1996
The Year
In Video
JUST A FEW OF THE REASONS WHY COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME VIDEO IS THE #1 RENTAL LABEL OF 1996.


CONGRATULATIONS!
Market Expands For Indie Folk Labels
Growing Customer Base, Promotion Push Eclectic Genre

BY TERRI HORAK

NEW YORK—As interest in roots music continues to grow, a number of independent labels with rosters that feature acoustic-oriented singer/songwriters and instrumentalists are finding themselves well positioned to expand in a market they helped create.

Relaying on strong rosters and their Consensus Reached At WIPO Conference

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

LONDON—The international record industry is beginning the new year with the Brexit in place for the elections it needs in the digital era.

A late-night session of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) diplomatic conference at the end of December completed two treaties that provide important advances in rights for songwriters, artists, and labels.

While the treaties have been warmly welcomed by both the Record Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) and the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), the organizations say that the challenge (Continued on page 89)

Kamen Foundation Takes Cue From ‘Mr. Holland’

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK—Determined to help children who may not have the advantages of music in school, composer Michael Kamen has formed the Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation.

Named after “Mr. Holland’s Opus,” the 1995 hit movie for which Kamen wrote the score, the foundation plans to provide musical instruments to schoolchildren. In the movie, Richard Dreyfuss plays the title character, an inspirational music teacher.

In the spirit of the film, the nonprofit organization plans to award a Mr. Holland’s Opus Foundation teacher-of-the-year honor annually.

Kamen’s motivation for starting the foundation came from a recent visit to the site of his musical birth—his high school, New York’s LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts.

Instead of the well-stocked programs that he remembered, he heard stories of Board of Education budget cuts that had left the school short on teachers and with a severely restricted musical curriculum.

Then they led me to a room that was filled to the roof with broken trombones, clarinets—all these instruments broken and beaten out of shape,” Kamen recalls.

He was understandably appalled by what he saw, especially in contrast with his fruitful times at the school. "I was raised in an era where the school sys- (Continued on page 39)
Building Records: stillsuit  
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www.americanradiohistory.com
U.K. Supermarkets Make Inroads In Music Chains Expand Profile As Home Entertainment Retailers

LONDON—U.K. supermarkets are poised to achieve significant progressive expansion into the music retail market.

Trend-setting U.K. supermarket chain Asda, announced an 40% increase in music sales in its latest financial results and an ambition to build on the growing success of its entertainment sections with a major re-fit of its in-store departments this year.

Asda is just one of several supermarket chains that are determined to consolidate their position in the home entertainment market. Last autumn, 300 of the country’s supermarkets were outfitted with “top 55” music racks (Billboard, Sept. 21, 1996), while another chain, Safeway, will this year roll out similar systems in 800 stores.

The trend has been mirrored by good merchants in continental Europe (Billboard, Sept. 12, 1996). France, for example, hypermarket and supermarket giants, including Carrefour and Auchan, are estimated to hold close to 65% of the total music market.

The Lewis, England-based Asda has pioneered the stocking of music in supermarkets and is the only supermarket group to have joined retail body the British Assn. of Record Dealers. In its interim results released (release No. 10) for the 28-week period ended Nov. 9, the group reported a 15.8% increase in pretax profits of £151.4 million ($230.7 million), and although there was no breakdown of music sales, chief executive Allan Leighton reported music sales have been strong in stores in schools and universities.

Steve Gallant, Asda’s category controller for entertainment, claims the chain’s music departments continue to enjoy strong growth at levels above the industry average. Asda carries entertainment sections in 185 of its 215 supermarkets; it plans to open five superstores in the spring. According to Gallant, one of the main priorities for 1997 is to launch a revamp of the music and video departments.

“We have been testing a new design and we have put it into three of the new stores and into existing stores. We are evaluating that but hope to roll out next year.”

The revamp will include new fittings, points-of-sale displays, in-store music listening points.

“They are in about 10 at the moment, but we are going to roll them out [in 1997] when we go through renewals and refits,” says Gallant.

As for Asda’s product mix, music and video will remain the core business. The chain has experimented with video rental in a number of outlets, but no decision has been made as to whether that will be expanded. However, Gallant is more bullish about the prospects for CD-ROM. “We are having a pretty good Christmas on CD-ROM, so we will be looking to put that offer into more stores next year. We carry CD-ROM games at present,” he says.

Another area Gallant is keen to build is electronic product lines. In July, Asda linked up with IBM U.K. for an exclusive collection of titles for the supermarket, that was followed with another 12 titles in the albums in October.

“We need to be looking to do more of these projects with other people in the future,” he adds.

New Congress To Address Industry’s Unfinished Business

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Most of the music-related issues to be addressed by the 105th Congress when it convenes this month after Inauguration Day will be tough, unfinished business.

High on the industry’s priority list will be the passage of the administration’s copyright-related National Information Infrastructure structure bill, which only slightly modifies copyright law but further defines and interprets existing laws in light of the interactive digital age.

That legislation is sure to be reintroduced early in the session. Last year, several obstacles and modified amendments dealing with other issues prevented passage.

The reintroduced bill, says sources, will probably initially be limited to three key features:

1. A copyright protection work can be distributed by limited transmissions.
2. It will offer protection against circumvention of copyright-management systems.
3. Third, it will provide protection against alteration or removal of copyright-management information.

In October, 1996, a major obstacle to passage was removed through an agreement between educators and copyright owners over the issue of fair use of copyrighted multimedia projects in schools and universities. The biggest remaining impediment to passage comes from hardware companies and online providers. Both camps are seeking liability exceptions. Hawkins companies say that they could be sued because legitimate-use machines could be put to unlawful use by consumers; online service providers are worried that they might be liable for online customers’ infringing uses, which are beyond their control.

“It’s going to be a big fight, our No. 1 big issue,” says Hilary Rosen, president/CEO of the Recording Industry Assn. of America. “We are going to try and persuade members that this place should not be dealing with these issues and also show them that right now there’s no big problem with the current law, such an extent that carved-out liability exceptions are needed.”

In last year’s legislation, several unrelated copyright issues were attached to the bill, a copyright-term extension bill, which would have provisions for the European Union and the Caribbean Community.

(Continued on page 89)
Parallel imports are an important issue for labels and retailers in Asia, as it is evident that their Pilots and Independent distributors are willing to go around coverage (“Hong Kong Is Tackling Parallel Imports Issue,” Billboard, Dec. 28, 1996). I believe that, at the end of the day, the labels see both ticketers as clearly similar. The following general points might help lead to a specific agreement.

- Retailers by large and large do not want to import. I believe that more than 95% of the imports coming into Hong Kong are impor¬ted from labels, which are less than available there. If the labels do make the product readily available locally, retailers will not import it. Rarely is it cheaper for a retailer to do so. We spend money serving our customers, who are telling us we want a wide selection of product. Don’t import to rip off our lab¬els; we are being forced to do so by its lack of availability from the majors.
- There are two specific cases when it can be cheaper to import.
  
1. The first is double or triple CDs or boxed sets, which most Asian labels seem to do at great ease to catalogue, but difficult-to-sell prices of two singles that of a single disc, or at least keep flex¬ible on this matter, to enjoy significant¬ly, or less satisfactory, lower margins.

The second is midline and budget prod¬uct. In some territories, we are told that there are no midnites or that a specific item is not midnite, even if the opposite is the case. In the U.K. or the U.S. Labels should try to be consistent on an inter¬national basis as to which items are mid¬nite. Also, we should be allowed to make a reasonable profit on midnites. We are of¬ten asked to accept unreasonably low margins, as thin as 10%. For developing markets and Asian marketing midnites. If the labels, for their own reasons, insist on selling midline product at full price, they shouldn’t ship. We should be able to identify it as midline product, as is usu¬ally the case.

- In many territories, we are given targets by suppliers to obtain certain levels of discount. It is frustrating to miss your targets because you are getting poor fill—in many cases, less than 50%. The labels are operating well below their potential. Retail can’t sell goods it can’t obtain. We hope that major and independent distributors will dedicate them¬selves to carrying deeper catalog and giving new artists a chance. At one time, EMI in Singapore believed that their policy was not to carry jazz; never mind that it has Blue Note, one of the greatest jazz labels in the world.

We want to be honest and classical, as well as megahit pop, and we hope the majors will put effort into these genres as well. We have established that there is a market for classical and world music in Asia. Asian consumers have not been introduced to a pop artist is enjoying large sales in the U.S. or the U.K., we think his or her label should at least give the product a try in Asia. In the past, we have pleaded for labels to carry multinational artists like the Smashing Pumpkins and Stone Temple Pilots to be considered on the grounds that “that type of music isn’t popular here.”

Over and over, we ask to buy product and are turned down, being told that it isn’t the bother, even though we are buying said goods on a one-way basis. We ask only that labels make catalog and new-product artist available, not that they spend money promoting it if they think it isn’t worthwhile. When they do spend money on advertising or promo¬tion, we hope they try more to coordinate marketing and distribution.

Our typical procedure is to turn in orders to the majors two months before opening a store. In Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Thailand, we have had fill from the majors of 25% or less. Many times, dis¬tributors/labels run advertising for them which have no stock before and during the time the ads run. It is common to have a major play dates in the given country, while at the same time, there is no stock of its CDs. Billboard’s top five albums can be out of stock for months at a time. This is everybody’s loss.

None of the majors in any of the Asian countries has what I call a “meaning¬ful” catalog. Some have catalogs, but they represent what is available in other countries, not their own. Mostly, we operate from stock lists that are obsolete months after they are made.

In some countries, we are asked to send our buyers to the distributor’s warehouse because distributors don’t want to bother writing down all the titles they have. If the majors would print catalogs of what they carry in a given ter¬ritory and dedicate themselves to keeping those items always on hand, we would not need to import those.

Most companies have “indent ser¬vice.” None of them is complete. In Asia, it’s almost a non-entity, or “indent” operations. Waiting six to eight weeks for spot fill is not satisfying or practical.

Please don’t say that we have to order 25 copies per title, as we often hear. We are buying on a one-way basis; you are not spending any money on market¬ing. Please accept our modest orders and allow us to build markets step by step. We are hoping that the majors make set lot of the majors can now be handling and dedicate themselves to filling orders within two weeks and that they allow us to bring in the minor items they do not want to go after. Historically, importers have played a large role in breaking new music in new territories.

I ask all the labels to look at PolyGram. In Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singa¬pore, it is well ahead of all other labels. Our purchases from PolyGram in the region are far larger than those from any other major, and it has by far the best distribution. The two facts are related.

Piracy is far more of a problem than parallel imports. It directly dam¬ages the industry by robbing the labels and their artists of income from radio and video sales, and it is widespread in Hong Kong. The main outlets for pirate retail are well known: Mongkok, Shau Shui Po, Causeway Bay, and Tai Shing. Why isn’t the International Federation of Phonographic Industry (IFPI) going after these people? If piracy cannot be controlled in Hong Kong now, what are the chances of it being controlled after China takes over in 1997? Stores that openly sell bootlegging CDs in Singa¬pore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Indonesia are still able to receive favorable terms from the majors and little or no attention from the majors.

• Tower wants to buy local. The labels say they want to sell local. Yet it is no secret that many majors can only sell large quantities of hit product out of Hong Kong and Singapore into Europe and developing Asian markets. Usually, the exporters that ship this product are rewarded with large discounts, given the volume of their purchases for export. I have been offered such deals directly by managing directors of major labels.

It is hypocritical, to say the least, of the majors to do this. The majors seem to agree with retail that there are many places where importing makes sense and can be beneficial to all. If distribution in Asia can be improved, the parallel import problem "is not a problem of the music business as a whole, but of the industry itself, and the labels and the retailers will bring this controversy to a happy end.

The labels think they have a parallel import problem; the retailers feel the problem is poor distribution and supply. We are both right. We are both concerned that it can be peacefully re¬solved.
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FRANCE

**Issue Date:** Feb. 8
**Ad Close:** Jan. 14

Billboard's Feb. 8th Spotlight on France will discuss the musical developments and changes occurring throughout the country. This issue, Billboard will discuss France's "Quota Generation," and how domestic-content legislation on French radio is having a profound effect on young artists, label executives and programmers. Also featured will be highlights on some of France's newest acts emerging since these radio quotas were introduced, a summary of the Victoires de la Musique Awards and an executive roundup, with French leaders discussing their projections for 1997.

**Contact:**
Francois Millet
33-1-4549-2933

BRITS AROUND THE WORLD

**Issue Date:** Feb. 22
**Ad Close:** Jan. 21

Billboard's Feb. 22 issue contains our annual update on the UK market. With the continuing resurgence of Britsh pop, our Spotlight's lead story will survey key U.K. music industry executives to determine which artists will be global priorities in '97. Other features include an at-a-glance guide to the top-selling UK artists in the '96 worldwide market, a listing of the ma or nominees for the Brit Awards and talent to keep a watch on in '97.

**Contact:**
Catherine Flintoff
44-171-323-6666

EMI/UK 100TH ANNIVERSARY

**Issue Date:** Feb. 22
**Ad Close:** Jan. 28

1997 marks the 100th year since the founding of the Gramophone Company Ltd. and the Columbia Graphophone Company Ltd., whose subsequent merging in 1931 resulted in the formation of the global entertainment giant, EMI. In our February 22 issue, Billboard chronicles a century of EMI’s musical and artistic accomplishments. Features will include exclusive interviews with Rupert Perry and J.F. Cecillor as well as an in-depth look at the company's history, growth, and future developments worldwide.

**Contact:**
Catherine Flintoff
44-171-323-6666

CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

**Issue Date:** Feb. 22
**Ad Close:** Jan. 28

The Kid Biz keeps growing, diversifying and reaffirming its strength in the entertainment market. Coinciding with this year's Toyfair, Billboard's February 22 issue looks at veteran artists' new releases (Cathy & Mercy, Joannie Bartals...), mainstream artists recording children's m.s.c., spoken-word products and specialty stores. This spotlight will also include a quarter-by-quarter, label-by-label listing of releases planned for 1997. Bonus distribution at the Toyfair!

**Contact:**
Jodie Francisco
213-525-2304

Reach Billboard's 200,000
DON WAS - 20 YEARS OF MAKING RECORDS

Issue Date: March 1
Ad Close: Feb. 4

Billboard's March 1st issue celebrates Don Was' 20 years of making records. This talented musician/producer, who has worked with successful artists like Bonnie Raitt, the Rolling Stones and Bob Dylan, is exclusively interviewed by Billboard's Chris Morris in this spotlight issue. Other features include a complete overview of his award-winning career, his recent success in film scoring and an extensive discography of his work. Join Billboard in honoring one of the music industry's finest.

Contact:
Pat Rod Jennings
212-536-5136

ASIA PACIFIC I

Issue Date: Mar. 1
Ad Close: Feb. 4

Continuing its editorial commitment to Asia Pacific's mega-market, Billboard's March 1st issue will contain our first "magazine with a magazine" on the region for 1997. Our Spotlight takes a final look for 1996 at the Asian Pacific market, with coverage on the most recent events, trends, Western acts experiencing success and Asia/pacific acts breaking in both the homeland and abroad. Don't miss this opportunity to align your company with the market that keeps growing and growing!

Contact:
Clinch-Leece
Singapore: 65-338-2774
Hong Kong: 852-2527-3525

1997 Record Retailing Directory

Publication Date: March 22, 1997
Ad Close: Jan. 22

The 7th edition of the Record Retailing Directory continues to influence the music industry buyers who purchase the products and services offered by record companies, wholesalers & distributors, accessory manufacturers, etc. The RRD contains 7,000 updated listings of independent record and chain stores, chain headquarters, and audio book retailers. One ad in the 1997 RRD can work for you all year long!

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213-650-3179 - FAX
AKI KANEKO
IFPI Asia Revamp To Put Focus On Chinese Piracy

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS and GEOFF BURPERE

LONDON—The international record industry's anti-piracy resources in the fast-growing Chinese market are set to be restructured this year to allow for increased concentration on the problems in China. Proposals for a major restructur- ing of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) in Asia will be presented to regional directors this month. Any new moves are likely to be similar to the reorga- nization in Thailand and Malaysia, where anti-piracy responsibilities were transferred to an industry body based to the respective national groups in the full.

IFPI director general Nic Garnett explains the group's need to reap- proach its Asian activities by saying, "Because China has become such an all-consuming operation for us, we have to look at how we can reorga- nize so that we don't neglect the rest of the region."

In effect, IFPI is aiming to ensure that domestic anti-piracy issues are not forgotten while Southeast Asia regional director J.C. Giouw concen- trates on the international issues generated in large measure by Bei- jing.

Carnett adds, "A number of mar- kets in Asia have now reached a stage of maturity where national efforts must take on more responsibility." In Thailand and Malaysia, they have already done so successfully. In September, the Record Industry of Malaysia (RIM) assumed full con- trol of the anti-piracy operations for which IFPI was previously seen as only part but only partial responsibility. Giouw says the mature nature of RIM's involvement in its home market meant that the regional IFPI was confident the Malaysia organization was prepared to carry out its role as an autonomous unit. "RIM is very will- ing to take on the responsibility," Giouw says. "They do the chart (Continued on page 104).

Sony Strategies For Spring DVD Launch
Early Targets For High-End Hardware

BY SETH GOLDSTEIN

NEW YORK—Sony is targeting early adopters as the first buyers of the DVD player it plans to introduce this spring.

Unlike other hardware manufacture- ers—such as Toshiba and Thomson Company—Sony have trumpeted a line of DVD players starting at $500-$600. Sony will limit itself to a single machine priced considerably higher. And the Japanese consumer electronics giant has cautious goals for

DVD in 1997, assuming the format occupies the copy-protection obsta- cles that torpedoed the much-public- ized 1996 launch.

John Briesch, president of Sony Electronics Consumer AV Group, esti- mates that a maximum of 500,000 DVD players will be sold this year. An industry forum in New York in May, 1997, Panasonic predicted sales of 1 million units; others have gone as high as 3 million.

"It's going to take some time," cautioned Briesch during a late-December meet- ing held to outline Sony's DVD strate- gy.

Details regarding prices, technical specifications, and the titles Sony will deliver are to be announced at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas Thursday (9-Jan. 12). CES will also serve to introduce Sony's DVD marketing team, headed by former Pioneer Electronics senior VP Mike Polidori.

Sony will be one of many CES exhibitors touting the format. Toshiba, Thomson, Panasonic, Pioneer, and Philips are among those expected to show DVD models, emphasizing video playback. In addition, audio suppliers, including Kenwood, Yamaha, will be on hand.

After last year's stumbles, vendors aren't committing to firm launch dates. DVD is supposed to arrive in the U.S. six months of 1997, with the breadth of the rollout dependent on the number of studio titles—still a big question mark going into CES. The price of the sim- plest players, meanwhile, may balloon from $500 to $600 as manufacturers struggle to cover costs. "Where they'll come in, no one knows," says one trade observer.

There is considerably more certainty, however, in the immediate availability of DVD-ROM for the computer market.

31st MIDEM To Focus On Emerging Music Markets

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

LONDON—New music, new markets, and new technologies will be the main themes of this year's MIDEM, accord- ing to Earphoto's chairman Charles Negre, who is organizing the event.

The 31st running of the event, in Cannes Jan. 19-23, will also, for the first time, part of a triumvirate of MIDEM shows and will share the world stage with the 3-year-old MIDEM Asia and the Miami-based MIDEM Latin America and Caribbean Music Market, which is to be launched in September.

Rood MIDEM Organisation chief executive Xavier Roy says, though, that the original MIDEM remains "unique in its field." He adds, "I think a large part of our success lies in the fact that we are always open to new possibilities and developments of rele- vance to the music industry."

That attitude has led not just to the launch of the Asian and Latin shows, but to a recognition of the changing world order at the flagship event in Cannes.

The emergence of the Latin Ameri- can market will be a particular high- light during the Cannes event, and, says Roy, through the impact of MIDEM Asia, a growing number of exhibitors and delegates from the Far East will be present in the French town.

Further, he states, total registra- tions from across the world are higher than they were at this time last year, putting MIDEM '97 on course to ex-ceed John Briesch's estimate of 10,000 participants from 3,001 companies rep- resenting 70 countries.

A theme of the delegates’ meetings and conferences this year, says Roy, will be new music, and he cites techno, dance, Euro pop, and jungle. The dance theme will be enhanced by the Dance Of'Or 2 Awards, organized by AB Productions and French broad- (Continued on page 97)

Music Industry Lagging In DVD Development

BY BRETT ATWOOD

LOUIS ANGELES—Unless it moves swiftly to develop content that takes advantage of DVD, the music industry may be left with last generation's advan- ced audio capabilities of the high- capacity format, according to industry executives slated to discuss the state of DVD-audio at a panel during the Consumer Electronics Show (CES), held Thursday (9) through Jan. 12, in Las Vegas.

While the computer and home video industries are ready for the U.S. roll- out of the first generation of DVD play- ers and DVD-ROM drives in the first quarter of this year (see story, this page), the music industry is lagging behind in the development of DVD audio and has yet to establish a standard for releases in the format.

"We must figure out how best to invest wisely in this new opportunity," says TMH Corp. president Tomlinson Holman, who co-chairs the U.S. Digital Video Disc Standards Committee (AESSC SC-02-M) task force on high-capacity digital audio.

Holman is to appear on the panel "Under- standing The Audio Applications Of DVD," to be held Friday (10), along with AESSC co-chairman John Earl- gie, founder of JME Consulting; Bob Studebaker, president of Sound Produc- tor for Meridian; and David Kawakami, director of new business development for Sony Pictures Entertainment.

The AESSC aims to educate the music industry about its options for utilizing new advanced audio systems, such as DVD-audio. At press time, the group, which was formed in early 1996, was planning to develop a specific pro- (Continued on page 97)

Test Chart Sparks French Debate Over Compilations

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

PARIS—The controversial issue of whether artist compilations should be included in the official album charts is once again dividing the French music industry.

At present, the top 50 albums listing excludes compilations, and a separate top 25 chart shows single-artist and multi-artist compilations. However, several record companies are lobbying to have single-artist compilations treated in the same way as new releases.

Industry body SNEP, which owns the rights to the charts, has been faced with lobbying by showing what the top 50 chart would look like if compilations were included. The charts are compiled by Tite-Live and IFOP, based on a sample of 200% of France's total retail accounts.

SNEP emphasizes that the sample chart shows an autonomous unit of president Pascal Negre is strongly in favor of the inclusion of compilations. He has been backed by SNES pres- ident Patrick Zenkel.

"All the major territories—the U.S. U.K., and Germany among them—have single-artist compilations in the charts. Why not France?" says Negre. "A best of album can be an important moment in the career of an artist. At PolyGram, for example, we released Florent Pagny's compilation as a new release in September 1996. It included a couple of new songs, and we have sold so far 1.3 million units. I don't see any reason why this album should not be listed in the regular charts instead of being charted between two dance compilations."

The current system has its support- ers, however. France president Paul-Alberti, who contends that introducing single-artist compilations would lead the charts would limit new artists’ exposure.

Independent labels are also against the change because they fear it will limit (Continued on page 103)

U.K. Pop Facility Receives Last Funding

BY EMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—A £35 million showcase for the British music industry is set to become a concrete reality within 18 months.

The National Centre for Popular Music (NCPM), situated in the English city of Sheffield was given the final £14.7 mil- lion of its funding by the U.K. govern- ment's Arts Council on Dec. 19. Now, according to creative director Tim Strickland, it is on course to open in summer 1998.

The scheme had already received £2.5 million from the Arts Council and nearly £8 million from the European Union’s Regional Development Fund. The final sum from the Arts Council completes the center’s financial pack- age, which has also been augmented by sponsorships and borrowing from banks.

When complete, the 4,500-square- meter project in the heart of Sheffield will use the latest interactive technol- ogy to entertain and educate visitors on all aspects of music (Billboard, July 20, 1996). Strickland stresses, though, that it will not be “object-based.” Instead, he says, the interactive exhibits will inform information subjects as the history and technology of popular music and the social context of music making.

"It will give people a flavor of where music has come from and where it is going," Strickland says. "It will show them what people in society were doing at a time when particular forms of music developed.

The center aims to attract 400,000 visitors per year and to be self-financed by admission fees. It will be situated between Paternoster Row and Charles Street in Sheffield’s new Cultural Industries Quarter, a development backed by the European Union and the regeneration of the post-industrial civil- tural.

Though Sheffield is the home of Def Leppard, the Human League, and Joe Cocker, the somewhat surprising loca- tion of the center and its success in attracting funding has, so far, eclipsed plans for a national music center in London, 190 miles away.

A gamut of leading industry organi- zations has backed the London pro- ject—which is being overseen by for- mer British Phonographic Industry (Continued on page 102)
Artists

POP • ROCK • R&B • RAP • DANCE • COUNTRY • LATIN • CLASSICAL • JAZZ • PRO AUDIO

BeauSoleil Rings In 20th Birthday With Rhino Set

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—"L'Amour Ou La Folie," BeauSoleil's fifth album for Rhino since coming to the label in 1990, celebrates the pre-eminent Cajun band's 20th anniversary—sort of.

The disc, which will be released Jan. 14, was originally meant to be a compilation of songs recorded but not released, fit by them up since its inception in 1975. That concept, according to founder Michael Doucet, has been shelved for now, perhaps until the band's 25th anniversary. "We had almost 40 songs on hand, and then we came up with some different ideas and cut new stuff which gave everybody room to express their own personalities more," says Doucet, BeauSoleil's fiddler/vocalist/Baguier of the revised approach. His bandmates are his brother and guitarist/vocalist David Doucet, accordionist Jimmy Dreaux, bassist Al Tharp, percussionist Billy Ware, and drummer Tommy Alesi. "This is the best case-section record yet in showcasing everybody's different qualities and tastes," adds Doucet, who produced "L'Amour Ou La Folie," which translates from Cajun French as "love or folly."

"We also invited some of our friends from over the years who enjoy this music [to play on the album]."

Past guest Richard Thompson, as Doucet notes, "goes without saying" as an invitee and plays acoustic guitar and electric mandolin. Another old friend, Texas Tornado Augie Meyers, plays piano on "Can't You See," which he wrote and Doucet translated into "Du Vas Voir."

On BeauSoleil's 1989 founder album "Bayou Cadillac," the band turned in a Cajun/French version of Meyers' "Hey Baby, Que Pasa," translated into "Hey Baby, Quoi Ca Dit."

Also joining Meyers on "Can't You See" are guitarist Beayl Dahon, an original member of BeauSoleil who was also with the swamp-pop band the Riff Raffs and now plays accordion with Galilea Ole Orey Cajun star (Continued on page 104)

Morissette Tops RIAA '96 Certs With Debut Set

LOS ANGELES—Alanis Morissette, to no one's surprise, racked up the biggest sales of 1996 in year-end certifications from the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA).

While Morissette's "Jagged Little Pill" (Maverick/Reprise/Warner Bros.) was a bonanza for the industry, the trade group reported that certifications in '96 were down in most categories compared with 1995 tallies.

In December, the soundtrack for "The Bodyguard" (Arista), featuring Whitney Houston, hit the 16 million mark, putting it among the top five best-selling albums ever. "Jagged Little Pill," released in 1996, was certified for sales of 10 million units in 1996 alone. The album, which is certified for a total of 14 million (Continued on page 103)

Waits Wins Latest Suit Over Commercial Use of His Songs

LOS ANGELES—On Dec. 16, singer/songwriter Tom Waits won another court decision here in his ongoing campaign to keep his compositions from being licensed for use in commercials by his former music publisher.

Superior Court Judge John P. Shook prohibited Third Story Music, a Los Angeles firm operated by brothers Herb and Martin Cohen, from using any of Waits' songs from the 1982 Zoetrope Productions film "One From the Heart" for use in commercials for national or multinational use.

In late 1993, Third Story licensed the medley "Opening Montage/Once Upon A Time" for use in a commercial for a Suchard Chocolate commercial in Argentina, for a fee of $100,000. Shook's decision came in a court case that combined an action filed by Third Story against Waits in May 1995 and a counterclaim by Waits against Third Story and Herb Cohen, Waits' former manager, filed the following month.

The judge's finding in Waits' favor made specific reference to a related court decision involving an exchange of suits between the musician and the publisher in 1993.

In that case, the singer claimed that Third Story had violated a 1980 amendment to his 1977 publishing agreement that prohibited commercial exploitation of his material by licensing the song "Heartattack And Vine" for a U.K. Levi's jeans commercial and the song "Ruby's Arms" for French ads for Williams' Gel shaving cream (Billboard, April 17, 1993). Third Story countered, saying it was within its rights in granting the foreign licenses (Billboard, May 1, 1990).

In August 1994, Superior Court Judge Harvey A. Schneider rendered a decision in those actions, stating that Waits' contract forbade the licensing of his songs for national or international commercials. Waits was awarded income made by the publisher from the two ads and $20,000 for the "embarrassment and humiliation" suffered from the songs' use in the ads, but (Continued on page 104)

Set Compiles Santa Barbara Acts Unsigned Bands Get Heard On Reset

BY DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—After mining the club scene in the California coastal tri-county area of Santa Barbara, Ventura, and San Luis Obispo over the past year, on Jan. 1, Carteprinia, Calif.-based Reset Records released three volumes of "Live Bands From The Santa Barbara Area."

Called from the label's other endeavors, a leased-access daily television show called "Locals Only," the albums tracks highlight live music from 25 unsigned area bands, including Escek, Truth About Seafood, and Papa Nata.

The first two discs will focus on folk, acoustic, and punk. While the third disc will feature bands with more aggressive style, often more underground. Like the retailer, local mainstream rock station KYTD is a title sponsor of the televised music show and has an involved history with Reset.

Station midday jock Jeff Hanley, who hosted KYTD's rock music program for several years, credits "Locals Only" co-producers and Reset co-owners Ian Stewart and Dennis Dragon (a former member of the Velvets) for "keepingReset in a place that's not only fun, but also very creative."

Hanley says, "They're really solid people, good roles model, and they're that aggressive style that is giving (Continued on page 105)

Velvets' Set 'Loaded' With New Music

Rhino's 2-CD Release Includes 17 Unreleased Tracks

BY CHRISS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—Velvet Underground fans will be the beneficiaries of a cornucopia of unreleased material this fall, as Rhino Records releases "Loaded (Fully Loaded Edition)," a comprehensive two-CD version of the group's classic fourth studio album, originally released in 1970 on the Atlantic subsidiary Cotillion Records.

The set will incorporate some features originally included on Polydor Chronicles' 1995 Velvets boxed set "Peyton: A Set of Three" (Billboard, Aug. 19, 1995); the full-length version of the original album, which included complete versions of three previously edited songs, and six out-takes and demos from the "Loaded" era.

"Loaded (Fully Loaded Edition)" also contains an additional 17 previously unreleased tracks. The second disc of the set leads off with a complete " Loaded," comprising various mixes, demos, and early versions of the "Loaded" songs in their original running order. The disc, which was co-produced by George Saunders, Shel Kagan, and the band, occupies a unique place in the Velvet Underground's discography. Its bright, radio-friendly sound is in marked contrast to the confrontational style of the New York group's first two albums, "The Velvet Underground & Nico" (1967) and "White Light/White Heat" (1968), and to the subdued yet brooding semi-acoustic format of its self-titled third album (1969).

The Velvets' bassist/guitarist/keyboar- dlist, Doug Yule—who recorded "Loaded" with guitarist/ singer/songwriter Lou Reed, the group's leader, and guitarist Sterling Morrison—says today that Steve Seinberg, the VU's manager, was pointing his act in a more overtly pop direction.

Yule says, "It was put into that style of AM/I-Pod format—three to five minutes max, and very 'up' kind of stuff."

Sessions for the album proceeded quickly but not easily, since Mau- reen "Moe" Tucker, the Velvets' drummer, did not participate in the recording, for she was pregnant at the time. Others— including Yule himself, his brother Billy, session man Tommy Castanaro, and even engineer Adrian Barber—filled the percussion chair.

Yule says, "The one thing, looking back, that I see as the major mistake that we as a group made was when Seinick said, 'Maureen can't play on this album because she's pregnant.' We should have said, 'Oh, well, then, we'll wait and do the album when she's ready.'"

By the time "Loaded" was completed, the band was splintering. Reed quit the group abruptly on Aug. 23, 1970, a month before the album's release, after a show at Max's Kansas City in New York. (I didn't know until an hour before we were gonna play that Lou had quit," Yule says.) Reed publicly announced the record upon its release.

The album failed to make the charts in 1970. However, "Loaded" produced two bona fide classics, the seminal "I'm Waiting for the Man," which featured an indelible, multi-colored guitar lick, and the anthem "Rock And Roll," among a finely wrought selection of pop tunes.

Rhino A&R manager Patrick Milligan, who co-produced "Loaded (Fully Loaded Edition)", with engi-

BILLY JOEL

MCA Sues Over Hendrix Rights
Agreements Contract Violations by 4 Firms

**By Chris Morris**

LOS ANGELES—Claiming damages in excess of $25 million, MCA Records has filed suit against four music companies in Superior Court here, charging that the firms breached contracts to sell various rights to the music of the late guitarist Jimi Hendrix to MCA and misrepresented their rights to the label.

The action, filed Dec. 13, names as defendants Bella Godiva Music Inc., the New York company that administers Hendrix's music publishing; Interlit Ltd., a Virgin Islands-based holding company; Bureau Voor Muziekrechten Ebber V.B. in the Netherlands; and Are You Experienced Ltd., producer Alan Douglas' company.

The suit is the latest chapter in a long-running legal wrangle regarding rights to album masters and other assets related to Hendrix, who died in September 1970.

In April 1995, James A. "Al" Hendrix, the musician's father, filed suit in federal court in Seattle against Bella Godiva, Interlit, Ebber and Are You Experienced, as well as the elder Hendrix's former attorney, Leo Branton.

Branton is said to have obtained a gain concerning his son's legacy and charged that Branton had wrongfully transferred the Jimi Hendrix assets to the co-defendant companies (Billboard, May 1, 1996).

In July 1995, a settlement was reached in the case, and the defendants effectively transferred ownership of all Hendrix materials to Al Hendrix and other members of the Hendrix family (Billboard, Aug. 5, 1995).

According to the terms of the settlement, Hendrix’s estate is paid $25 million, and the label is to pay a royalty of 12% on all future income from the Hendrix catalogue.

The suit went on to recover several Hendrix albums, including reissues of the guitarist’s first three albums, a hit compilation, and new collections that included “Woodstock,” featuring his complete set from the 1969 festival and “Blues.”

MCA says that after Al Hendrix learned of the label’s acquisition and filed his suit, the defendant firms “reconfirmed to MCA that they had complete right, title, and interest in Hendrix’s works and that the Hendrix family’s claims were without merit.”

However, the purported rights holders later settled and conveyed their rights to the Hendrix family. Faced with the change in ownership—and with left with no clear title to Hendrix’s music, since its rights hinged on sale agreements essentially voided by the settlement (Continued on page 105)

Warner Bros. Sues The Goo Goo Dolls

NEW YORK—In an ongoing dispute involving platinum-selling rock act the Goo Goo Dolls, Warner Bros. Records. Records is suing the Buffalo, N.Y.-based band for infringing on a trademark.

In an action filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, the label claims that the Goo Goo Dolls are attempting to “repudiate their contractual obligations to Warner Records” by entering into discussions with other record companies for their recording services.

Although the Goo Goo Dolls are not signed directly to Warner Bros., their breakthrough album, “A Boy Named Goo,” is distributed by Warner through a special arrangement with the Goo Goo Dolls label, Metal Blade Records of Simi Valley, Calif.

On Nov. 26, 1996, the Goo Goo Dolls sued Metal Blade for nonpayment of royalties and failure to provide an accounting of the band’s royalties. They also accused Metal Blade of exploiting the band’s naiveté by forcing them to sign an unfair contract.

Coincident with their lawsuit against Metal Blade—which named neither Warner Bros. nor Goo Goo Dolls publisher Virgin Music—the band released a statement saying that it would “enter into discussions with other record companies and music publishers.”

In the lawsuit, Warner claims that the Goo Goo Dolls agreed to confer their exclusive recording services on Warnerm Records in the event that the agreement between Metal Blade and defen- dants was terminated or repudiated (Continued on page 105)

**Reggae’s Conscience Evoked At Seventh Ghetto Splash**

An image of music’s healing powers is engraved forever in the minds of millions: Singing and “skank-jogging” in a trance of ecstasy at the 1976 Smile Jamaica concert, reggae singer Bob Marley linked and held up the threads of the national and family traditions behind him on stage. They were Michael Manley and Edward Seaga, fierce combatants for the prime minister during the country’s notoriously bloody 1976 election.

Twenty years later, with violence once again escalating in Jamaica and a national election due in a year and a half, reggae remembers.

In October 1996, a letter went out to key members of Jamaica’s music industry. It described a dawn meeting held Oct. 22 at producer/label owner Augustus "Gussie" Clarke’s Anchor Recording Studio in Kingston. Ninety-six members of the "Music Fraternity" had signed the “Ghetto Life” pledge to produce and promote lyrics that “will help create the type of country we want to live in and wish for tomorrow.”

Drawn up by Clarke, producer/label owner Michael "Mikey" Bennett and radio personality Lachemail Semaj, the bill states, in part, “By omission and/or commission, we are partly to be blamed for the current state of the country.”

(Continued on page 23)

**SOAR Bows Native American Christian Label Red Sea Imprint Hopes To ‘Legitimize’ Fleeting Genre**

**By Deborah Evans Price**

NASHVILLE—Tom Bee, founder/president of Albuquerque, N.M.-based Sound of America Records (SOAR), will launch a Native American Christian label, Red Sea, Jan. 15.

Bee, who released new albums from the label are due this spring and include an album by rockers Generation Exodus and a duet, “Prayer Warrior,” from Russian and Bad Seed, hopes the label will be "the next thing," according to SOAR label executive Stephen Pewewardy, Grayhorse Singers, and featured artists ranging from rap, rock, and new age product to traditional Native American sounds.

Since launching SOAR in 1996, Bee has developed Natural Visions, a label featuring instrumental, world, and new age music with a roster that includes Douglas Spotted Eagle, Cielo, Brúdr, Standing Deer, and Samantha Rainbow. Bee, a rockin' label that is home to actor Russell Means, Bobby Bee & the Boys, The Boyz of The Rez, and Tiger Tiger; and Dakotah, a children's label that has released two titles with material written by Paul Gdalé and narrated by Bee.

The SOAR label features traditional artists such as Carol Halbeil, Cornell Pewewardy, Grayhorse Singers, and cans as well as a Virgin album titled “Sacred Spirits.” It also distributes albums by Robert Mirabal and Bill Miller for Warner Western, the western music division of Warner Bros. SOAR's distribution network covers bookstores, trading posts, galleries, museums, airports, and Native American gatherings, as well as mainstream music chains such as Musieland and Blockbuster. Bee acknowledges that the Christian bookstore community is a different ball game and says that for the Red Sea imprint he will be looking to team with a company that specializes in distribution to that market. He plans to visit Nashville during the annual Music Week in late April in order to talk to members of the Nashville Christian music community about the new label.

Bee is a veteran writer/producer whose experience includes recording for Motown as an act named XIX, short for “Xtreme Cowboys.” During his association with Motown as a writer/producer, he worked with Smokey Robinson and the Jackson Five. "I was on the Jackson 5’s double-platinum "Maybe Tomorrow" album.

After a stint in Los Angeles, Bee returned to his native New Mexico and launched SOAR. "I started this label out of the garage of our house on a wing and a prayer," he recalls. "I hocked a Rolex watch, maxed out a credit card, and I was broke. But I was 1 am. That’s the American dream."

Developing that dream hasn’t been easy, but Bee says it has been worthwhile. "The most challenging thing has been getting people to accept the music in the mainstream . . . as music and not just "tom-tom" music, Indian music, but as a legitimate genre," he says.

Bee says that he was dissatisfied with the quality of Native American product previously available and that (Continued on page 105)

**RECORD COMPANIES**

Bob Merlin is promoted to senior VP of worldwide corporate communications for Warner Bros. Records in Los Angeles. He was senior VP/director of media relations.

Leigh Ann Hardie is promoted to VP of artist development for Sparrow Communications Group in Nashville. She was director of artist development.

Peter Wright to GM of Rykodisc USA and names Ron Decker product manag- er to VP of product marketing for Rykodisc, the company’s new subsidiary, Rykodisc in Salem, Mass., promotes

Merlis Records in Los Angeles. She was publicity director.

RELATED FIELDS: The Arbitron Co. in New York promotes Scott Musgrave to VP of sales, radio station services, and Linda Diupre to VP of sales, advertiser/agency services. They were, respectively, marketing manager, radio station services, and Eastern manager, advertiser/agency services.

PM Entertainment appoints Kelly Stephens Midwest regional sales director in St. Louis and Linda Chan Western regional sales direc- tor in Los Angeles.(clarke, respectively, product manager for Turner Home Entertainment at Sgiatan & Sound and a home video sales rep at Erent Entertainment. John Monforte is named director of audio and lecturer in the school of music at the University of Michigan music media union in Ann Arbor. He was assistant professor and director of recording services in the music engineering technology program at the University of Miami.]

Dundie A. Albin is appointed director of marketing for Group W Satellite Communications in Miami. She was director of marketing for the American International Group.

Lewis H. de Seife is named direc- tor of trade marketing for SAT International in Hambden, Conn. He was director of marketing and promotions for Jami Marketing Ser-

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE
Anticipation Builds For Silverchair Set

Epic Bides Its Time Releasing 'Freak Show'

By DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—After the startlingly rapid success of "Frogstomp," the 1995 debut album by Australian teen sensation Silverchair, Epic Records has prepared the band's sophomore set, "Freak Show," with a far more deliberate marketing strategy.

John O'Donnell, director of the Australian label that signed the act, Murmur Records, says that the plan for "Freak Show," which bows worldwide Feb. 4, has been carefully plotted since its completion last summer. O'Donnell says that during the ensuing months, Epic has prepared a strong early album art and fine-tuned marketing and sales details.

"The album was recorded in June, when we essentially meant that we could have rushed to release it in 1996 or put it out early in '97," he says. "All around, the extra time has been used very well."

Epic Records Group senior VP of sales Jim Scully says that the label has had a good reason to bide its time.

"This is probably the strongest release for the [first] quarter, and we wanted to make sure that we had enough time and energy to release it properly," says Scully.

"This is a young group, and there's a lot of interest in them, but we're going to be cautious," he adds. "We're not trying to put a million albums out there, because we first want to make sure the band is in front of the consumers' faces."

"Frogstomp," which peaked at No. 9 on The Billboard 200 only three months after its release and has sold more than 1.7 million units in the U.S., according to Nielsen SoundScan, has undeniably set a high standard for Epic.

Hastings Books, Music & Video senior music buyer Skip Young says that the Amarillo, Texas-based band is awaiting the release "with much anticipation."

"We're excited about it, and I think that kids are, too," says Young. "The last album just kept selling well, and I don't think the band was even able to tour here because of their school schedules."

Epic senior VP David Massey says that while the label is sensitive to the fickle tastes of radio and a volatile retail environment, it is confident that the market will respond enthusiastically to "Freak Show."

"We're not daunted at all by the success of "Frogstomp,"" he says. "We are quietly confident that this is the album that is going to take them to the next level. The feedback we're getting from press and radio is that it's like the band has skipped its second album and this is its third."

Indeed, though "Freak Show" contains a fair amount of straightforward, familiar grunge elements, such as on the wailing refrain to "Lie To Me," Silverchair surprises with appealing symphonic elements on the rock ballad "Cemetery."

Silverchair drummer Ben Gillies says that the new record came about after the band members found that a few of

(Continued on page 33)

A Final Reflection On A Departed Year:
What They Said At The Billboard Awards

WITH ONE LONG, LOVING look back at 1996, we revisit December's Billboard Music Awards one last time to glean tidbits from those artists who helped make last year memorable.

Tony Kanal of No Doubt said the band has just completed work on its fourth video from the "Tragic Kingdom" album, focuses on the song "Excuse Me Mr." Despite touring almost nonstop since the album's release in early 1996, Kanal said he's not yet weary of performing live. "We're definitely not tired of playing these songs," he said.

"Touring the world is like a vacation for us. The best places we've played have been in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Indonesia." Although the band is "already thinking about its next album," Kanal said, "we have a lot more touring in the U.S. as headliners. There are so many places in the rest of the world, like India and China, that we haven't played yet." All that touring is clearly paying off: The band's album footage reached No. 1 on The Billboard 200 49 weeks after it debuted.

Carmen Electra has wrapped taping of her first season as the host of MTV's "Singled Out." "I love it," she said. "It's so much fun, and I get to be silly and playful. I'm kind of like a cheerleader for the kids who are all excited and ready to find a date." After she completes work on a calendar, the artist formerly known as Tish Cyrus plans to go into the studio and record some demos, with her boyfriend, B-Real of Cypress Hill, producing.

Toni Braxton is an obvious candidate for movie stardom, but "not right now," she said. "I'm really nervous about the second album. I'm interested in scripts, though." Braxton, who kicked off a tour with labelmate Kenny G in mid-December, says of projects she'd like to pursue, "I've always wanted to do a duet with R. Kelly. Maybe we'll do a remix or something like that together." Speaking of movies, R. Kelly said he plans to continue to pursue work in films. "I'm hoping to get into some movies and some things like that—soundtracks, some scoring, and also some acting."

Kelly said he contributes the music to the hit film "Space Jam" was a thrill. "It was inspirational. It was nice for the kids, and it was something I've always wanted to do."

Meanwhile, there are plenty of other artists who want to work with Braxton. Keith Sweat, currently riding high on both the Hot R&B Singles and Hot 100 Singles charts with "Nobody," his duet with Athena Cage of Kut Klose, said he wouldn't mind pursuing other partnerships. "Not at all," says Toni Braxton or Mariah Carey. "There's quite a few female artists I'd like to duet with."... Dr. Dre said he will release a solo project by Dawn Robinson of En Vogue on his new label, the Aftermath. Dre was in high spirits about the performance of his imprint's first album, "Dr. Dre Presents... The Aftermath," which bowed at No. 6 on The Billboard 200 for the week ending Dec. 14. "It's real hot," Dre said. "It's going too good for a new label with all new artists."

Donna Lewis is experiencing the first blushes of fame following her huge hit "I Love You Always Forever." "I'm just starting to get recognized," she said. "When I'm at the airport, people see me and say, 'You're the one who did that song!' Thats why I've taken to carrying this," she added, picking up a leather cap. "It covers a multitude of sins in case I've just run out..." "Mr. Las Vegas," Wayne Newton, compares his Vegas audiences with those that see him perform in Brandon, Mo. "Branson is what Las Vegas was in the early '60s. They have a very seasonal demo. It's senior citizens until school is out. Then it's families for summer. The seniors in Branson are the party animals of the world. In Vegas, they aren't in large groups, there aren't 50 or 90 of them on a tour." Newton, who has a new album coming out in February, has just wrapped another movie, "Vegas Vacation," the latest in the National Lampoon series with Chevy Chase and Beverly D'Angelo.

Commenting on the reason he chose "Sometimes When We Touch" and "When I Need You" for his new album, "If We Fall In Love Tonight," Rod Stewart said, "Usually I choose my own covers, but this time both of the songs were suggested to me by very good friends, and they were right on the money. Both have strong [elements] of R&B in their melodies and have feel-good lyrics. So they're just the kind of emotional [songs] I like to record..." Dave Koz, whose new album, "Off The Beaten Path," is a mainstay on the Top Contemporary Jazz Albums chart, said he is filming a PBS special in Hawaii in January. The concert will air in March.

Assistance in preparing this column was provided by Chris Morris, Craig Rosen, and J.R. Reynolds.

A&M Aims For Extreme Fans
With Bettencourt's Solo Set

By CARRIE BORZILLO

LOS ANGELES—Gary Cherone's appointment as Van Halen vocalist has renewed interest in the band he formed along with Michael Anthony and Alex Van Halen. So now is probably the perfect time for Extreme guitarist Nuno Bettencourt to capitalize on that interest and hit the road.

Bettencourt, who now goes by his first name only, will release his solo debut, "Schizophrenic," Feb. 11 on A&M Records.

Extreme was one of the many rock bands formed in the '80s that found the mid-'90s musical climate not so warm, even though its biggest hit, the acoustic duet "More Than Words," reached No. 1 on the Hot 100 Singles chart in 1990. That song was on the double-platinum "Pornograffitti."

The two albums that followed, "Ill Sides II Every Story" and "Waiting For The Punchline," both on A&M, didn't fare as well, and Extreme broke up.

Now, Bettencourt is back, this time as a front man, with a fresh take on rock'n'roll and an album that is a bit of a departure from the band that produced revved up, funk-inspired rock with shout-along choruses.

With distorted vocals, introspective—and at times very dark—lyrics, and not much of the guitar wizardry for which Bettencourt is well known, "Schizophrenic" has a good shot at attracting an audience that might not have been Extreme.

(Continued on page 32)
NEW YORK—For most of its existence, Redd Kross has been the archetypal "inside band" revered by critics and fellow musicians but unable to break through the ceiling of a small-but-dedicated cult audience. Even with its own short-lived label, This Way Up/Mercury, have plenty of confidence that the seventh time will be the charm, with their newest album, *Show World*, released Feb. 11.

"We're approaching our setup with the knowledge that there are very dedicated Redd Kross fans out there in tastemaker positions, and we're working hard on reaching them," says Madelyn Scarpulli, Mercury director of marketing. "It's also important to reach the hardcore fans out there, so we're working with the Rock N Roll Club and working with the fan-run Web sites as well.

"Show World" is the band's first full-length release since 1998's "Phase Shifter." (The wryly titled, limited-edition "2500 Redd Kross Fans Can't Be Wrong" was released on Sympathy for the Record Industry.)

"It was a little more time writing the songs this time around because we had the luxury of being allowed to work at our own pace," says bassist/vocalist Steven McDonald. "We started working in '95 and things just didn't work out, so we took a break, refreshed ourselves, and came back ready to go." McDonald and his brother Jeff, who also does vocals, have been the only constant in the band they co-founded in 1980, when they were 12 and 14, respectively. At its inception, the band initially spelled its name in the same manner as the charitable organization until a lawsuit forced a change—played typically thrashy punk rock in the manner of its neighbors in Los Angeles' South Bay.

"We never thought about bands like Black Flag, but we never thought it was a contradiction to want to put on a real show," says McDonald. "So when punk rock started getting a little more popular, and we were taking things a little more seriously, we went in a different direction.

That sea change was evident in records such as 1984's "Even Babes From Monsanto" and appearances in such no-budget flicks as "Deads" and "Berlin Lovedolls," both of which cemented Redd Kross' reputation for nonstop fun.

"I think they definitely fill a void, since there's really no one doing quite what they do," says Dave Swansea, manager of the Cleveland-based My Generation store. "They've got personality that appeals through the music as well as the presentation, which, in my opinion, is why they've always done well in stores I've worked in."

In order to expand upon the existing audience, Scarpulli says, Mercury will work an initial single, "Stoned," to modern rock radio beginning Jan. 15.

The promotional CD will come with a lyric sheet, which Scarpulli says is the label's way of heading off questions about the subject matter.

"If you look at the lyrics, it's clear that it's an anti-drug song," she says. "We just wanted to be sure that was evident to everyone."

Redd Kross, which is signed to This Way Up worldwide (in Europe, the label is distributed through Island) and managed by John Silva at Gold Mountain, will embark on a tour in support of *Show World* in the spring. The band is booked by Bob Lawton of Twin Towers/International Creative Management.

"This Way Up's U.K. division is really giving us a leg up in terms of promotion to retail and radio," Scarpulli notes. "They have a great array of tools, from rare B-sides to interesting packages of singles, and we'll be importing a bunch to send to supporters in those areas.

Mercury's retail campaign will utilize promotional materials designed to capitalize on the band's unique visual flair. Redd Kross will also be doing a number of in-stores, including a late-night event at Tower Records' Sunset Boulevard store in Los Angeles on the eve of the release of *Show World*.

"Hey, we end up spending a lot of our time hanging out in record stores anyway," says McDonald. "We may as well get some work done while we're there."

**REDD KROSS**

**VELVET'S SET 'LOADED' WITH NEW MUSIC**

(Continued from page 12)

neer Bill Inglot, says, "It's their most poppy album, and I think it was a conscious effort on their part, being on a new label (Qwest) and everything. It's not like they were saying, 'OK, we're going to take what we've done before and kind of rehash it into something that's a little more accessible,' or, 'We're gonna give this record company some hits.'"

"At the time, those things were probably still a little too left-of-center for most people to pick up on, but in retrospect . . . this could almost be a Big Star album or something," Milligan says.

The wealth of previously unissued material on the Rhino release was unearthed by Inglot while he was researching the Polydor Chronicles boxed set, which contained complete versions of the Velvet's *Verve, MGM, and Cotillion albums.

"It wasn't really brain surgery to find the original stuff. It's not like those things were buried under Anthrax's or something like that," says Inglot, referring to Atlantic Records founder Ahmet Ertegun. "It was just that no one had ever really looked for it. The reason this stuff was never [bootlegged] was that it was never mixed down, or if it was mixed down, the mixes didn't survive over time. 'Neglected' is the perfect word.

The newly discovered material reflects a wealth of influences beyond the band's doo-wop styles so prevalent on the original version of the album.

The "alternate album" includes a distorted, compactly edited edit of the "Heard Held High" that Inglot compares to the work of the early Who; an early version of "Sweet Jane" that shows Reed's signature character figure; a primitive "Lonesome Cowboy Bill" with an introduction that could have been lifted from the Monkees' "Last Train To Clarksville."; and a Dylan-esque acetate version of "I Found A Reason."

Milligan says the decision to present an "alternate album" on the second disc is not unnatural as he reviewed the newfound tapes.

"I was seeing that there was pretty much alternate versions of everything that was on the album," Milligan says. "Trying to find a way to make a cohesive package out of this, it occurred to me, 'Well, since there's enough for two discs, why not organize it this way, where you've got an alternate version of the album, and then bonus tracks on each disc?' It just sort of came about because the material was just there.

Yule says the alternate version comes closer to capturing the live sound of the band.

"The new version I think I like better, actually. They appeal to me more, because they feel more like the real album . . . the general feel of the raw tracks before they were compressed and compacted was much better, much more natural. Looking back on that, I wish we had gotten out, which now it will."

"Loaded (Fully Loaded Edition)" also includes "Loaded"-era versions of songs that Reed would re-record for his first three RCA solo albums, "Lou Reed," "Transformer," and "Berlin."

Inglot says, "The original Velvet versions of 'Ride Into The Sun' and 'Ocean' are brilliant, and you wonder why they didn't make it into the record. It's interesting to see those kind of baby pictures that showed up on Lou Reed albums."

"Loaded (Fully Loaded Edition)," which is priced at $19.98, will be released on a slim-line jewel box containing a booklet featuring unseen session photos and notes by Rolling Stone senior editor David Fricke, who also annotated the Chronicles boxed set.

Rhino product manager Jim Hughes says, "We've developed special packaging. It's leotardic packaging that's enhanced the original artwork by Stanislaw Zagorski."

The original artwork featured Zagorski's drawing of nude—colored pink in the U.S. version and green in a Dutch edition—belching from a New York subway station; on the Rhino package, the smoke will appear to change color and rise from the station.

Regarding the marketing of the set, Hughes says, "We're going to have a teaser poster going out to key retail and press and radio in January, which is going to be highlighting all the unreleased material. Our promotion department is going to be servicing the release to specialty-show DJs, classic rock, triple-A, alternative, and public stations as well. Press has always [loved] the Velvet Underground, and with all the historical importance of the unreleased material, we're expecting pretty heavy coverage."

Hughes adds, "We're looking at one of those rare records that appeals both to casual fans and collectors. You've got 'Sweet Jane' and 'Rock And Roll,' the hits, for the casual fans, and then you've got the unreleased material for collectors. There's really something in it for everybody."

Dave Crouch, GM of the Rhino Records retail outlet in L.A., says "Loaded (Fully Loaded Edition)" will "probably not do as well at independent stores."

"Any independent record store that has ever sold a Stooges or Velvet Underground single in their entire history is going to be a winner over this set," Crouch says. "I project it’ll be in our top 10 for two or three months."
INDIE FOLK LABELS
(Continued from page 3)

ing largely receptive to a wide range of acoustic-oriented styles, from the edgy folk of Ani DiFranco to the acoustic guitar sounds of Adrian Legg.

In addition, independent labels are finding that artists like Legg and Popa Chubby, who previously had deals with majors, are frequently opting to sign with indies. As roots music finds new fans and existing fans deepen their interest, indie label executives expect consumers to continue seeking product, allowing catalog titles to retain their longevity. "I find that consumers are getting much more educated," says Feldman. "They're tired of hype and commercial radio, and they want something more honest."

Motivated music buyers have long been the lifeblood of independents. Aided by the growth of roots music radio formats over the past two years, the boundaries between the various styles of music are blurring, and eclectic artists are gaining exposure among new types of fans. Leading titles this year from Sugar Hill artists who pioneered the acoustic roots music trend include "Red On Blonde" from Tim O'Brien, "Yonder" from Peter Rowan and Jerry Douglas, and "Glamour & Grits" from Sam Bush.

Sugar Hill staple singer-songwriter Robert Earl Keen and pop-rocker Marti Jones—whose latest album, "My Long-Haired Life," was produced by husband Don Dixon—are also doing well for the label, Poss says. "It's interesting that at the time when the customer base is growing, the one obvious place for them to go is the most difficult place for them to find a lot of the music. As the larger chains reduce their catalog inventories for a lot of specialty music, there's no question that people will find a way to get it, and we will find ways to reach the people," Poss says.

He adds that some retail chains remain viable for folk- and bluegrass-oriented music. The Disc Jockey and Wal-Mart chains ran bluegrass promotions last year (Billboard, Aug. 31, 1996, and Nov. 2, 1996, respectively), while others have been open to working with the label at events, he says. But he stresses that sales growth at the chain level can no longer be the only goal for roots-oriented indies.

Independent retailers, however, remain a staple for selling product from acoustic-based singer-songwriters and instrumentalists. Independent retailer John "Cody" Sokoloski, owner of Champlain, Ill.-based Periscope Records, says his customers respond to "genuine music that sounds like it's made by real people, not machines. From what we sell, people respond to the music and want to make free choices based on the music, not a tie-in with an Arnold Schwarzenegger..."
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MARKET EXPANDS FOR INDIE FOLK LABELS
(Continued from preceding page)

movie." Singer/songwriter Greg Brown has long been the cornerstone of Red House's 100-title roster. And Feldman says that the label is now getting opportunities to work with artists who would have previously gravitated toward the majors.

"A lot of artists are finding dissatisfaction with large, multinational labels," Feldman says. "They want the intimacy and support of a label like ours. We try not to put out more than 12-15 records a year."

1997 releases for the label include albums from English guitar masters Legg and Martin Simpson. Red House is now large enough to afford to run four-color ads and hire independent promoters, but it's not just large labels that are benefitting from nurturing niche artists and their audiences.

S m a l l e r labels, such as 1-800-Prime-CD, have taken a cue from their larger brethren and are finding ways to boost nonretail sales. A direct-mail piece to 1,500 music buyers yielded 100 orders for Prime-CD product in the first week. "If we can turn that into 2,000, the profit is close to $20,000 for us," says David Seitz, Prime-CD founder and president. "If we can do that, it really affects what we can do for an artist."

The label has had its greatest success with rock/bluesman Chubby, whose latest album, "Hit the High Hard One," has shipped 12,000 copies since its fall release. Other Prime-CD artists breaking out nationally are New York-based folk country-rocker the Chinese Brothers and Irish singer/songwriter/bandleader Susan McKown.

LABEL SAMPLERS
Prime-CD also has had success with a label sampler, an idea "totally stolen from Bob Feldman at Red House," Seitz says. In lieu of co-op advertising, the label has found it to be more cost-effective to produce and give away samplers with a purchase either at a store or through mail order.

Red House issued its "House On Fire" sampler in August 1996 and is working on the second volume. "I wish I did it earlier," Feldman says. "The music is good, and we felt confident in taking the money, which is more than we wanted to spend on advertising, and putting it into a disc that people are going to take home and play a lot."

Likewise, Evanston, Ill.-based Waterbug Records, which drew national acclaim as the early label of Dar Williams, says samplers pay off. "It was the smartest thing we've done so far. It's in the black as a project, and the phone's been ringing with people looking to order CDs," says singer/songwriter Andrew Calhoun, who is the founder and president of Waterbug.

Waterbug artists, who chipped in to make the sampler, sell the disc at shows for $5, and the label offers a free copy with every mail order.

Samplers have proved to be an effective tool for small labels that Seitz, who is chairman of the National Assn. of Independent Record Distributors and Manufacturers' folk/bluegrass special-interest group, is trying to organize an inter-label sampler.

Seitz says he is trying to generate cooperation between labels in finding ways to boost nonretail sales. A direct-mail piece to 1,500 music buyers yielded 100 orders for Prime-CD product in the first week. "If we can turn that into 2,000, the profit is close to $20,000 for us," says David Seitz, Prime-CD founder and president. "If we can do that, it really affects what we can do for an artist."

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The artist-oriented nature of independent labels is especially evident with the growth of artist-run labels (Billboard, Nov. 4, 1996), but companies like Nashville-based Compass and San Rafael, Calif.-based Acoustic Disc also have the advantage of knowing their audience. These imprints underscore the importance of label identity.

Craig Miller, co-founder and head of business affairs at legendary mandolinist David Grisman's label Acoustic Disc, explains the prevailing attitude.

"It's important for us to choose projects that we feel will be special. We're not fighting the idea of selling ice to Eskimos. Even if you have no idea what a title is, we know you're going to love it, and as a result, we have a core group of radio and press people who virtually love everything we put out," Miller says.

Garry West, co-founder of Compass with noted banjoist Alison Brown, with whom West plays, echoes the spirit that is driving the genre in general. "We try to do music that matters, and we're looking for things that last and have artistic integrity. And we want it to come from someone who knows where they're going with their career and has the fire in their gut to make it work with us as a team."
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**REGIONAL HEATSEEKERS**

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**THE REGIONAL ROUND UP**

- **PACIFIC**
  1. The Cardigans - "First Band On The Moon"
  2. Biz Markie - "Rapture"
  3. Kevin Sharp - "Measure Of A Man"
  4. Merle Rindermann - "The Garden"

- **SOUTHEAST**
  5. Enrique Iglesias - "Euphoria"

- **MIDWEST**
  6. Ray Conniff - "Serenade"

- **SOUTHWEST**
  7. Kevin Sharp - "I Stole This Record"

- **SOUTHEAST**
  8. Kevin Sharp - "Measure Of A Man"

**Round 10 Top Lists of Best-selling Titles by new and developing artists.**

1. Kevin Sharp - "I Stole This Record"
2. Ray Conniff - "Serenade"
3. Kevin Sharp - "Measure Of A Man"
4. Merle Rindermann - "The Garden"
5. Enrique Iglesias - "Euphoria"
6. Ray Conniff - "Serenade"

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**THE WHOLE TRUTH**

- **ADRENALINE**
  1. Ka
  2. Brian H"A.Man"
  3. Brian H"A.Man"
  4. Brian H"A.Man"

**THE MESSAGE**

- **MORE THAN YOU KNOW**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"
  3. Brian H"A.Man"

**EVERYTHING SUCKS**

- **HEAVENLY PLACE**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**THE message**

- **A DISTANT CALL**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**WHAT I LIVE TO DO**

- **IRRESISTIBLE BLISS**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**WIREBLOOD**

- **GOLDfinger**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**PRE-MILLENNIUM TERROR**

- **LIFE IN GENERAL**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**NO GREATER SACRIFICE**

- **THE FIRST NOEL**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**BEAUTY FOR ASHES**

- **MY HEART**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

**THERS FIRE**

- **PAULA COLE**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"

- **THE WHOLE TRUTH**
  1. Brian H"A.Man"
  2. Brian H"A.Man"
White's Multifaceted 'Spirit'  
Hip-Bop/Silva Screen Eyes Many Formats

BY J.R. REYNOLDS

LOS ANGELES—Executives at Hip-Bop/Silva Screen hope that "Renderers Of Spirit," drummer Lenny White's sophomore set for the label, strikes a chord with consumers who favor ecclectic-themed albums. The artist, meanwhile, simply hopes that the set will find a home among listeners who like quality music.

"Renderers Of Spirit," scheduled for domestic release Feb. 18, features sparkling tracks that span styles ranging from soul jazz fusion to easy-listening R&B. Although such diversity is a boon for broad-minded consumers, it often poses difficulties for marketing departments.

Hip-Bop/Silva Screen president (international) Yusuf Gandhi says, "The most challenging thing about working a Lenny White album is determining which radio format to target in America. Programmers tend to want to pigeonhole you into one format, and sometimes that makes things tough, marketing-wise. Internationally, there are fewer constraints, and stations are more willing to program diversity."

"Renderers Of Spirit" will be released in Europe Feb. 11 and a week later in Australia and the Far East, except in Japan, where it was released Dec. 21, 1996.

The 11-track collection contains original compositions by White and interpretive covers of various classics, such as Bart Bacharach and Hal David's "Walk On By" and Christophe Cross' "Sailing." The common thread that binds each tune is White's musically diverse influences, which include contemporary jazz—from his years of work with such icons as Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Herbie Hancock—and more traditional styles from such straight-ahead talents as Freddie Hubbard and Joe Henderson.

Guest artists featured on "Renderers Of Spirit" reflect White's status in the business and include Stanley Clarke, Michael Brecker, George Duke, Geri Allen, and Jackson Brown. He describes them all as close friends, which this assists him in the creative process.

"As an artist, I have to keep pushing the envelope, instead of remaining in a box that critic tends to put musicians in," says White of his diverse musical approach. "I feed off of playing a lot of different kinds of music, and there's so many [intimate] kinds of things that you can do when you're recording with friends and have the kind of [digital] technology that you have today."

In an effort to explain his resistance to musical conformity, White issues the following poetic message in his album's liner notes:

"With ulterior motive, we ask why? Constantly taken to new heights, some ride in awe, while others watch with envy. Inspiration bears a full palate, and is not wasted on one flavor, but again we question why, and fall short of the uplifting, why not? To be in tune brings on the unexplained, when in tune we define ecstasy, bliss, understanding. What kind of music? Inspirational, inspired by whatever...Diversity rules. Explanation, simple. We are Renderers of Spirit."

"When you're recording in the studio, you're documenting where you are in your career," says White. "And when you're in touch with your creative spirit, you have a better chance of drawing in your audience, so I record whatever kind of music I'm inspired by at the time to help capture that spirit, instead of what somebody thinks I ought to be playing."

No single will be serviced from the project. However, a three-track sampler that is scheduled to feature "Wheee! What A Dream," "Walk On By," and "Pick Pocket" will be serviced to approximately 600 jazz/AC promoted stations and stations that feature "quiet storm" shows.

The label hopes it can send White on a promotional tour that will include retail visits, beginning in March. "Because he's on the road a lot, it's hard to have him for those kinds of things, but we're hoping to do a little of it for this album," says Gandhi. "The executive says that more promotional visits would have helped sales of "Present Tense.""White's 1995 debut Hip-Bop set, which sold 17,000 units, according to SoundScan.

"No domestic touring schedule has been announced for White, who has no management or booking agent. However, Hip-Bop's Japan distributor, Onagotaki, is testing the market there for an upcoming tour.

Gang Stops By. MCA exec flank debut artist Rhasaan Patterson, who issued a dynamic showcase performance at the Los Angeles Pacific Design Center in December. Pictured, from left, are MCA black music president Ken Wilson, MCA urban promotion VP Stanley Winans, MCA Music Entertainment Group president Zack Horowitz, MCA black music senior director Madeline Randolph, Patterson, MCA black music marketing and public relations VP Ashley Fox, MCA marketing and sales senior VP Jayne Simon, MCA executive VP Abbey Konowitch, and Uni Distribution executive VP/GM Jim Urie.

On Tap In '97: More Groundbreaking Soul, Tony Toni Toné, Jam & Lewis, En Vogue

PREDICCTIONS: Although a cloud hangs over the music industry as retail continues to weather a deep sales trough, we can at least expect sunnier days musically from the R&B sector this year.

In 1996, radio played an increasing number of songs by R&B acts whose albums feature an array of soul. And while most singles from these artists admittedly did not depart radically from the mainstream R&B sound heard on ebony frequencies, they served as special forces of "creative loss leaders"—enticing consumers to purchase albums rich with rhythm alternatives.

And as consumers' tastes for such richly textured music grew, so should the opportunities for an increasing number of artists to bare their creative teeth.

"Hip-Hop/R&B artist producers have an advantage in their ability to serve as the primary writers and producers of their own music," says Jim Konow, MCA Urban's VP of promotion. "The more the artist is involved in the creative process, the more likely they are to make it with their music."

Examples of sets that featured trendsetting music in '96 include "Grove Theory," "Maxwell's Urban Hang Suite," and "Solo." While D'Angelo's longplayer "Brown Sugar" saturated the R&B market with its soulful singles, perhaps the most notable album that's helping to steer a more creative hip-hop course is "The Score" by the Fugees.

Early creative woodshedding credit on the hip-hop side goes to Arista Development's 1992 album "3 Years, 5 Months & 2 Days In The Life Of..." and Digable Planet's "Reachin' (A New Refutation Of That End And Space)," which was released a year later. Those critically acclaimed albums helped plant seeds in the minds of general consumers regarding acceptance of hip-hop's most organic musical form.

It should also be noted that the Fugees' 1994 debut, "Blunted On Reality," also served as an excellent grass-roots setup for their follow-up commercial success. Credit to A&R/rase House/Columbia execs for sticking in there during the act's developmental stage.

Back on the R&B side, look for Tony Toni Toné to help carry the creative torch to consumers to perhaps an equal degree as the Mercury trio's fourth album, "House Of Music," begins picking up steam in the new year.

Talk about artist development: "Who7?", the trio's 1988 debut, was certified gold; its sophomore follow-up, 1990's "Revival," scored platinum status; and its third set, 1993's "Sons Of Soul," went double-platinum.

In the process, the act has had 11 top 10 hits on the Hot R&B Singles chart, including "Little Walter," "The Blues," "Feels Good," "It Never Rains (In Southern California)," and "Whatever You Want," which all reached No. 1.

PRODUCERS TO WATCH: Although Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis were quieter on the charts in 1996 than in recent years, expect some chart-topping fireworks from this prolific production duo. Armed with their new Universal joint-venture deal and label-approved production "license to kill" (Billboard, Dec. 7, 1996), the talented tandem should more than prove their worth during the next 12 months.

Of course, Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds should continue his winning ways, especially since he's become a major pop player. But it's the producer's journeymen protégé, Keith Andes, who bears watching as the year develops. Managed by Face, in association with Meeza Don Entertainment's wunder-tinder Roget Romain and Max Gousse, Andes has used his soundboard ears and lyrical pen strokes to create such hits as AY Yet's "Last Night" and Johnny Gill's "Let's Get The Mood Right." He's involved in production work on upcoming albums for After 7, En Vogue, and Michael Speaks.

Grove Theory artist/producer Bryce Wilson is another rising star whose magnitude is increasing by the moment. In addition to orchestrating the creative success of Grove Theory's self-titled debut in '96, he also collaborated with Babyface to deliver Tony Braxton's "You're Makin' Me High." The song reached No. 1 on the Hot 100 Singles and Hot R&B Singles charts last year.

With that kind of juice, it's no wonder he's being courted for an associated label deal of one kind or another by the majors. In the meantime, he's continuing to chug away at production duties for upcoming projects by a diverse group of acts, such as En Vogue (Continued on page 20)
Goodfellaz Reign With The Queen. Avatar/PolyGram's Goodfellaz hang with Motown rapper Queen Latifah during a recent industry event. The trio's current single is "Sugar Honey Icem Tea." Pictured, from left, are band members Angel Vasquez, Latifah, and band members DeOlu/e Avant Jr. and Ray Vencier.

R&B

THE RHYTHM & THE BLUES

(Continued from page 18)

there's that name again," Mary J. Blige, Des'ree, and Zhané. While we're on the subject of diversity, producer Doug Rasheed has seemingly been involved creatively with everything and everyone—from session work on Sting's "This Cowboy Song" remix (on bass, but he can also play guitar and keyboard) to producing 2Pac's "Only God Can Judge." Rasheed's most commercially celebrated production work came in 1995 with Coolio's Grammy-winning "Gangsta's Paradise," which sold 16 million copies as the theme song to the film " Dangerous Minda;" the track was also re-arranged for vocalist L.V.'s debut solo set. Other projects that Rasheed worked on include remixing Brandy's "Sittin' Up In My Room" and co-producing Montell Jordan's "Something 4 Da Honeyz," which was released in 1995. Look for the boardman's production on the Bee Gees' upcoming cover of the classic "Still Waters Run Deep." Since En Vogue has already been mentioned twice here, and good things are said to come in threes, it must be noted that the act's current hit, "Don't Let Go," from the "Set It Off" soundtrack, was produced by Organized Noise. Nine of the songs worked on by the creatively fertile producer collective reached R&B Singles. Pop and R&B stations are hawking "Don't Let Go" to death, and rightly so: The single features delicious harmonies, a well-defined melody, and an incredibly recognizable hook. It's just the sort of song to begin creating a buzz for the quartet's upcoming West Coast album, due later this year.

With five No. 1 hits to its credit, and with the firepower producers who are being tapped for its album, including Denzil Foster and Thomas McElroy (plus the marketing and promotion muscle undoubtedly slated by the label), En Vogue could very well join New Edition in the comeback kids club, since the former hasn't recorded a project together since 1998.
Billboard
JANUARY 11, 1997

Hot Rap Singles

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Wu-Tang Clan Shows How To Do It Right

A TAT 1:30 in the morning on Dec. 20, the rappers of the three-dimensional Wu-Tang Clan was the last act on a hill at the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark, N.J.

It had been a typically long evening of live hip-hop, and the crowd of hard-core brothers and stylish sistas was growing restless. But when DJ Clark stepped up to the mike and asked, "Are y'all ready for the Wu-Tang Clan?" Jason and his band-room stool stood erect. Those mingling in the hallways, smiling and chatting, ran inside to resound.

"It's a new Wu order, '97's ours," shouted the pricey man, Free, before RZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Ghostface Killah, Method Man, and assorted loose parts of da Clan took the stage and launched into many of their greatest hits. The display, which had the audience gaping, head-nodding, and reciting rhymes, recalled strong rap shows of yester-year, and the release of the group's as-yet-unreleased sofa set may very well prove Free right.

The forthcoming set, a double album, according to Wu-Tang's lead sound craftsman, RZA, is one of the most eagerly-awaited collections this season. It will comprise the 1.5-hour live-selling "Enter The Wu-Tang:36 Chambers" (Loud/RCA,1993) and the several successful solo sets it has spawned: Method Man's "Tical" (Def Jam, 1.1 million units), Ol' Dirty Bastard's "Return To The 36 Chambers: The Dirty Version (Elektra, 650,000 units), Ghostface Killah's "Ironman" (Razor Sharp/Epic, 500,000 units), and Genius" Liquid Swords" (Geffen, 200,000 units).

The new long-player was supposed to emerge Feb. 14 with the title "Valentine's Day Massacre," but it will drop later, probably in March, with a new name, according to executives at Loud. In the four years since it made its debut with peaked marksmen, slightly irregular soundscapes wrapping emotionally charged, hard-edged reality rhymes (everything from the good, bad, and ugly to the witty and crazy), Wu-Tang Clan has developed into a consistent hip-hop conglomerate by ignoring established rules of commerce. The secret of its success is its ability to expand on what has come before while staying in touch with the audience that first embraced the group's style.

Speaking about the new album, RZA says, "About half of it is gonna be classic Wu shit. The other half is gonna be stuff you could party to I always love the vocals up front because I think they're more important. But this time I gonna just put the vocals up more front on certain songs so people can dance.

Soul Sisters. After taping a segment of the syndicated show "It's Showtime At The Apollo," the harmonious trio SWV posed with RCA senior VP of black music Kevin Evans, who says work on the group's third album is set to begin this month. Shown, from left, are Lelee, Tamara, and Lelee.

New release listings updated weekly

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Three Divas Perpetuate Health Of Dance Music

DIVAS IN THE HOUSE: Given the high volume of cold tablets and cough medicine consumed backstage at New York’s Lunt-Fontanne Theatre on Dec. 11, it might have been more appropriate for WKTY New York to host its landmark “Three Divas On Broadway” show at St. Luke’s Roosevelt Hospital.

“I feel like hell,” Chaka Khan said as she climbed the narrow, creaking backstage steps to her dressing room early that afternoon. “But you know, darling, all that matters is looking fierce and hitting the high notes once you step onstage—what proved to be a richly diverse and satisfying mini-fest.

WKTY air personality and evening host RuPaul—who was also battling the flu—warmed up the room with a scant Bob Mackie gown (that looked like it was lifted right out of Cher’s closet) and his springy new Rhino single, “A Little Bit Of Love.” What a pleasure it was to see him dig into substantial material that showed off his fine baritone voice. He has long deserved better than the novelty trappings of his past recordings.

The main event was a study in contrasts. Khan, who had just performed an earthy set that slotted new jams like “Never Miss The Water” next to classics like “Ain’t Nobody.” She kept the vibe raw and funky at all times, breaking into air guitar solos atop whinny-blowing jazzy heat into her readings of “My Funny Valentine” and “Sweet Thing.”

Estefan swung to the polar opposite of Khan, craftily condensing her flashy two-hour stage show into a 30-minute whirlwind that managed to hit every high point of her long and sterling career. A lesser talent would have been swallowed whole by the mammoth backing band, which seemed to cover every inch of the stage, but Estefan rode above it all with astonishing ease—playfully tweaking the crowd and breathlessly jiggling her lean and muscular body. Her hushed, intimate rendition of the single “I’m Not Giving You Up” was a highlight that had us wishing more people would focus on the Afro-Cuban arrangements that make her current album, “Dancing,” so unique.

Sparkle flew during the brief moments when the trio appeared onstage together. They tiptoed through “I’m Every Woman” and “Turn The Beat Around” with visibly nervous energy and convincingly sisterly support. Particularly striking was the palpable chemistry between Khan and Estefan, whose vocal trade-offs hinted that a studio reunion at a later date might be a dance music event to remember.

Ironically, the evening’s biggest jolt of excitement was not provided by one of the divas. It came via the artist formally known as Prince, who unexpectedly joined the trio midway through “Turn The Beat Around.” He stood in front of his guitar and cranked out a few fluid funk licks. His shy smile at the crowd’s noisy reception was as charming as the kneading bow of respect he offered Estefan, Summer, and Khan.

With the show successfully completed and the divas resuming their paths, word is running rampant that WKTY’s honchos are plotting a sequel for the spring. Among the names being bandied about is Diana Ross. It’s a nifty idea, though we’re not sure that Khan is ready to relinquish her slot just yet.

“I think this would make for an excellent tour,” she says, her voice spiked with adrenaline. “As a rule, I’d like to do shows where there’s a lot of chicks on the bill. More times than not, it leads to some sort of drama—and it’s usually started by the men surrounding the chicks, if ya know what I mean. But this feels like something bigger. It feels like an event... like something special that people are going to talk about for a long time to come.”

Once that long-desired vacation is behind her, Khan will resume promoting “Epiphany,” her recently issued greatest-hits collection on Reprise. From there, she’ll put the finishing touches to her first album of all-new material in three years. “It’s going to blow people out,” she says with a sly grin. “Revisiting the old jams has been fun, but it gets old after a while. I’m just hitting my stride as an artist.”

Also plotting a new phase in her career is Summer, who is enjoying a budding pop hit with “Whenever There Is Love,” a duet with Bruce Roberts from the Universal soundtrack to “Daylight.” While mulling over offers to cut a new album, she’s actively pursuing her dream of returning to the theater by writing a musical with pop tunesmith Michael Omartian and several others. She’s tight-lipped about the piece, beyond revealing that she will tackle its leading role and that it will likely go into workshop production with the Tennessee Repertory Company this spring.

“It’s a little nerve-racking,” she says, settling back into her dressing room. “The hard part is being accepted and respected for doing more than what the public has come to expect from you. I love doing the dance stuff, and I always will. But I have to do more than that. I have to spread my wings and see how far I can fly.”

Estefan agrees that diversity has been the key to remaining interested in making music. “I would lose my mind if I all made was the same record over and over again,” she says, noting that this summer will bring her first full-cut club collection on Epic. The set will feature the house-remixed singles that brought her Billboard’s No. 1 dance artist of the year, along with several new gems. “This has always been my base—I still love to go dancing when I can find the time. It’s kinda cool to walk into a club and hear one of your own songs among all of the great stuff that’s out there.”

Taking Requests. Illlown/Motown duo Zhanes is hard at work in a Los Angeles studio, cutting tracks for its forthcoming album in Los Angeles. The still-unitled collection will be previewed in late January with “Request” and “Hustler” produced by Naughty By Nature’s Kay Gee. House mixes by Maurice Joshua have been completed and should begin circulating on 12-inch test pressings shortly. Pictured, from left, are Kay Gee with Zhanes’ Jean Norris and Renee Neuville.

On The Road. Arista act No Mercy stopped by WBBM (B-96) Chicago recently as part of its promotional tour in support of “Please Don’t Go,” the follow-up to the gold-selling smash “Where Do You Go.” The trio performed both songs a capella on the air. Pictured, from left, are Erika Bradley, music director, WBBM; Marty Cintron, No Mercy; Denise Lutz, promotion manager; Arista; Gabriel Hernandez, No Mercy; and Ariel Hernandez, No Mercy.

From left: Gloria Estefan, Chaka Khan, and Donna Summer.

and I will, even if it kills me.”

As Khan sipped tea and fanta-
sized about a vacation in London, fellow diva Donna Summer was tuckered a few feet away in her tiny quarters, wrestling with the fact that lingering flu symptoms and doctor’s orders to rest her vocal cords would keep her from performing a full set that night. “I guess three years of constant touring have finally caught up with me,” she said, solemnly fingering the petals of a rose from a bouquet on her dressing-room table. “But it feels great to still be wanted and appreciated after all of these years.”

Only Gloria Estefan, the third diva on the evening’s bill, was feeling it—save for the exhaustion that comes with hitting the promotional ground running. On her first day back in the States after several months on tour in Europe, she found herself between two television crews, dueling over which would get her attention first. “It’s all in a day’s work,” she said with a good-natured sigh as she freshened her lipstick before facing the camera.

“I’ve been so hectic this year, and the promotion for this has really been at this for so long, I’m confident that it’ll come together just fine.”

And it did. In fact, the rabidly appreciative audience saw nary a sign of physical ailment once the curtain rose on a stellar, dance-charged show that drew its conceptual inspiration from the opera world’s famed 3 Tenors. The absence of a Summer set was certainly missed, though it hardly hurt the evening’s overall vibe.

GROOVELINE: The furor surrounding “Evita” is about to spread to clubland, now that Warner Bros. is finally unleashing the much-anticipated Pablo Flores/Javier Garza remixes of Madonna’s “Don’t Cry For Me Argentina.” The production team wisely honored the stately pop-orchestral style of the original recording, while wrapping the singer’s freshly minted vocal in fluttering flamenco guitar, à la No Mercy’s “Where Do You Go.” The percussion has a festive live feel, though it may be a tad loud for those NBGers who save their for the under-ground. Perhaps a harder set of remixes is in order.

Maverick continues to throw its support behind Me’Shell Ndegécello’s brilliant yet woefully under-rated “Peace Beyond Passion” project, plucking the seductive “Stay” as its next single. Once again, clubland is called upon to pave the path for others to follow, as the label issues a two-pack of remixes that run the gamut of rhythmic styles. Peter Daou teams with Cevin Fish for a rippling post-production mix that drips with seductive, jazz-kissed keyboards and a muscular house

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DANCE TRAX (Continued from preceding page)

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NASHVILLE—Many country artists began singing in church, and there was a time when nearly every country album included a spiritual song. On "Peace In The Valley: A Country Music Journey Through Gospel," Alan Jackson, Lee Roy Parnell, Brooks & Dunn, Pam Tillis, and other Arista/Nashville acts celebrate the country/gospel connection with a collection of personally chosen tunes that include gospel favorites, hymnody, and little-known hymns.

The project, slated for release Feb. 23, opens with Diamond Joe's version of "Walkin' In Jerusalem," a song the group has been performing since its days at Opryland as the Tennessee River Boys. Tillis contributes "Morning Has Broken," a traditional Welsh hymn first made popular by Cat Stevens.

"It's a real personal project," says Travis. "I grew up hearing hymns. I have gotten very involved in that side of music." Brooks & Dunn also made a personal connection when they contributed "Peace In The Valley." Their family includes a music minister, and they have adopted old hymns like "Oh Sacred Head, Now Wounded." They have been more than willing to expose these to new audiences, and Parnell is helping with that,ší

A Friend We Have In Jesus," Brooks & Dunn's "I Ain't Singing That Song Anymore," and Michael Bruce's "People Get Ready." Parnell's "John The Revelator," and Rodney Foster's "Oh Sacred Head, Now Wounded.

What differentiates "Peace In The Valley" from other compilations is that many of the songs, such as "John The Revelator," "Oh Sacred Head," are departures from the gospel standards usually found on tribute albums. "This is the one that was special to them," says Arista/Nashville president Tim DuBois.

Executive producer Jim Schoenell, VP

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Compilation from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected, compiled, and provided by Billboard SoundScan.
HAPPY NEW YEAR: During the holiday period, seasonal songs and year-end programming usually consume spots that would otherwise be earmarked for mainstream country music. And Billboard’s Hot Country Singles & Tracks reflects this shift, with only 21 titles showing airplay gains and no increases within the top 25. Despite the big winter chill on the radio chart, Kevin Sharp’s country cover of the Tony Rich Project’s “Nobody Knows” rises 2-1. Colter Muse’s “I’ll Be There” rises 4-3. And the third week of December marks the banner week for BMI’s No. 2 on the Hot 100 in the March 23, 1996, issue for Rich and is Sharp’s debut single.

Meanwhile on Top Country Albums, those who gave the music ofapper

owed, early with Christmas week sales falling sharply from the previous week. However, Sharp’s “Measure Of A Man” holds even from the prior week, at $2,000 units (17-16). It remains No. 1 on Hotseekers for a third week (sales rised 110-104 on The Billboard 200).

DO NOT ADJUST YOUR SET: It isn’t often that a 40-year-old title shows up on Hot Country Tracks, and the perennial holiday favorite “Jingle Bell Rock,” by Bobby Helms, makes an encore performance on that chart. Re-entering at No. 73 during our unpublished week, Helms’ song rises to No. 60, with airplay at 105 of our 162 monitored stations. The track resurfaced this year on the TV special for Arnold Schwarzenegger’s “Jingle All The Way” and was further boosted on the country list by airplay on ABC Radio Networks’ “Christmas In America With Bob Kingsley.”

Originally issued in 1957, Helms’ version of “Jingle Bell Rock” peaked at No. 6 and No. 4 on the Hot 100 in 1957’s Christmas season, and all rights were renewed and not released in and out of that chart periodically in subsequent years, it appeared just once on the country list, in the Dec. 23, 1957, Billboard. Earlier that year, Helms dominated the Billboard’s Hot 100 chart for 14 weeks, which collected a total of 52 country chart weeks. Two months before Christmas that year, Helms entered the country list with “My Special Angel,” which peaked at No. 1 on Dec. 9, 1957, and remained there for four consecutive weeks.

ROLL WITH IT, BABY: Based on vigorous play over the holiday period, John Curb, promotion VP at Curb Records, says his team will continue soliciting airplay for the rest of December’s “Unchained Melody” (no. 57-57 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks). “We have no choice but to continue our efforts at this point, since we have several key markets spinning in heavy rotation,” Curb says. The track was initially available only as part of a premium package at Target stores, but was serviced to radio Dec. 17 (Country Corner, Billboard, Dec. 21, 1996).

Curb says a fourth single from Rimes’ debut set, “Bliss,” has been tentatively scheduled for release, but may be delayed depending upon airplay activity for “Unchained Melody.”

SO YOU’LL KNOW: Collin Raye’s “What If Jesus Comes Back Like That,” is allowed on three Hot Country Singles & Tracks. “A Change In Me” debuts 11-12, despite a modest decrease in spins. As is typical with post-holiday airplay, many of the releases on that chart will post gains in the upcoming week, and Jack Lamerie, senior promotion VP at Epic in Nashville, says he’s confident the 99.5% new rules will remain in effect because the song racked up 11 weeks of unsolicited album play before being issued as a single.

ARISTA EMBARKS ON GYM JOURNEY (Continued from page 26)

spread appeal to both audiences. Scherer says country fans will enjoy the album. “It’s a combination of hearing their favorite country artists singing their favorite gospel songs, he says, and it really spans a large variety of music styles.”

Christian music fans are also likely to enjoy the album, which was recorded before they were发展机遇, the BMI says. Sparrow released “Amazing Grace: A Country Salute To Gospel,” which has sold more than 180,000 units, according to Billboard. “We thought that Arista/Nashville had the idea to do a country gospel album long before the Sparrow project was released but that we were all in it at the same time," says he, before adding, "it bodes well for the Arista set. “To see that succeed and do well—that’s exciting.”

Bob Elder, senior buyer for the 185-outlet Family Bookstore chain based in Grand Rapids, Mich., says that Christian music is becoming increasingly popular and that last year it was the fourth best-selling genre for Family Bookstore. Elder says that Arista/Nashville had the idea to do a country gospel album long before the Sparrow project was released but that they were all in it at the same time. The BMI says it bodes well for the Arista set. “To see that succeed and do well—that’s exciting.”

TRAVIS TRITT RETURNS TO ROOTS (Continued from page 26)

the connection. When you get into arena with 8,000-10,000 people, it’s a lot of fun, but there’s no one-on-one connection.

Falcon admits that club owners were surprised at the way the dates were approached. “I first contacted our agent, William Moore. We had met three months ago and gave them the idea,” he says. “Then they had all these offers from clubs for huge rates and high ticket prices, and I said, ‘Guys, you’ve missed the point. We want to go back and keep the ticket prices low and not charge the club whatever arm and a leg for this.’ They looked at me and said, ‘We’ve never had anybody ask us to do that.”

Falcon says, “People couldn’t believe we were going out and doing this at our own expense. It was [difficult] convincing people that we were on the level. The rest of it—going out and doing it, showing up and playing—was the easiest part.”

But he and DuBois had wanted to do this as a couple of people have approached us about wanting to do it.”

The project looks to have wide-

spread appeal to both audiences. Scherer says country fans will enjoy the album. “It’s a combination of hearing their favorite country artists singing their favorite gospel songs, he says, and it really spans a large variety of music styles.”

Scherrer says that the marketing plan is still in the works but that it will include a definite presence at main-
label's greatest notoriety lately has come from pop stars Enrique Iglesias, Marco Antonio Solís, and the recently departed Cristian. The L.A. imprint has dominated the U.S. Latino radio scene for the past two years but has yet to replicate those achievements at retail. Company president Guillermo Santiso has wisely tried to expand the label from its regional Mexican base into the tropical, rock, Tejano, and dance markets. It is too early to judge Fonovisa's prowess in rock and dance, where it has a Licensing deal with Spanish dance label Blanco y Negro, but its high-profile entrée into the tropical market via El Gran Combo and Willy Colón has yet to pan out. The label has sold potential in the Tejano field, led by Letty Guay, Annette Y Axton, and Esmé Talamanca.

For the third straight year, the L.A. indie will likely continue to pound radio to provide a strong market profile for selected acts, as it did last year for Iglesias. This year, check out Joe Luciano's summarized "El Baile De La Botella" for similar success. Santiso has a knack for snipping out musical trends (he rolled with boleros several years back), so expect "The Bottle Dance" to score at retail, too. Look for another massive multimedia push for the Iglesias album, due in late January.

Close ties to Univision, which is partly owned by Mexican TV station Televisa, ensure optimum TV exposure for rising stars Ana Bárbara, Banda Maguey, and Ezequiel Peña. The label needs to greatly reduce its plotters of releases.

**PolyGram Latin: The Miami-based label helped establish Grupo Limita as the hottest regional Mexican act in 1996. It also remained packed in ninth place at the end of the year, mainly because Carlos Vives disappeared. Young president star Pedro Fernández is the other only act on the label to make a dent in radio and retail charts in 1996. Acts from the acquired Rodven label have yet to best chart presence, except for in various-artist packages. The appointment of PolyGram President Marcos Maynard as head of PolyGram Latino in the middle of the year prompted staff defections and put the label into an unproductive holding pattern.

With Maynard coming in, PolyGram is expected to continue its personnel changes while adopting a more aggressive marketing stance. Maynard is a proven winner, as exemplified by his stints at Sony Mexico and PolyGram Brasil. But unlike PolyGram Brasil, PolyGram Latino does not have a fat catalog from which to kick-start Maynard's drive for grooming new talent. In addition, Maynard needs to figure out how to revive the Rodven acts.

**Sony Discos: An erasable pow-wow experience of the U.S. Latino market, Sony Discos has fallen on hard times by failing to complement its stable of veteran hit-makers Julio Iglesias, Ricky Martin, Gilberto Santa Rosa, La Mafia, Vicente Fernández, Jerry Rivera, Ana Gabriel) with new artists. Steps were taken to redress the situation in 1996, with Colombian singer/songwriter Shakira and urban salsa act DLG, but the label still fell from fourth to sixth in the year-end sales chart. Sony closed spinoff label SDI and tucked to rest structures to its upper-level management by hiring Oscar Llordo, who replaced former VP/GM George Zamora. The label enjoyed a robust holiday season with Iglesias' "Tango," a joint-venture album with Columbia, which debuted at No. 1 on The Billboard Latino 50. Other acts showing initial bursts at retail were Grupo Manía and Santa Rosa.

After years of churning out novelty acts and gimmicky dance tunes, Llordo got his first green-light chance to show that he can develop enduring artists who can make long-term contributions to the label. Fortunately, Zamora did not leave the cupboard bare. Before he left Sony, he signed Grupo Manía and secured a distribution deal with Sir George Records, home of DLG. But until Llordo can nurture acts of his own, such as recent regional Mexican signee Los Tiranos Del Norte, he will be forced to rely on the still-strong tropical roster and from other countries, particularly Mexico, where Alejandro Fernández and Fey are popular.

**WEA Latina: Four star acts—Luiz Miguel, Mansa, Olga Tañón, and Laura Esquivel—have driven sales for this small label in the past few years.
### Jazz

**by Jim Macnie**

**FROM BRITAIN WITH LOVE:** It's been 10 years since the ensemble known as Azimuth has released a disc, so the portly titled "How It Was Then... Never Again" should please longtime fans of the band. EPCM places it in the racks Jan. 28. Together since 1977, Azimuth is proud of its novel makeup: Pianist John Taylor, vocalist Norma Winstone, and trumpeter Kenny Wheeler make sparse yet gorgeous art music.

The title track actually amends their usual sound a bit: It's a boldfaced blues tune. The release of the disc is scheduled to coincide with a weeklong stint at New York's Blue Note club Feb. 25-Mar. 5. In a release from the Canadian Times Union label, the Azimuth disc isn't EPCM's only unique triple release slated for early '97: Pianist Michael Cain's "Circa" is due Jan. 14. Cain's group includes trumpeter Ralph Alessi and saxophonist Peter Epstein. The album is his first outing for EPCM, and its visibility will be helped by Cain's performance at the 1997 presidential inaugural gala. The Howard Hanson Institute commissioned a piece from the composer for the event. Cain's stint is precision-based. Let's hope the horn-wielding president doesn't try to lend a hand with the tune. Congratulations to all.

**THERE PAST NEWE:** Reissues make up a great chunk of the jazz market these days. Here's a quartet of single discs and boxed sets that stood out in 1996.

- **Slim And Slam**, "The Groove Juice Special" (Columbia/legacy): Legacy's claim that it's investing more in the trove of great jazz it lords over has proved true. The entertainment side of jazz-influenced R&B is all over this nut, but don't write it off to simple silliness. Slam's sense of swing is deep. Now, if only Ellington's "Piano In The Foreground" would reach Legacy's release schedule.

**TOP CONTEMPORARY JAZZ ALBUMS**

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<td><strong>Bobby Jones and Kirk Whalum</strong></td>
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**A&M AIMS FOR EXTREME FANS WITH BETTENCOURT SOLO SET**

(Continued from page 13)

fans.

For Bettencourt, "Schizophrenic" is a way to express his most personal feelings, something he says wasn't always appropriate to do in Extreme. "The songs are a lot more personal, lyrically," he says. "I've just kept them for myself over the past two or three years. They were too close to me to not keep them for myself, and some didn't fit on any particular [Extreme] record."

Bettencourt created his debut with his long-time writing and harmonizing partner Cherrone to write two songs on the album—the stripped-down, acoustic "Pursuit Of Happiness" and "You." "I miss the guys," admits Bettencourt. "I miss touring with them. But I'm sure Gary's not very lonely right now. I think it's all worked out for the best. I'm looking forward to doing something they're happy with now... I'm really happy for Gary. His songs with Cherrone in Van Halen sound great." Fortunately, the Van Halen camp supports Bettencourt, too. The official Van Halen fan club has joined A&M's mailing list for direct marketing, and is even running an article on Bettencourt in its newsletter, according to Scott Carter, director of product development at A&M. "We're targeting the Extreme fans and Van Halen fans through our Web sites and through guitar magazines, and our show is a lot more popular on the Web," says Carter. "He has already begun feeding information and music to the fan-created Bettencourt sites on the World Wide Web: http://www.mars.superlink.net/user/kjramer/extreme.html, http://www.extreme.com/~dibleplay/extreme.html, and http://www.vt.com/~extreme/extreme.html."

"This album doesn't sound at all like an extreme record," says Carter. "It's very different, but the old Extreme fans already knew that. It's sort of like it and says that it's not what they expected."

The first single, "Gravity," will be serviced to mainstream rock radio early this month. "Hopefully, we'll hit a new kid of fan with this, and make some of the guitar players join in," Carter says. "He can suspend their previous beliefs of what Van Halen is." A&M is also planning cross-promotions with Washburn, the guitar manufacturer with whom Betten"
**Billboard HOT COUNTRY SINGLES**

**January 11, 1997**

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**Hot Shot Debut**

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<td>I WONT STOP LOVE</td>
<td>MARTY STROUD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>HEARTBREAK EVERYDAY</td>
<td>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>HIGH AND LOW IN BETWEEN</td>
<td>THE TROGGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>POOR POOR PITY ME</td>
<td>TERRY CLARK</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>UNCHAINED MELODY</td>
<td>LEANN RIMES</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>SHE DREW A BROKEN HEART</td>
<td>STEVIE NICKS</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>POLITE, RELIGION AND HER</td>
<td>SAMMY KERSHAW</td>
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**Top Country Singles Sales**

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<tr>
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<td>KEVIN SHARP</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>FRIENDS</td>
<td>JOHN MICHAEL MONTGOMERY</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ONE WAY TICKET (BECAUSE I CAN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>TRACY LAWRENCE</td>
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<tr>
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<td>HER MAN</td>
<td>BROOKS &amp; DUNN</td>
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<td>TRISHA YEARWOOD</td>
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<td>MARY Chapin Carpenter</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>VINCE GILL</td>
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<td>REBA McENTIRE</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>I CAN'T DO THAT ANYMORE</td>
<td>FAITH HILL</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>HALF WAY UP</td>
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<td>A MAN THIS LONELY</td>
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<td>KINGS OF THE MOUNTAIN</td>
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<td>SHE'S TAKEN A SHINE</td>
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<td>ALL I DO IS LOVE HER</td>
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<td>LIKE THE RAIN</td>
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<td>YOU AND ME AGAIN</td>
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</table>
Sultry African-American vocalist Rath could spice the Tejano market. BMG still boasts the best rock acts in the biz, but their sales are tepid compared to those of artists in other genres. The label remains weak in the regional Mexican market.

- **EMI Latin**: Lead by aggressive, progressive president/CEO José Béjar, who last year attracted the interest of Sony's Tommy Mottola, EMI Latin has topped or shared top honors in the U.S. Latino market for the past four years. Selena has played a large role in the Tejano chart's success, and she will likely continue to do so after EMI Latin puts out the mostly English-language soundtrack to her Warner Bros. biopic in March. EMI Latin will be the first Latino label to release a mostly English album on its own.

But that soundtrack's anticipated success will not be reflected on the Latino charts. EMI Latin has bequeathed its regional Mexican profile with a distribution deal with Dasa.

It is tough to predict what will happen at EMI Latin this year. Selena's chart impact will lessen as EMI tries to bring along another superstar. The label will remain potent in the Tejano field with conjunto acts Intocable and La Tropa F, although veterans Emilio and Mazz seem to have reached a sales plateau. Sales of newcomers Bobby Pulido's second album flattened out earlier than expected, too. Los Tucanes De Tijuana and new signee Flito Olivarres are expected to provide punch in the regional Mexican arena, but promising singer Graciela Beltrán's sophomore album has yet to hit The Billboard Latin 50. Béjar hopes to break Millie, a gorgeous pop singer from Puerto Rico. Tropical/salsa has been a disappointment so far, with Lalo Rodríguez and Jallene providing little sales impact.

- **Fonovisa**: The huge roster of the indie label owned by giant Mexican media conglomerate Televisa skewers heavily toward regional Mexican acts, even though the

(Continued on next page)
HAPPY NEW YEAR, and may it bring hope and optimism to all, not least with respect to the future of classical music.

Another voice of doom pronounced the inevitable demise in The New York Times just two days before Christmas. (Rah, harrumph!) But the Steinway believes that movies have replaced Beethoven's Ninth as the narratives that speak to a universal audience and that the great arts have a role and thus, their reason for being. He portrays an industry in turmoil, with orchestras striking in response to insecurity. And members of the top orchestras have solid upper-middle-class incomes (many earn those incomes right out of conservatories), something that certainly wasn't the case years ago.

On the other hand, the most difficult art form, is drawing large audiences across the country. Young people crammed Lyric Opera of Chicago's "Ring" last spring. I saw very few seniors this season, one by the veteran Luciano Berio, another by a relative newcomer, Tobias Picker. Thousands of students flock to conservatories every year. Community music schools are expanding all over the country.

There is definitely plenty of interest. So what if it's not universal? Very little in America is. And I suspect that if one actually had the historical information to compare numbers, one would find that in total there are actually more classical recordings sold today and more people attending live concerts and listening to all kinds of classical music. What's back in that mythic time of greatness, that was. Maybe not all those people are part of the priestly-inclined, but they are interested. Also, classical music lost its function as the center of religion and experience and as the performance center of the aristocracy—and it survived. We should think about the real world and build on its possibilities.

GILLES also says that the band members, who are all 17 years old, felt more comfortable concerning their thoughts on production this time around.

"We spent a lot more time and were much more involved on this album," says Gilles. "On the last record, we were so young that we didn't know what was going on. Now that we're older, we know what we wanted, and we knew some of the basics to getting it down."

To target the act's multimedia savvy fans, "Freak Show" contains enhanced CD features, including a band bio, interview footage, and in-studio and live performance clips.

The act will also remain active on the Internet, where O'Leary has its 39 dedicated World Wide Web sites.

Of those, Murmur selected a site run by Pete Walton as its official Silverchair site. In addition to linking with Sony's site, it will begin a countdown 30 days prior to the album release date that features band diary entries and interview segments with the album's producer, Nick Launay.

The band members, who don't graduate from school until the end of 1997, will break from their US tour in the top 20 US markets during a monthlong tour in February, followed by a nationwide US tour from April 13 through May 13.

"We're juggling around their schooling, and it's like they're trying to feed 5,000 with three loaves of bread," he said. "It made it difficult, but we think the band is going to suffer."

The album's first single, "Abuse Me," will go to modern and mainstream radio Jan. 13. The label serviced key markets with the album, creating the first week of Greatest Hits.

The band will appear on syndicated rock programs "Rockline" and "Modern Rock Live." It is also returning to "Rockline" with its alternate format and will be on "The Alice" with its hard rock cover. "Freak Show" will hit in the US and UK at the same time.

The label will also advertise on 400 number that will play snippets from the album.

As for the band members' youth, those involved with the project say that while they expect the usual gawking by the media, the music will eventually take center stage.

"It's one thing to be seen up at 32, but who wants to be washed up at 17?" says Watts. "The band delivered a great album, and we want to do justice to them by being in a position where all the pieces are in place."

The Billboard Top Classical Music Chart.

by Heidi Waleson.
Time Machine Memorializes Beatles

Modern Gear Creates Eerie Sonic Resemblance

BY PAUL VERNAD

If one were in a tribute band that wanted to capture the sound of the Beatles on tape, one would probably gather old Rickenbacker and Gretsch guitars, a Hofner bass, Ludwig drums, Vox amps, and Newman and Coles microphones like the ones used at Abbey Road. For extra credit, one might hang down a REDD 37 tube console and a BTR 4-track tape machine.

Indeed, the surviving Beatles pursued as much of this equipment as possible to lend a vintage flair to their new contributions to the "Anthology" projects, "Free As A Bird" and "Real Love."

Defying any such conventional approach, a West Hollywood, Fla., rock band has approximated the sound of the Beatles even more impressively than the extravagant '70s stage production "Beatlemania"—and did so using '80s and '90s solid-state technology and less than ideal recording conditions.

The band, Time Machine, comprises Gary G on vocals and bass, Stewart Winter on vocals and guitars, and Mark Jones on drums. They perform regularly in South Florida, playing mostly covers of early Beatles, Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Van Morrison, and other '60s material.

The band's demo is a 4-track cassette recording of "From Me To You" and "Misery," that sounds uncannily like the Beatles. In fact, both tracks could easily be mistaken for close alternate versions of the familiar tunes—perhaps cut from "Anthology 1" or a high-quality bootleg from the same sessions that yielded the masters.

To achieve the Beatles' sound, the band set up in a small room in Gary G's house and played live to one track of a Yamaha MT-120 cassette 4-track, the music captured on nothing more than a Shure SM-57 and a Shure SM-58 summed together. Jones played a white Pearl drum kit, Winter a Washburn acoustic guitar close to the SM-58, and Gary G a Carvin bass through a Carvin 360 bass cabinet with built-in compression.

Winter then overdubbed the electric guitar onto the second track, playing an Ibanez RG-540 set to the middle pickup though a Multivox amp mixed into a Sound City cabinet. He used chorus and reverb to enhance the sound.

Following the instrumental sessions, Gary G and Winter sang together to a third track and then doubled their parts onto the fourth and final track.

For the mix, Winter, who is the band's de facto recordist and live sound engineer, braved all the instruments hard left and the vocals hard right and processed the vocals through an Alesis Microverb digital reverb unit. By running the Microverb in stereo, Winter unintentionally duplicated a favorite '60s recording technique of panning the instruments and vocals to separate sides but having the reverber of the vocals on the instrumental track.

Another trick Time Machine picked up from the Beatles was playing with variable tape speeds to achieve different tonal qualities and allow the singers to hit notes that otherwise might be unattainable. "We're all in our mid-'40s, and some of these harmonies are real high," says Winter.

Although he admits to being amazed that low-cost modern technology could achieve such a warm, vintage sound, Winter says the vocal and instrumental performances had more to do with the success of the demo than with the actual recording process.

(Continued on next page)

 AUDIO TRACK

NEW YORK

DOWNTOWN AT CHUNG KING Studios, TLC was in the Blue Room (featuring a New VRP27 with Flying Faders and Total Recall), tracking and mixing new material for its upcoming project with producer/engineer Fernando Král; Steve Neat assisted. The sessions were produced by Organized Noise, engineered by Dexter Simmons, and assisted by Rawle Gittens. As at Mystic, American Recordings group Lord's Of Brooklyn tracked in Studio A with producer/engineer Doug DeAngelis and assistant Sharon Kearney, MCA Recording artist Charisse Arrington mixed in Studio A with producers Kyanna Griffin, Assim, and 40-Deuce, plus mixing engineer Peter Diorio and assistant Brenda Ferry; Fred and Rodney Jerkins were also in Studio A, producing sessions for Def Jam recording group Shorties with engineer Ben Garrison and assistants Kearney and Nikos Tenekezis; and MCA artist New Child inaugurated Mystic's Studio B by tracking has upcoming album on the 96-channel Alesis MSKU console and Sony AP2-24.

LOS ANGELES

MICHAEL JACKSON was in Record Plant's Studio 1 (featuring a 96-input Solid State Logic 8000 G console, working on material with engineers Eddie DeLena and Andrew Shepp; Greg Collins assisted on the sessions. Barbra Streisand and Bryan Adams cut their duet for the soundtrack to "The Mirror Has Two Faces" at the Record Plant's Studio 3 on a 72-input SSL 4096 board with producer David Foster, engineers Humberto Gatica and Felipe Elguezab; and assistant Tim Lauber. Whitney Houston also worked on "The Preacher's Wife" soundtrack in Record Plant's Studio 2 with producer Mervin Warren, engineer Dave Reitzes, and assistant Steve Durkee. Among other stars working at the Record Plant are the Scorpions and Jon Bon Jovi.

Newcomer Denise Marsa worked on her debut album for startup indie label Key Records at DMT Studios in Van Nuys. The self-produced album was engineered by Bruce Boullet, formerly of Racer X and the Screams. Among the guest musicians on the project are John Ernst of MTV's "Singled Out," Jimmy Page & Robert Plant tour violinist Eric Gorfin, and a rhythm section consisting of veterans Dave Chamberlain and Richard Diamond and newcomer Sam Varma. Producer/songwriter Jorge Martin tracked an R&B single at Artisan Sound Recorders featuring singer Sanetta; the track was later co-produced by Jon Lowry of David Lee Roth fame.

NASHVILLE

AT THE CASTLE, hard rock act Megadeth overdubbed with producer (Continued on next page)
TIME MACHINE MEMORIALIZES BEATLES
(Continued from preceding page)

“Mark plays exactly like Ringo, and we try to sing as close as possible to the Beatles,” he explains, adding half-

jokingly, “The whole key to the Beatles is to sing black and never finish your words.”

Of particular note is Gary G’s John Lennon impression, which is accurate down to the most subtle inflection.

Time Machine was formed in April 1994, when Winter moved to Florida and decided to pursue his lifelong goal of playing in a Beatles tribute band. He responded to an ad placed by Gary G in a local musician’s paper that read, “Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, Beatles, and more Beatles.”

Although the group tried to incorporate a second guitarist to more closely approximate the Beatles’ formation, the three core members were unable to find a fourth who fit into the band both musically and personally. Consequently, Time Machine forged ahead as a trio, taking advantage of Winter’s classically

inspired ability to play lead and rhythm parts simultaneously.

So impressive is the band’s live set that a club owner at a recent gig in Pompano Beach, Florida, suspected the band of playing to recorded tracks.

“Everybody was getting really into the show, but I noticed the club owner looking at us like he was pinsed off,” recalls Winter. “So in between sets, he crooked his finger at me and called me over and said, ‘I know what you guys are doing. If I wanted to hire karaoke performers, I would have done it for much cheaper. I saw you fooling around with a machine.’ So I showed him that there were no tape anywhere in the club and invited him to stand right in front of the stage during the next set, and he was blown away.

Time Machine has been gigging regularly in such Florida venues as Pickles in Pompano Beach, Cafe Iguana in South Beach, Haines Bay in Hollywood, Shooters in Fort Lauderdale, and the Swap Shop Circus in Sunrise.

The band also landed a regular stint at Pro Players (formerly Joe Roblady Studio), entertaining Marlings and Dophins owner H. Wayne Huizenga and other top executives in the stadium’s clubhouse.

In addition to its Beatles set—which consists mostly of early hits like “She Loves You,” “I Want To Hold Your Hand,” and “All My Loving”—it also includes latter cuts such as “Back In The U.S.S.R.” and “Lady In The Sky With Diamonds”—Time Machine plays the Stones’ “Honky Tonk Women,” “Beast Of Burden,” and “Start Me Up,” The Doors’ “Hey Joe” and “Purple Haze”; and barroom favorites by the Kinks, Bob Seger, Van Morrison, Eric Clapton, Bob Dylan, and other classics.

More a tribute act than a cover band, Time Machine tries to emulate the spirit of the original recordings whenever it performs and plans to record tunes by other bands in the same type of 4-track environment that yielded the Beatles demos.

In addition, this year the band plans to incorporate original material into its repertoire, according to Winter.

AUDIO TRACK
(Continued from preceding page)

Douglas Huff, engineer Jeff Balding, and assistant Mark Hagen. Also at the Castle, the Thompson Brothers tracked with producer Bill Lloyd, engineer Rob Feaster, and assistant Paula Montondo.

At Woodland Studios, Capitol records artist Emilio overthucked with producer Barry Stock and engineer Carla Petercz; Wes King tracked and overthucked for an upcoming Sparrow release with producer/artist Ben Wisch, Hal Ketchum worked on a Curb Records project with producer Stephen Bruton and engineer Dan Bosworth; Nanci Griffith overlapped her upcoming Elektra project with producer/engineer Don Gehman, and Days Of The New tracked and overthucked its upcoming Outpost/Geffen release with producer Scott Lift and engineer Bill Klett. Another notable project at Woodland is the Elvis Presley
documentary “All The King’s Men,” which features such Elvis sidemen as DJ Fontana and Scotty Moore, plus sessions by Chet Atack, Tracy Nelson, Joe Ely, and Steve Earle.

Sound Emporium hosted Hank Thorns, who worked on self-produced sessions with co-producer Bill Millet and engineers Mark Raklon and Matt Andrews. Pam Tillis was also at Sound Emporium, working on an Arista release with producer Chris Farren and engineers David Thoener, Karl Meadows, John Thomas, Tom Harding, and Joe Costa. Among other artists working at Sound Emporium are Mark O’Connor, Terry McBride, Michael Peterson with Travis Tritt, Dead Ringer Band, Callie Chappel, the Manhattan Transfer, and Chris Duarte.

OTHER LOCATIONS

At SOUND TECHNIQUES in Houston, Texas, producer Ken Anthony worked on an upcoming solo vocal project with engineer Ted Paduck. Also at Sound Techniques, local rockers Acoustic Junction worked in the Solid State Logic room with producer Danny Bernardi and engineer Peter Keppler, Paduck and Tom Richards assisted.

At Criteria in Miami, Universal Records artist Billie Musers recorded basic tracks with veteran producer Desmond Child, engineer Charles Dye, and assistant Chris Carroll. Also, Brazilian superstar Roberto Carlos completed mixes for his Christmas release with producer Mauro Mata, engineers Ted Stein and Edu de Oliveira, and assistants Steve Robb

lard and Chris “Scoubie” Spar. Other sessions at Criteria include projects by Recordmaster metal act Obituary and PolyGram rocker Suraya.

At Chicago Recording Co. (CRC), Outpost/Geffen rock act Veruca Salt tracked with producer Bob Rock and engineers Randy Staub and Brian Dobbs. Babysface recorded vocal overdubs for a Whitney Houston track from “The Preacher’s Wife” soundtrack with engineer Brad Gildeerman; Mata
capitalist artist Liz Phair recorded basic tracks for a future release with producer Scott Lift and engineer Chris Shepard; R. Kelly mixed tracks for his contribution to the “Space Jam” soundtrack; Billy Corgan of Smashing Pumpkins tracked a song with engin
er-Shepard for a David Lynch soundtrack; and Smashing Pumpkins hand


At North Shore Studios in North Salem, N.Y., Andy Powell and Roger Flippate of Wishbone Ash recorded a VH1 acoustic set for MCA. In Berkeley, Calif., jazz artist Kitty Margolis tracked an album with engineer Gary Mankin.

Please send material for Audio Track to Paul Verna, Pro Audio Technology Editor: Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036; fax: 212-326-345; e-mail: PvP@billboard.com.

PRODUCTION CREDITS
BILBOARDS NO. 1 SINGLES (JANUARY 4, 1997)

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<td>Felipe Eguzqui</td>
<td>BATTERY STUDIOS (Chicago, IL)</td>
<td>Stephen George</td>
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<td>Mitsubishi X80/ Studer AR20</td>
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<td>Nick Gatiuzi</td>
<td>CHICAGO RECORDING Co. (Chicago, IL)</td>
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<td>Herb Powers</td>
<td>HIT FACTORY Chris Gehringer</td>
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BILBOARDS JANUARY 11, 1997

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE GUIDES

1. International Buyer’s Guide: The worldwide music & video business-to-business directory jam-packed with record & video co’s, music publishers, distributors & more. $109
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KAMEN FOUNDATION
(Continued from page 8)

tem cared enough about the students to provide them with the tools for learning, whether it was with math books, lumber, a vat of clay, or musical instruments," he says. "That's all gone. They've obviously lost their appetite for supplying the kids with that fertile breeding ground that fuels their imagina-
tion."

Unable to change the cuts or cur-
riculum, Kamen decided to help the only way he could—by supplying instruments. He established the founda-
tion, which is being run by three retired schoolteachers, one of whom taught Kamen.

One of the first companies to offer assistance was Apple Computer, which has provid-
ed office equip-
ment and set up a World Wide Web site through which schools and indivi-
duals can apply for aid.

For its first year of operation, Kamen wants the foundation to target between 50 and 75 schools nationwide that need instruments. In identifying schools, the foundation will work with a number of educational outlets, includ-
ing the National Coalition of Music Educators.

The second step is targeting what instruments are needed. "Does a school need fiddles or an entire orchestra?" Kamen says. "Or maybe they need a computer to facilitate the work they do... It's not amazingly expensive to help. If we were going to outfit an entire orchestra with brand-spanking-new instruments, it would cost $40,000. But we also know there are attics filled with old broken instruments that could be fixed and put to good use."

Kamen stresses that students do not have to be part of an established school band or orchestra to receive support from the foundation.

Each year, Kamen says, he would like to see the foundation assist another 50-75 schools. "We're going to tap into the local business community on a long-term basis to make sure that the foundation doesn't just go for one year," he says.

Not surprisingly, Kamen has enlist-
ed the support of many of his famous colleagues. Dreyfuss wrote a state-
ment that is featured on the founda-
tion's brochure and appears in a video describing the foundation's mission that will be used for fund raising. Dreyfuss is also speaking about the foundation to music educators' pro-
gress. Friends like Bryan Adams and David Sanborn are helping in various ways, including speaking at schools, along with Kamen. Kamen is also con-
ducting youth orchestra concerts in several cities and donating proceeds to the foundation.

"Maybe we can get groups or artists to visit the high school (they attended) and give them instruments or just see what they need," says Kamen.

While the short-term goal is to sup-
ply instruments, Kamen knows the long-term effects of these efforts can be much greater. "If we can get instru-
ments in kids' hands, we might keep weapons and drugs out of them," he says. "We might be able to introduce them to a world that will change their lives."
1996

The Year

In Video

...In Box Office
3 Years In A Row.

...In Video Sales
For 10 Straight Years.

And Now...

#1 In Producing First-Run Movies
As World Premiere Events For Your Store—
Featuring The World's Biggest Stars
And Best Animators!

1997 Promises To Be Our Biggest Year Yet.
Together We'll Deliver Even More Record-Breaking Success!

Buena Vista Home Video
Distributed by Buena Vista Home Video, Burbank, CA 91521. © Disney Enterprises, Inc.
or home video, 1996 was a year of retail consolidation, a continued strong flow of direct-to-sell-through titles and—best news of all—no format introduction.

The first two trends were nothing out of the ordinary. Industry analysts knew all along that there were too many video retailers and that, in the face of a stagnant retail market, the weak would have to either close out or sell out. Sell-through, meanwhile, ahead as anticipated, although by year’s end, some studios were concerned that perhaps too much product was being shipped and that catalog prices of under $10 for big-name movies might be devaluing more expensive titles. But the format status-quo shocked the experts.

A year ago, betting was strong that digital videodisc-players and programming—would appear in the third and fourth quarters. DVD’s arrival would signal the first challenge to the VCR, which has dominated home entertainment for 20 years. It didn’t happen.

WAR OF THE SATELLITES

The domino effect of technical and legislative problems kept tripping up and pushing back DVD release dates set by consumer-electronic vendors, including Toshiba, Matsushita, Sony and Philips, from Labor Day right through the Christmas holidays. They weren’t helped when the studios, which control the movies that will drive player sales, decided 1997 presented an even better opportunity.

Only Warner Home Video, originally teamed with Toshiba in DVD development, was ready to roll out perhaps 50 releases in 1996. A year ago, Hollywood had been expected to contribute 250 of its best. Home video does have a hi-tech concern that might rival DVD: the impact of direct satellite systems on rental and sell-through. The roughly 2.5 million DSS subscribers, who can tune in as many as 150 channels, are cancelling cable subscriptions.

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The temporary damming of a new revenue stream like DVD had its good side. Vendors haven’t been distracted from feeding and milking the VHS cash cow—and the cash it has generated. Tape duplicators produced an estimated 700 million cassette last year, a 10%-to-15% increase over 1995. The volume of rental copies remained as it is.

Video Sales

HOW THE 1996 YEAR-IN-VIDEO CHARTS ARE COMPILED

The 1996 Year-In Video charts were compiled by computer from Billboard’s weekly and biweekly charts during the eligibility period of the Dec. 2, 1995, through that of Nov. 29, 1996. With the exception of the Top Music Video chart, which is based on SoundScan sales data, the final year-end positionings on these charts are based on a point system, with points awarded to each title. For each week spent on the published charts, the year-end ranking reflects the accumulation of points based on the number of weeks on the chart, plus positions attained at each title received during the tracking period.

The year-end rankings for Top Music Videos are based on an accumulated unit tally for each week that a title appeared on the published chart. Including the weeks that the chart is not published. Although Billboard prints the Top Music Video chart every other week, it is still compiled and made available to subscribers of Billboard Information Network, Billboard Online and SoundScan in the weeks it is not published.
The FIRM

Billboard's Health and Fitness Category leader '96.

Cabbage Patch Kids

Award winning stop-action animation.

BMG independents

Critically acclaimed, star-driven theatrical films.

Under construction for '97...

www.americanradiohistory.com
From The Jane Train To A “Killers” Cut, The Year Was Full Of Tough Sells That Sold. It’s About Marketing In A Hostile Environment...

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

The fight for shelf space was never more intense than this past year, and retail buyers and consumers were bombarded with new choices every week. Some choices, like “Babe,” “Pocahontas” and “Twister,” were easy sells, but non-hits like persistent reinforcement and commitment to the product was necessary to make it a sales success. Although many non-hit titles achieved significant sales here are a few standout from the past year, based on marketing tough sells in a hostile environment.

“The Firm”—BMG Video

Without questions, 1996 was a tough year for the exercise genre. Retail significantly cut back inventory, sales dropped by almost 20% and consumers went back to gyms instead of their local video store to get in shape.

In the midst of the turmoil, BMG Video’s “The Firm” soared. As of April, eight tapes on the market had sold in excess of 500,000 units, according to the company, and four additional titles released in September kicked another 500,000 in unit sales.

In the Dec. 7 Top Special Interest Video Sales (Health And Fitness), “The Firm” occupied eight of the top 20 spots. Prior to the series’ retail debut in January 1995, “The Firm” had built a core consumer base through a series of infomercials, but breaking them at retail in a soft market was a tough sell.

“We heard all the naysayers declaring that fitness was dead,” says BMG associate director of marketing Michelle Fiddler. “But we positioned this product as a winner and went to retail with a belief in the category.” Fiddler adds that the supplier went into stores just when Time-Life was launching another direct-response campaign for “The Firm.” “TV ads make everyone more comfortable,” says Fiddler.

Instead of television ads, BMG spent its money on trade and consumer print advertising. The supplier also provided in-store P.O.P. support.

Following the line’s strong sales performance, Fiddler says the supplier has been able to get new accounts to bring in “The Firm.” “The product is in a consistent re-order pattern,” Fiddler explains. “Many dealers tell us, ‘Whatever you’ve got on ‘The Firm,’ sign me up.’”

With 12 titles now at retail, Fiddler says more print advertising and a mall tour is planned for 1997. “I don’t think the fitness category has bounced back,” she claims. “It’s stabilized, and we have to make sure ‘The Firm’ continues to do well.”

“Wallace And Gromit”—BBC Video, distributed by CBS/Fox Video

“More than anything, I think the day ‘Wallace & Gromit’ got lost in New York was the most effective marketing element for the series,” says CBS/Fox Video VP of marketing Joan Blanski.

CBS/Fox didn’t orchestrate the disappearance, but when director Nick Parks left his two sculptured stars in back of a New York City cab the day before the supplier’s media event at Lincoln On The Green, he inadvertently increased sales of the video. (The clay models were later returned by the cab driver.) The story hit every major news outlet in New York, and Parks, a two-time Academy Award winner for animated shorts, became an overnight media sensation.

In 1995, CBS/Fox released two gift-set skyrocket,” says Blanski.

As a video brand, BBC has struggled with the cult success of “Dr. Who” and “Fawlty Towers,” but in 1995 “Absolutely Fabulous” made retailers take a second look at the line. Blanski says Parks “Wallace & Gromit” is continuing to keep interest growing in the entire BBC line: “There is greater retail interest today in the BBC line. ‘Ab Fab’ started it, and ‘Wallace & Gromit’ has kept it going.”

“Pride And Prejudice”—A&E Home Video

In 1996, no author was hotter than Jane Austen, and no video company benefited more from the so-called “Jane train” than A&E Home Video. Demand for Jane Austen’s “Pride And Prejudice” a six-tape set released by A&E, was so strong that the supplier had to release the series again on two tapes at the request of rental dealers. “Even at sell-through, the series is in almost every retail channel, including mass-merchant accounts,” says A&E.

Continued on page 55
#1 in recreational sports for three years running… jumping, slamming, skating, putting, exercising, etc.
Non-family titles flew off the self-through shelves in 1996. Why?
And what does it say about shifting consumer habits?

BY CATHERINE APPLEFELD OLSON

It would seem children are the only ones who have hours to sit idly in front of the television set watching movies. But looking back at sales of direct-to-self-through and reprinted current titles, it looks like adults too had plenty of time to engage in couch-potatoism in 1996.

The year goes by seen a swell in adult-oriented self-through releases, ranging from FoxVideo's "Waiting To Exhale" to Buena Vista Home Video's "Pulp Fiction" to MGMUA's "Rocky" boxed set to PolyGram Video's "The Usual Suspects." Although the trend away from rental was not a new phenomenon in 1996, the question of why 1996 witnessed so many non-family titles on self-through shelves is one worth revisiting. The answer appears to be a combination of aggressive label-marketing, shifting consumer habits and the magnetic appeal of strong titles.

FoxVideo catapulted the concept of self-through for non-family fare when it took what traditionally would have been considered a rental property and turned it into a surprise self-through smash. "Waiting To Exhale" grabbed the attention of other labels and retailers alike, with self-through strongman Best Buy making 85,000 tapes thus far.

"Fargo" segued quickly from retail to self-through, echoing the sentiment of other merchants who increasingly count on the availability of adult fare to set them apart from other types of retailers, such as grocery and toy stores that sell tapes. It's the one way for 'real' video retailers to differentiate themselves from grocery chains that tend not to carry R-rated titles," Russo says of the broadening outside of children's titles.

NON TOY-STORE STORY

"I don't think Toys R Us carried "Pulp Fiction,"" Pagano says, noting his chain has sold about 70,000 copies of the title to date. "And because the distribution is a little narrower than, say, on a 'Toy Story,' the dynamic works well for us because there are fewer people selling the title." Feldstein adds that labels need to select which videos can self-through written all over them on a title-by-title basis. "There is no blanket rule," he says. "Everything is dependent on what's right for that appropriate title in the marketplace at the time."

Aside from changes in the retail environment, advances on the home front also contributed to the rise in adult self-through fare, according to Bob Sigman, president/Ceo of Republic Pictures. "Clearly, one of the exciting things happening in the marketplace is larger-size televisions with better quality pictures and sound," he says. Republic's catalog includes such self-through perennial "It's A Wonderful Life," and "One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest," as well as a library of John Wayne and Roy Rogers westerns. "Anything that can simulate the home-viewing experience is going to be more attractive."}

"Braveheart": No. 1 Video Rental

15 DEAD MAN WALKING—PolyGram Video
16 BROKEN ARROW—forVideo
17 LEAVING LAS VEGAS—MGMUA Home Video
18 CLUELESS—Paramount Home Video
19 APOLLO 13—Univ. Dist. Corp.
20 DIE HARD WITH A VENGEANCE—forVideo
21 HAPPY GILMORE—Univ. Dist. Corp.
22 SHOWGIRLS—MGMUA Home Video
23 WATERWORLD—Univ. Dist. Corp.
24 TO DIE FOR—Columbia TriStar Home Video
25 FROM DUSK TILL DAWN—Buena Vista Home Video
26 GOLDENEYE—MGMUA Home Video
27 THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT—Columbia TriStar Home Video
28 UNDER SEIGE 2: DARK TERRITORY—Warner Home Video
29 CONGO—Paramount Home Video
30 DOLORES CLAIBORNE—Columbia TriStar Home Video
31 BAD BOYS—Columbia TriStar Home Video
32 THE JUROR—Columbia TriStar Home Video
33 BABE—Univ. Dist. Corp.
34 ASSASSINS—Warner Home Video
35 THE SANTA CLAUSE—Buena Vista Home Video
36 NINE MONTHS—forVideo
37 PULP FICTION—Buena Vista Home Video
38 THE BIRDCAST—MGMUA Home Video
39 SPECIES—MGMUA Home Video
40 MIGHTY APHRODITE—Buena Vista Home Video
41 THE MONEY TRAIN—Columbia TriStar Home Video
42 FORGET PARKS—Columbia TriStar Home Video
43 CITY HALL—Columbia TriStar Home Video
44 THE TRUTH ABOUT CATS & DOGS—forVideo
45 POWDER—Buena Vista Home Video
46 JUMANJI—Columbia TriStar Home Video
47 THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY—Warner Home Video
48 WAITING TO EXHALE—forVideo
49 DESPERADO—Columbia TriStar Home Video
50 UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL—Buena Vista Home Video
51 FIRST KNIGHT—Columbia TriStar Home Video

15 JUDGE DREDD—Buena Vista Home Video
16 JONNY MEMOIC—Columbia TriStar Home Video
17 RUMBLE IN THE BRONX—Turner Home Entertainment
18 STRANGE STORIES—forVideo
19 DEAD PRESIDENTS—Buena Vista Home Video
20 TOMMY BOY—Paramount Home Video
21 HOW AND WHEN—Tunr Home Entertainment
22 HOW TO MAKE AN AMERICAN QUIET—Univ. Dist. Corp.
23 SGT. BLKDO—Univ. Dist. Corp.
24 ROB ROY—MGMUA Home Video
25 FARGO—PolyGram Video
26 VERBATIM—Paramount Home Video
27 JADE—Paramount Home Video
28 DEAR ADOLUQUE—Warner Home Video
29 CRAMPER OLD MEN—Warner Home Video
30 THE INDIAN IN THE CUPBOARD—Columbia TriStar Home Video
31 THINGS TO DO IN DENVER WHEN YOU'RE DEAD—Buena Vista Home Video
32 BEFORE AND AFTER—Buena Vista Home Video
33 WHITE SQUALL—Buena Vista Home Video
34 THE QUEST—Univ. Dist. Corp.
35 SENSE AND SENSIBILITY—Columbia TriStar Home Video
36 RED SILENCE—Buena Vista Home Video
37 THE CRAFT—Columbia TriStar Home Video
38 SUNDOWN DEATH—Univ. Dist. Corp.
39 EYE FOR AN EYE—Paramount Home Video
40 MURDOCK'S WEDDING—Buena Vista Home Video
41 PRIMAL FEAR—Paramount Home Video
42 WHITE MAN'S BURDEN—VHI Home Video
43 FRIDAY—Turner Home Entertainment
44 CASPER—Univ. Dist. Corp.
45 HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS—PolyGram Video

52 ACE VENTURA: WHEN NATZPY F-L-L-S—Warner Home Video
53 TO WONG FOO, THANKS FOR EVERYTHING!—Julie Newmar—Univ. Dist. Corp.
54 BATMAN FOREVER—Warner Home Video
55 FRENCH KISS—forVideo
56 SABRENA—Paramount Home Video
57 NORTAL KOMBAT—the MOVIE—Tunr Home Entertainment
58 A WALK IN THE CLOUDS—forVideo
59 MULTIHELLA FOLDS—MGMUA Home Video
60 THE SUBSTITUTE—Live Home Video
61 FATHER OF THE BRIDE PART II—Buena Vista Home Video
62 DEVIL IN A BLUE DRESS—Columbia TriStar Home Video
63 SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT—Warner Home Video
64 TWISTER—Warner Home Video

POS. TITLE Distributing Label
1 BRAVEHEART—Paramount Home Video
2 THE USUAL SUSPECTS—PolyGram Video
3 SEVEN—Turner Home Entertainment
4 HEAT—Warner Home Video
5 12 MONKIES—Univ. Dist. Corp.
6 GET SHORTY—MGMUA Home Video
7 CRESMON TIDE—Buena Vista Home Video
8 CASINO—Univ. Dist. Corp.
9 EXECUTIVE DECISION—Warner Home Video
10 THE NET—Columbia TriStar Home Video
11 COPPAC—Warner Home Video
12 WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING—Buena Vista Home Video
13 MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS—Buena Vista Home Video
14 DANGEROUS KINGS—Buena Vista Home Video

"Pulp Fiction": probably not for Toys R Us

"Waiting To Exhale" grabbed the attention of other labels and retailers alike, with self-through strongman Best Buy making 85,000 tapes thus far.

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"Fargo" segued quickly from retail to self-through.
LONDON—“Fighting back against the odds” was the main theme of the U.K. video industry’s year, which had the recovery of the rental business as one of the industry’s major achievements. The overall business was in the region of 12 billion pounds ($22 billion) in 1996, with rental showing a 6% growth on the previous year. That makes 1996 the first full year of growth for video rental since 1989.

October saw rentals increase for the seventh consecutive month, with rental transactions up 10 million on the first 10 months of 1995. Strong product, like “Braveheart” and other action-adventure movies, including “Die Hard With A Vengeance,” streams enjoying greater unity through a series of senior-management appointments and changes in operating structure. Jeff Taylor has been named as president of director of consumer publishing to oversee the implementation of greater synergy between the group’s various departments.

COMMONS CENSORS
Always a bone of contention whatever the year, U.K. video censorship came to the fore once again when the U.K. video censor, James Ferman, director of the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), came under another severe attack from MP David Alton over his decision to pass the Oliver Stone film “Natural Born Killers” uncut for video release.

The U.K. is now the world leader in video censorship. The laws governing video products are more stringent than those of any other country. The number of titles classified or rejected in the U.K. in 1996 was the highest since 1992. The BBFC has been criticized for its excessive use of classification and for its failure to provide clear guidance on the classification of video products.

In a motion at the House of Commons, MPs from all political parties condemned the BBFC’s decision to pass the film without cuts. Alton asked the government to investigate the BBFC to see if it was in breach of its statutory responsibilities, duties which were increased as a result of Alton’s anti-video crusade two years ago.

The U.K. has the toughest video censorship in Europe and most of the world. Of all videos passed for viewing, 6.7% are censored, with 19.4% of all 18-rated films. In 1995, 219 videos were classified after censoring occurred out of some 3,261 submitted to the BBFC for classification. In the 18-rated category, 175 out of 901 titles submitted were cut by the censor.

“Braveheart” conquers Scotland
Films that have been responsible for a bright revenue year include
MUSIC & MAGIC ABOUND

IN THIS FIRST-EVER THOMAS SING-ALONG COLLECTION

TWO GREAT WAYS TO SELL THE LATEST THOMAS VIDEO

Sold Separately

Sing-Along Videos

Are a Favorite With Kids!

Whistle & Video Gift Package

Boost Sales Even More With A Specially-Priced Value-Added Train Whistle & Video Gift Package Option.

SPECIALY-PRICED TRAIN WHISTLE AND VIDEO GIFT PACKAGE OPTION AVAILABLE

FREE THOMAS STICKERS INCLUDED WITH EVERY VIDEO (WHILE SUPPLIES LAST)

INcludes 3 SONGS AND 2 STORIES NEVER RELEASED ON HOME VIDEO

PROVEN SALES SUCCESS

Thomas videos consistently rank in the top 25 among Children's Videos sold each week*

NATIONAL PRINT ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN

Reaching over 72 million parents via ads in Parents, Parenting, Child, Family Circle, McCall's, Sesame Street Parents, and Woman's Day (Mar-Apr-May issues).

TELEVISION EXPOSURE

Seen in more than 92% of U.S. households on more than 280 PBS stations nationwide; with viewership of 7.5 million children and their families weekly.

AWARD WINNING SERIES:
Recipient of "Year's 10 Best Videos" Video Magic Award by Parenting Magazine.
Approved by The Coalition for Children's Video.

STREET DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 1997

* Based on Video Scan sales for children's videos between $10-$13.

TOP VIDEO SALES

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76 THE BIG GREEN—Buena Vista Home Video
77 THE REAL WORLD-VACATIONS—Sony Music Video
78 THE ADVENTURES OF PRISCILLA, QUEEN OF THE DESERT—PolyGram Video
79 PLAYBOY'S CHEERLEADERS—Uni. Dist. Corp.
80 LEGENDS OF THE FALL—Columbia TriStar Home Video
81 TOY STORY—Buena Vista Home Video
82 MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND—Buena Vista Home Video
83 ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS SERIES 3, PART 2—Fox Video
84 MARIAN CARY: LIVE AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN—Sony Music Video
85 THE ROLLING STONES ROCK & ROLL CIRCUS—ABCO Video
86 A TRIBUTE TO STEEVY RAY VAUGHAN—Sony Music Video
87 THE SHAMSHANK REDEMPTION—Columbia TriStar Home Video
88 THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB: THE MOVIE—Columbia TriStar Home Video
89 THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF MR. BEAN—PolyGram Video
90 FORREST GUMP—Paramount Home Entertainment
91 COP'S IN HOT PURSUIT—MVP Home Entertainment
92 LES MISERABLES: 10TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT—Columbia TriStar Home Video
93 LUIS MIGUEL EL CONCIERTO—Warner Home Video
94 THE EXCITING ESCAPADES OF MR. BEAN—PolyGram Video
95 THE LION KING—Buena Vista Home Video
96 NOW THE WEST WAS FUN—Warner Home Video
97 ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS SERIES 3, PART 1—Fox Video
99 SEVEN (DIRECTOR'S LETTERBOX EDITION)—Turner Home Entertainment
100 WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING—Buena Vista Home Video

Top Video Sales Label

Pos. DISTRIBUTING LABEL (No. Of Charted Titles)
1 UNI DIST. CORP. (38)
2 BUENA VISTA HOME VIDEO (33)
3 FOX VIDEO (43)
4 WARNER HOME VIDEO (38)
5 COLUMBIA TRISTAR HOME VIDEO (16)
For the second consecutive year, Billboard’s top Video Sales Label and Video Distributor. Sincere thanks to our retailers, distributors and friends—without whom it would not be possible... again.
has for the past several years, in the 40 million-to-50 million range.

Sell-through shouldered the burden of generating increased sales and revenues over the previous year. Once again, it has succeeded. While no title has matched Disney's 30 million units for "The Lion King," two features—"Toy Story" from Disney and "Independence Day" from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment—each topped 21 million in the fourth quarter, and several others, such as "Twister" and "The Nutty Professor," were in the 6-million-to-8-million range.

All told, the majors delivered in excess of 100 million copies of front-line movies from September through December, as well as tens of millions of repriced rental hits and re-released budget features. But observers worry Hollywood may be too successful, and that the studios could face equally unprecedented returns early this year.

A PROBLEM EXACERBATED BY DIRECTNESS

If a problem does exist, it will be exacerbated by the trend toward direct delivery that gained momentum in 1997. Traditionally, rackjobbers and distributors served the function of traffic cop, signalling the flow of more product to accounts. The racks have been especially important since companies like Handleman and Anderson Merchandising are responsible for stocking shelves.

But the service isn't free, and in an effort to cut expenses, two key retailers, Wal-Mart and Blockbuster Entertainment, have decided to eliminate the middleman. Wal-Mart, the single biggest influence on self-through titles, last year completed its conversion to direct shipment from suppliers. Handleman and Anderson were largely eliminated.

Approved vendors gained carte blanche to deliver what they thought the Wal-Mart stores could bear, with the proviso that the mass merchant can return everything—COD—that doesn't sell. Wal-Mart hasn't been reticent. Cassette began heading back early last year, and freight cars have shuttled to and fro ever since.

Some of the cargo is probably current titles, eclipsed by the next round of hot releases. Cassette still in inventory 10 days after street date are considered video wallowers, ripe for return. A crowded release schedule is only part of the problem.

PRICING AND PRODUCT DEVALUATION

Studio executives worry consumers finally have gotten the hang of the market: If they wait a few months, the new title retailing at mass merchants for $14.95 will be

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THE YEAR THAT WAS
Continued from page 52

repriced at $7 to $8. The majors have spent much of the past year delivering under-$10 catalog; now it's feared they may be devaluing premium titles.

One studio, which has tried to limit its budget exposure, is conducting research to determine whether it should further reduce the commitment while at the same time lower the price of new sell-through releases. The idea: Close the gap between top and bottom and bolster sales at both ends.

BRANDING IRONY

Blockbuster, the Wal-Mart of video stores, began the shift to direct delivery last summer, when the 3,300-store chain announced it would end its exclusive arrangement with longtime distributor ETD in Houston. Under chairman Bill Fields, former of Wal-Mart, Blockbuster is building distribution centers to take deliveries and repackage and ship cassettes to company-owned outlets.

Franchisees can also participate. Fields told those who attended an annual fall meeting in Palm Springs.

In his presentation, Fields said he wanted closer ties with Hollywood, so do the studios and independents, who hope to cement relations by branding their videos and establishing permanent displays. Fox Home Entertainment and MGM/UA Home Video, among others, spent considerable time and effort last year developing sell-through labels.

Until now, a movie has always been considered sui generis; few buy a Warner title, for example. But Hollywood could take direction from such nontheatrical vendors as BBC Video, Sony Wonder and A&E Home Video, who are busy establishing brandnames.

The consumer recognition they—and the studios—desire will be needed in an increasingly crowded and competitive 1997.
**Top Kid Videos**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Distributing Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CINDERELLA</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>THE LION KING</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>POCOHONTAS</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>THE ARISTOCATS</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>THE LAND BEFORE TIME III</td>
<td>Uni Dist. Corp.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK: GRAMMAR ROCK</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>THE MANY ADVENTURES OF WENKIE THE POOH</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>BALTO</td>
<td>Uni Dist. Corp.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>MARY-KATE &amp; ASHLEY'S SLEEPOVER PARTY</td>
<td>WarnerVision Entertainment</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>WALLACE AND GROMIT: A GRAND DAY OUT</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>GOOSEBUMPS: THE HAUNTED MASK</td>
<td>Fox Video</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK: AMERICA ROCK</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK: MULTIPLICATION ROCK</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>ALADDIN AND THE KING OF THIEVES</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>A GODLY MOVIE</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE WRONG TROUSERS</td>
<td>Fox Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>MARY-KATE &amp; ASHLEY OLSEN: CASE OF THE SPACELAMP MISSION</td>
<td>WarnerVision Entertainment</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>BEAVIS &amp; BUTT-HEAD: FEEL OUR PAIN</td>
<td>Sony Music Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>SCHOOLHOUSE ROCK: SCIENCE ROCK</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video</td>
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UMER SAVINGS FOR
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*Source: BVHV Internal Estimate.

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EVER TO PREMIERE ON VIDEO!

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PREBOOK: February 4, 1997
NAAD: March 18, 1997

“Selling adult product is one way for ‘real’ video retailers to differentiate themselves from grocery chains that tend not to carry R-rated titles,” says Borders buyer Patti Russo of the broadening beyond children’s titles as “Home For The Holidays,” “Dead Man Walking,” “Fargo” and “The Usual Suspects,” all of which segued rather quickly from rental to sell-through. David Kosse, director of marketing at PolyGram Video, says that, while the titles are holding their own at sell-through, they still made sense as rental tapes first. “They all were clearly rental titles, and they had good acceptance in the rental marketplace with a lot of retailers coming off their theatrical runs,” he explains. “Then we knew they would have a good strong second window with the repricing.”

ADULTS AS CONSUMERS
Continued from page 44

help, and then consumers go back to the shelf and see all that is available for them to buy,” says Sigman.

RE-PRICED DEAD MEN
Nestled alongside the direct-to-sell-through releases last year was a stable of product from labels that shortened rental windows to introduce repriced titles sooner than later. PolyGram Video scored a series of sell-through successes with such repriced adult fare as "Waiting To Exhale," "Leaving Las Vegas" and "Waiting To Exhale."
THE FAMILY THAT BUYS TOGETHER

Helping move second-generation sell-through videos off the shelves is a consumer base that has grown more accustomed to bringing home tapes for good rather than just for the weekend. "The consumer marketplace has become more accepting and fallen into the habit of buying videos," Koss says. Shorter rental windows also turned the trick in 1996 for MGM-UA, whose "Rocky" collection continues to set standards in the boxed-set arena. Blake Thomas, senior VP of marketing at the company, says the label considered going direct to sell-through with the James Bond thriller "Goldeneye," but decided initially to release it to rental as it did with "Get Shorty" and "Leaving Las Vegas," both decidedly non-children's entertainment. "There is a greater tendency to go direct to sell-through than in the past, because it is much less like charting new territory than it used to be," he says. "But the rules for direct to sell-through remain the same. You need a broadly appealing film that parents and most kids can enjoy together."  

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19 BAD HAIR DAY—Rend Al Yankovic—Scotti Bros. Video
20 EL CONCERTO—Luis Miguel—MCA Latin Video
21 BARBRA'S CONCERT—Barbra Streisand—Sony Music Video
22 REMOTELY CONTROLLED—Mark Lowry—Word Video
23 GRATEFUL TO GARCIA—Various Artists—Channel One
24 CHRISTMAS WITH LUCIANO PAVAROTTI—Luciano Pavarotti—Video Treasures
25 SUMMER CAMP WITH TRUCKS—Hootie & The Blowfish—Warnervision Entertainment
26 YOU MIGHT BE A REDNECK IF...—Jeff Foxworthy—Warnervision Video
27 REBA LIVE—Reba McEntire—Uni Dist. Corp.
28 LIVE SH!TE: BINGE & PURGE—Metallica—Elektra Entertainment
29 (LIVE) TONIGHT SOLO!—Nirvana—Uni Dist. Corp.
30 VIDEO ARCHIVE—Def Leppard—PolyGram Video
31 THE 3 TENORS IN CONCERT 1994—Carreras, Domingo, Pavarotti—Warnervision Entertainment
32 Voodoo Lounge—Rolling Stones—PolyGram Video
33 A TRIBUTE TO STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN—Various Artists—Sony Music Video
34 LIVE INCURSION—Stapley—American Recordings
35 LIVE FROM LONDON—Son Jovi—PolyGram Video
36 ENLARGED TO SHOW DETAIL—PolyGram Video
37 WHAM! LOOKIN' 4—Kirk Franklin And The Family—Gospo Centric
38 DECADE 1985-1995—Michael Bolton—Sony Music Video
39 THE ROLLING STONES ROCK & ROLL CIRCUS—Various Artists—ABKCO Video
40 REBA: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS—Reba McEntire—Uni Dist. Corp.

For Music Video Labels

Pos. LABEL (No. Of Charted Titles)
1 POLYGRAM VIDEO (14)
2 COLUMBIA MUSIC VIDEO (10)
3 EPIC MUSIC VIDEO (6)
4 CAPITOL VIDEO (4)
5 6 WEST HOME VIDEO (4)

For Distributing Labels

Pos. DISTRIBUTING LABEL (No. Of Charted Titles)
1 SONY MUSIC VIDEO (20)
2 POLYGRAM VIDEO (19)
3 BMG VIDEO (8)
4 UNI DIST. CORP. (10)
5 WARNERVISION ENTERTAINMENT (10)
The comic genius of Benny Hill has never been surpassed. One of the most popular television comics ever, his sly humor, wicked smile and knockdown slapstick humor brought a world of laughter to all.

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Benny Hill's Video Revue 91037
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Warner Bros. Family Entertainment titles have earned over $630 million at the box office, sold over 55 million videos and ranked in Billboard's Top-10 Video Sales for over 80 weeks.

Available only from
Warner Home Video

continued from page 54

Top Kid Video Labels

Pos. LABEL (No. of Charted Titles)
1 WALT DISNEY HOME VIDEO (24)
2 MCA/UNIVERSAL HOME VIDEO (8)
3 ABC VIDEO (6)
4 DUALSTAR VIDEO (7)
5 BBC VIDEO (3)

Top Kid Video Distributing Labels

Pos. DISTRIBUTING LABEL (No. of Charted Titles)
1 BUENA VISTA HOME VIDEO (26)
2 WARNERVISION ENTERTAINMENT (11)
3 PARAMOUNT HOME VIDEO (8)
4 UNI DIST. CORP. (8)
5 FOX VIDEO (7)

U.K. AND EUROPE

"Braveheart," which replicated its Oscar triumph at the BVA Awards ceremony, the major U.K. video-industry get-together. The Mel Gibson feature was honored for best-renting film of 1996, best renting-artist for Gibson, and winning the best rental-distributor marketing award. Part of its campaign was to make it the best-renting video ever in Scotland, an aim which it achieved.

The overall best-selling retail video was also a bit of a surprise in that the winner, "101 Dalmatians," managed to outstrip all other best-sellers of the year in the six weeks from release date to the BVA Awards ceremony, with some 1 million sales the day it hit the shelves.

Distributor income up

The European video industry is at an all-time high, with total distributor revenues at 2,504 million ecu ($3,202 million), an impressive 7.8% rise, according to data released by the International Video Federation. Across all EU states, and in both rental and retail markets, distributor revenue has increased while consumer spending has decreased. This is particularly true of the EU's key retail markets—Italy and France—where there is a sometimes massive shortfall between what is being shipped and what is being sold. The video market in the European Union services 352 million households, with an overall VCR penetration of 64%.
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Bug Music Signs Richard Thompson
Publisher To Administer ‘Gold Mine’ Of Material

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—Bug Music’s recent signing of Richard Thompson to an administration deal is seen by the company as being right up there with its previous acquisitions of John Hiatt and Johnny Cash’s esteemed catalogues.

“Only a handful of songwriters are of the caliber of Richard Thompson,” notes vice president Gary Velletti, “few have his history and catalog, so this is a huge deal for us.”

According to VP of business and legal affairs David Hirshland, Bug now represents worldwide nearly all of Thompson’s catalog, following the signing earlier this year of the 1971 break with legendary British folk-rock group Fairport Convention. Bug will treat Thompson as a priority, says Hirshland, who, like Nashville and film soundtracks as prime marketing targets for Thompson’s far-reaching music.

Thompson has recorded for Capitol since 1988, and Bug has repositioned it out there—which Thompson published through his Beyonce publishing—outside the U.S. and U.K. since 1986. Bug now administers additional post-1974 Thompson copyrights formerly held by PolyGram Music, of which the writer recently regained ownership and control. Altogether, it’s a gold mine of relatively unexploited material, says Hirshland, even though Thompson has been extensively covered by a wide range of U.S. and U.K. artists.

Indeed, Hirshland counts scores of covers of Thompson songs that have come about without any active publisher solicitation. He cites 1984’s “The Retreat” tribute album on Capitol, which featured Thompson songs covered by the likes of R.E.M., Bonnie Raitt, Jackson Browne, the Eagles of Alabama, Dinosaur Jr. Bob Moog, Loudon Wainwright III, and Shawn Colvin.

“It illustrates the universal nature of his songs,” says Hirshland, who at the time of the album’s conception represented its producer, John Chelew, and, as a huge Thompson fan himself, helped facilitate the project. “He’s not a writer for any specific time or genre but one who crosses those boundaries.”

Covers on current albums include Patty Loveless’ version of “Stained Letters,” which was also a country hit for J.C. Souther, K.T. Oslin’s rendition of “A Heart Needs A Home”; and the Thompson-featured “Is It True” from the 1993 film “The Day.” “Wall Of Death,” meanwhile, can be found on R.E.M.’s current “E-Bow The Letter” maxi-single, and Nanci Griffith will include it in her forthcoming, self-titled album, on which Thompson is a featured guitarist.

“You can compare him with John Hiatt, another prolific writer whose other musicians revere as a writer, and with the right kind of effort we can similarly introduce Richard to a wider audience,” says Hirshland.

Hirshland sees especially great potential for Thompson’s catalog in Nashville, and Thompson joins him in citing the connection between country music and Thompson’s English folk roots—”-together with the greater opportunity for covers that the Nashville scene affords.

“As so many writers do their own material these days, it’s great that country music is increasingly looking outside Nashville for songs,” says Thompson. “I suppose melodically and thematically, there are Scotch-Irish links there that go back hundreds of years, which make my songs not totally strange to country singers. The reverting to the cowboy, the Celt is enormous fans of country music. They really buy it up!”

Waxman, who is stationed in Nashville and has been the Thompson fan at least, since Fairport Convention’s 1969 “Un Half-Bright” album, also sees Thompson as a hot writer for Music City.

(Continued on page 80)

Musicals Of ‘60s Are Subject Of
92nd Street Y’s Lyrics & Lyricists

WHATSOEVER the precise timeframe for the musical theatre’s “golden era,” by the time the ’60s rolled around, many of Broadway’s leading lights were still writing scores. However, with an exception or two, their biggest successes were behind them.

But during that decade, Broadway heard new scores from Irving Berlin, Richard Rodgers, Frederick Loewe, and Alan Jay Lerner, Arthur Schwartz and Howard Dietz, Frank Loesser, and Jule Styne (with his frequent collaborator, Betty Comden and Adolph Green).

There were no new scores in that period from Comden & Green, who died in 1964, or Harold Arlen, Leonard Bernstein, who collaborated with Stephen Sondheim to create “West Side Story” in 1957, would not write another Broadway score until 1976’s “1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.”

Rodgers’ classic role in bringing new voices to the Broadway musical, the 27th season of the hugely successful Lyrics & Lyricists series at New York’s 92nd Street Y is celebrating shows of that decade, with a little leeway to accommodate productions from 1959 and 1970. Particular emphasis is being put on the ’60s’ biggest hits.

So, it is the relatively new but successful Broadway voices of that decade that get the big play, including Jerry Herman, Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, John Kander and Fred Ebb, Stephen Sondheim, Charles Strouse, and Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt. The period’s British invasion is represented by the likes of Lionel Bart and Anthony Newley.

By Ira Lichtman

Broadway Songs Of The Sixties” doesn’t just focus on the chronology of the showtunes, it’s a vivid look at how the various Broadway voices of the time shaped the genre.

“By the time I was 12,” Lichtman says, “I could name the writers of the songs and the musicals they wrote. I’ve always been a musical theatre fan.”

“Ira’s been a Broadway and Film music nut for a long time,” says Yiddish.

Mr. Lichtman has written for “The Atlantic” and “Playbill” and is currently working on a book about the 1950s and ’60s musicians and producers.”

Words & Music

by Ira Lichtman

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PRINT ON PRINT: The following are the listings of followings from Cherry Lane Music:

2. Soundgarden, “Down On The Upside.”
3. Ozzy Osbourne, “Diary Of A Madman.”
5. The Beach Boys, “Fairy Tale Christmas.”
**P’Gram Gears Up For European Challenge**

Rick Dobbis Leads Ongoing Regional Analyses

**BY ADAM WHITE**

LONDON—The $18 billion European music market has become a Rolls-Royce business. What the situation now demands is a light truck with four-wheel drive.

The automobile analogy comes easily to Rick Dobbis, himself an import from where it was once said that what is good for General Motors is good for America. Entering his third year as president of PolyGram Continental Europe, Dobbis faces an obstacle course that would tax the most skilful all-terrain driver.

For the European music industry as a whole, a number of major markets are stagnant, notably Germany and France. The strength of the British pound has helped propel truckloads of U.K. merchandise into the Continent, impacting front-line prices almost everywhere. The retail landscape is changing in favor of major players. And the explosion of radio and TV outlets for music has had serious implications for how record companies deploy their promotional and marketing resources.

“We’re going through a bit of a blip,” says Dobbis, “when you say, ‘I’d better take a step back, see where I am, try to understand the changes, and make the moves that will provide the maximum opportunity for success for my product.’ Which is always the goal.” Those changes are substantial, he says. “We’ve had to take a really serious look at the whole way we market records.”

Over the past 15 months, every PolyGram managing director in Europe has been through this process. The result has included sales-force reorganizations (with job losses) in Germany and France; a prominent label shutdown, Metronome Music in Germany; downsizing at the company's classical/Rock label Deutsche Grammophon; and increased investment in developing markets in Eastern Europe.

“Every market where we do business is getting the same scrutiny,” says Dobbis, “and it has virtually nothing to do with money in the first instance. It’s very easy to save money, to cut heads. That’s a dangerous way to manage a business. Last July, after the French reorganization, I sent a note to all the operating company managing directors in which I talked about the overall business in general, meaning their business, and the challenges of being better at what we do: breaking new artists, selling catalog, and all the tasks of running a record company and a video company.”

That is when Dobbis used his auto analogy. “What I meant,” he says, “was that flexibility and responsiveness to the market, and aggressiveness, make a successful company. At the same time...” (Continued on next page)

**Discount Records Spur Russian Buying Spree**

MOSCOW—Russian record shoppers were introduced to a novel concept in the run-up to Christmas—the sale.

The idea of selling goods at a discount did not exist in the communist era, but when Moscow-based distributor/retailer Sloyz ran its sale Dec. 1-27, the success of the venture reached surprising proportions.

“We ran out of some of the sale stock within a week,” states Sloyz head of sales Alexander Bochkov.

The company, which has 15 cassette-dominated stores in Moscow and 100 elsewhere in Russia, limited the advertising of its 50-title sale to a poster campaign. Nonetheless, says Bochkov, “we expected very bad expectations.”

Sloyz’s trade customers also benefited from the sale. The company’s sale CDs were sold to retailers for the equivalent of $2, compared to an average CD wholesale price of $4-$6. Though many items covered by the sale were back-catalog titles or slow sellers, 1996 chart-toppers from leading acts such as Na-Na, Tanya Bulanova, and Alena Alpina were also included.

Bochkov comments, “Initially, we were afraid that we’d be able to keep to a $3 retail price only in our own stores and outlets and that our wholesale clients would keep the product until January, when prices return to normal.”

His fears, though, were unfounded, as in retail outlets across Russia, consumers were able to buy legitimate product for the price of the Bulgarian or Chinese pirated versions.

Following Sloyz’s lead, two other record companies announced December sales. Apex marked down around 140 catalog titles, while Recar Records offered discounts on 20 albums. (Continued on next page)

**French Fund To Finance New Work By Local Talent**

**BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND**

PARIS—The development of new French talent will receive a major boost with the creation of a fund to help finance new works by local artists.

After years of discussion, French music-industry bodies representing record production companies have joined forces to create a $87,000 (FF 3 million) fund called Fond Nouveau Talent, which is designed to help finance new talent in France by independent production companies.

The fund is financed by France’s two producers’ collecting societies, SCPP and SPPF, in conjunction with IFICIC, which manages several funds and banking guarantee systems for cultural industries. SCPP, which comprises all the major companies and more than 100 indie producers, will contribute $450,000 (FF 1.5 million) to the fund, while SPPF will pour in $150,000 (FF 0.5 million).

To apply for the fund, a company must not have more than 50% of its shares owned by multinational record companies and must produce and promote the first, second, or third album by a French or francophone act. Only acts that have not scored a gold album (100,000 units) will be considered.

Eligible projects will benefit from an advance credit, up to 50% of the total production budget, recoupable from future record sales. The projects will be evaluated by a five-member selection committee (three from SCPP and two from SPPF), which will meet six times per year. The IFICIC will manage the fund and act as financial adviser.

SCPP managing director Marc Guez says that the fund is rather modest in volume but admits, “It is a first step. With this fund, we’ll be able to support some 10-15 projects a year, and it’s a five-year program.”

The possibility to recoup some of the loans will contribute to extra financing for the fund. Experts evaluate that with similar systems, some 25% of the loans can be recouped. Guez says the fund will start collecting royalties on a project once 30,000 albums are sold.

The creation of the fund has been a long-time issue for independent producers. Another scheme, based on a...
Kosugi's Legacy To Continue At WMJ

Deputing Chairman Stressed Marketing at Warner Co.

BY STEVE MCLURE

WASHINGTON—While Ryan “doumar” Kosugi, the 35-year-old president of Warner Music Japan (WMJ) chairman in March due to ill health, the restructuring process he set in motion at the company will continue.

Kosugi's main legacy during his term as WMJ chairman, which began in 1992, has been to stress the importance of marketing.

“there can be a tendency for people to rely on the R & D side of things, but it's the marketing that actually sells the product, and that’s the direction he wanted the company to go,” says Sony Thompson, deputy GM, international, at WEA Japan. “That’s a policy we continue to push.”

A key part of that effort was Kosugi’s chairmanship of the Japan Music Industry Association (JAMIA). He took the helm of that group, which is essentially the result of a multi-entrepreneurial satellite joint ventures with production companies in an effort to boost WMJ’s domestic repertoire.

“We’re still in a defensive phase,” says Kosugi, “but in 1997, Warner Music Japan will go on the offensive. I’m going to be the ‘empire strikes back’.”

Kosugi’s highest-profile outside hires were those of Milanese Takeukena and Dutchman Apple whom he brought to WMJ in November 1995 and Takeyuki Hashizume as president of East-West Japan in August 1992. Both Takeukena, previously GM of Nichicon, Japan’s biggest music publisher, and Hashizume, formerly GM of Sony Records’ domestic No. 3 R & B label, had already made their mark on the company.

POLYGRAM GEARS UP FOR EUROPEAN CHALLENGE

(Continued from preceding page)

time, you have to be able to do the backbone of your business—selling catalog—which is different to selling new artists. We must be able to do both.” He adds, “this is what we’re all the companies are becoming aware of the music and the way in which they buy it is going through so many different stages, it’s hard to talk and say, ‘Well, we’ll groove with it.’”

CONTINUING ANALYSIS

To help his team members keep their vehicles under control, Dobbs has asked for something else in their market research. There is a continuing analysis and evaluation of changes being made or contemplated. He reviews such proposals, as he did, for any of the competition, before submitting a proposal to Spykey Fryland, managing director of PolyGram’s Danish affiliate. “It was a plan that made sense; however, it was very expensive. We had a good meeting, talked about a lot of issues, and Stefan came back with a different plan, which was much more manageable, a little bit more expensive, but not as expensive. Now that company is significantly reorganized.”

Dobbs adds, “We had those kinds of competitive reports from the reports directors before, during and after the [1966] budget meetings.”

Extending the point, the PolyGram president says, “We may have two guys doing classical sales in one company, five doing pop. Classics may represent 4% of our revenue there. Take one of those classical guys and have him do pop sales. It doesn’t necessarily mean you eliminate jobs. For instance, we have one man in the market who is selling CDs. This is a very effective company. I could save money in Finland by having 10 people, but I would lose West have if I added two people, I wouldn’t necessarily add business.”

POWERFUL FORCE

Major retailers are proving to be a powerful force for change in single-mark.

The advantage of expanding your lineup in a wide range of musical genres, while at the same time we want to develop new artists using the kind of long-term strategy which this company has so far lacked. We want artists who are steadily selling.

One advantage that WMJ has over other Japanese record companies, says Hashizume, is that unlike many labels, WMJ is not affiliated with a hardware manufacturer.

“Warner’s belief is that everybody involved in making records must make a profit, while traditionally in the music industry, where the parent company is usually a known classical composer, the record company, or somebody else—is victimized in order for the parent company to make money. We cannot expect to develop talented artists or capable staff in such a poor climate.”

Another priority for the company, Takeukena and Hashizume agree, is promoting its corporate identity. The Warner name is not nearly as well known in Japan as, say, Sony or Toshiba-EMI.

Hashizume sees WMJ’s hiring of both artists to be a turning point for the company.

“They’ve shifted from stressing English skills to [developing] a market-orientated strategy, and it’s obvious that the Japanese know the Japanese music market very well,” he says. “This is because at present you can’t expect to find somebody in Japan who understands the knowledge of [and rich experience with] this industry. It will take a couple of decades before you see people at the company’s top management level.”

After March. Kosugi will serve as a consulting producer on various WMJ projects. Warner Music International president Stephen Shrimpton will be WMJ’s acting chairman until a replacement is found. Reporting to Shrimpton will be WMJ vice chairman Kiyoji Hachii, Takeukena, and Hashizume.

An exchange rate of 112 yen to 1 was used for this story.

FRENCH FUND TO FINANCE NEW WORK

(Continued from preceding page)

percentage of total record sales in France, was presented by the ministry of culture three years ago but was unanimously rejected by the major French and European record companies. It was announced during MIDEM 1996, took about a year to take off. According to the ministry of culture, the French “can do it on their own first step.” Nevertheless, some consider the scope of the fund to be limited. Industry sources point out that the amount allocated is quite small when compared to other countries. Other points out that the ministry of culture has not put any money into the fund although it has been a driving force behind it. Independent producers claim that a 50% guarantee is not enough because of the high costs involved in all record production-related projects. “To be efficient, this fund should guarantee up to 70% of the financing of a project,” says an industry source. Others have called for a system similar to one established in Quebec, where government-backed music support agency Musicaction is giving local producers with recoupable subsidies. Independent producers regret that so many of the projects supported by the government to music production, as compared to the cinema industry. Billboard has learned that independent producers and organizing body its plans to run a lobbying campaign during the next MIDEM in which it will ask for better treatment for the music industry. The French government’s $40 million (FF 3.3 billion) program set aside to stimulate French film production, for example, drew $1.92 billion (FF 10 million) for music production.

To overcome the limitations of the French government’s recording fund, a new record production is under discussion within the Fund for Musical Creation. This fund will allocate non-recoupable subsidies to indie producers as a way to enhance the production of new talent.

Short Opera Target Pop Fans

Composer’s ‘Crossover Classic’ Set On BMG Ariola

BY ELLIE WEINERT

MUNICH—BMG Ariola is aiming to make the ‘Crossover Classic’ set the new up-to-date for the MTV generation.

BMG is continuing to promote a new work from one of Germany’s best-known classical composers who comprises two one-act operas

Eberhard Schoener, one of Germany’s most renowned directors and conductors of classical music, says, “I always felt that operas in general were too lengthy, and nowadays, in our fast-paced world, it has become even more essential to write short-form operas. Two and a half years ago, Thomas M. Stein [BMG Ariola Germany/Switzerland/Austria managing director] inquired whether I would like to produce a ‘crossover classic’ project for BMG. I told him that I thought I could produce short operas; he immediately believed in this project and gave me the go-ahead.”

The first part of “Short Operas” (BMG Ariola Munich) is called “Pulpixi Dell’Amore.” It tells the story of famous lovers in history and features Italian rock star Gianna Nannini and Germany’s “Sunset Boulevard” star Helen Schneider. The songs are sung in Italian and English, with the choice singing in German.

The second opera, “Cold Genius,” is about the short life of cult sewer Lou Reed and features German rock singer George Kochek (formerly front man of Georgie Red) with the assistance of internationally renowned bass baritone Kurt Moll. They are accompanied by the United Philharmonic Orchestra of Budapest.

After studying violin and conducting (under the late Sergio Celibidache), Schoener played first violin in the Berliner of the Bavarian State Opera before becoming leader of the world of pop music. During the course of his career, Schoener has worked with the likes of David Bowie, The Rolling Stones, and Rock Meets Classical televised concerts in the 70s and 80s, featuring artists as diverse as Mike Oldfield, Eddy Grant, Tangerine Dream, and Jack Bruce. He has a long list of TV and film music to his credit, plus numerous cross-cultural projects with musicians from China, Japan, and Malaysia.

Projects under consideration by Schoener include the writing of another short opera and the premiere of the works at one of America’s leading opera houses, the Los Angeles Opera, within the next year.

“I realize I am undertaking a tight rope act trying to win over rock ‘n’ roll audiences who would never set foot in an opera house, but simultaneously trying not to lose the traditional opera lover. However, I think my chances are pretty good, because my concerts are attended by parents—who know my work for the past 20 years—as well as their children, who know me as a special guest for their operas. I believe the crossover phenomenon is almost similar to that of the Rolling Stones today,” he concludes.

Warner Music Names New Heads In Europe

At Teldec, Munich, Mario Bignotti has been named acting president until a permanent appointment is made. He replaces Hans Hirsch, who has retired from the post but remains a consultant to the group. Bignotti retains his role as president of Warner Classics International, based in London.

At WEA France, Laure Le Ny takes over as managing director Jan. 15. For the past five years, she has been managing director of Epic in France. Le Ny replaces Philippe Laoc, who resigned in September.

JEFF CLARK/MEAD

FRENCH FUND TO FINANCE NEW WORK

(Continued from preceding page)

percentage of total record sales in France, was presented by the ministry of culture three years ago but was unanimously rejected by the major French and European record companies. It was announced during MIDEM 1996, took about a year to take off. According to the ministry of culture, the French “can do it on their own first step.” Nevertheless, some consider the scope of the fund to be limited. Industry sources point out that the amount allocated is quite small when compared to other countries. Other points out that the ministry of culture has not put any money into the fund although it has been a driving force behind it. Independent producers claim that a 50% guarantee is not enough because of the high costs involved in all record production-related projects. “To be efficient, this fund should guarantee up to 70% of the financing of a project,” says an industry source. Others have called for a system similar to one established in Quebec, where government-backed music support agency Musicaction is giving local producers with recoupable subsidies. Independent producers regret that so many of the projects supported by the government to music production, as compared to the cinema industry. Billboard has learned that independent producers and organizing body its plans to run a lobbying campaign during the next MIDEM in which it will ask for better treatment for the music indus-
P'GRAM GEARs UP FOR EUROPEAN CHALLENGE

(Continued from preceding page)

Nate products have dominated the global marketplace in which they compete and not necessarily have to feel that what works as a retail concept in Europe will work in Spain or Turkey," says Dobbs.

Among the mass merchants, he mentions French hypermarket giant Carrefour, which Dobbs says is the biggest retailer in Europe, but not necessarily in France. Carrefour is one of the largest music accounts in France and a reputation for doing a hard bargain with labels. "They're a very smart, powerful, effective, aggressive company," says Dobbs. "Last year, they installed what they call their own distribution on pallets, and they'll be essentially self-distributing. We currently sell them territory by territory, as we do with Free and Mic. We've got our product in retail in Europe clearly demonstrates that individual territorial boundaries don't mean much to them.

REGIONAL SUPPLY CENTER

PolyGram's response to the diminishing number of active recording artists in Germany, at least, is that it has recast its distribution facility as a "regional supply center," even as the company has expanded its relationships. "We're preparing for the future," comments Dobbs.

That future could include an increasing number of outlets that operate regionally and make product purchases not territorially, but via one outlet. In this scenario, the product would be shipped to the store in various countries. "This will not be a one-way street," Dobbs says. "If the supply is going to be distributed to stores, it will be easier for artists to explore deals with companies in other countries. Can we have local regional labels working with the quandary of whether to sign directly with a Canada-based label, which would likely be able to provide artists with their own national recording, or to sign with a U.S.-based label, which practically assures them of a U.S. as well as a Canadian presence?

According to sources here, a deal with the Canada-based affiliate of a multinational label generally guarantees U.S. release, even though advance guarantees for most other major territories have become common. At the same time, sources here say that they've seen a trend toward having a U.S. label hold a portion of a U.S. release. In other words, a Canadian label may likely hold on for a cut at least several albums, particularly if there have been signs of success domestically or elsewhere. In contrast, a group will most likely be dropped by an American label if it has no success in the U.S., even if it does have a following in Canada.

"We're on record sites, and signed in Canada," says Oak's president Doug McCarver. "A Canadian label can sign an artist and sell their record to us, as well as other U.S. labels. We aim to provide them with a chance to be heard in the U.S.," says McCarver. "This is a great opportunity for the artists."

"When it comes to distribution, the record company is looking for an efficient way to get their product to the stores." In this scenario, the product is distributed to the stores in various countries, and the stores are provided with the product in the way they want it. This is not a one-way street, but rather a two-way street where the artists and record companies can work together to ensure that the product is available in the stores where it is most needed.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Many industry figures argue that in the future, Canadian-based affiliates of multinationals must take a more aggressive role, including a substantially greater financial risk, to ensure that their acts get a chance internationally, particularly in the U.S. Otherwise, the companies must be prepared to give greater freedom to their acts to make deals with labels outside of Canada.

Sutherland says Canadian companies should put up money for international touring, promotion, and showcasing, or else the label or act must be able to make their plans on the act's own.

"Canadian labels are new to having to make a greater financial investment," says Kulin. "But I think we're seeing that the number of artists companies here can make a commitment to. Another approach might be to support joint ventures, which is what we're doing more and more, particularly with our U.S. labels."

Many industry figures are not convinced that Canadian-based labels will dig into their pockets to further sales of Canadian music abroad.
U.K.: With just nine full-time staffers working from the bucolic setting of an old mill in Box, Wiltshire, WOODAM is a remarkable organization. Last month, the company staged its first London festival in its 15-year existence, taking over the Barbican Centre for three days. African artists such as Papa Wemba (Zaire), Salif Keita (Mali), and Thomas Mapfumo (Zimbabwe) re-entertained the normally arts and theater crowd, into a symphony of arts and theater. There were more reflective sounds on offer, too, with the divine Buddhist songs of Tibetan exile Yunchen Lhamo and the ecstatic Sufi devotional chants of the Sahib Brothers from Pakistan; in other words, the classic and exotic WOODAM mix. Thomas Brennan, who has been Peter Gabriel’s set WOODAM all these years ago, says, “At its best, WOODAM transports people outside the usual house of culture to a temporary, surreal village.” These days, Brooman travels the globe, looking for fresh talent to promote and new festival venues. On Dec. 29, WOODAM staged its first-ever venture in Sar-
dtie for its two nights at the Venice Carrierte in Early February. Then it’s off to Australia for WOmenadale Feb, 3-28 March 2, with 30 acts, including Keita, Richard Thompson, Radio Tarifa, and the Afro-Celt Sound System. With almost the same bill, the show goes to Auckland, New Zealand. After a couple of early-summer festivals in France and Spain, the show goes back for the annual British tour at WOmanread, starting July 25-27. Watch this space for details.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

POLAND: “Swierczewo” (Cricket), released on Pamaton EMI, is the debut album by actress Graza T., who is known for her roles in many films, especially “Luch Eros” (Eros’ Bow), a controversial movie that was seen by 2.5 million people. Graza T., whose real name is Graza Czerniakowska-Drozdz, recorded the album before, and her voice is heard in the background. The album was produced by Marek Grechuta and as a part of a duo with Grzegorz Turau. She hit the singles chart here in the summer of 96 with the new album’s title track, a song full of warm emotion that was written by Jaroslaw Senek. This album is a similarly lo-fi, soulful style, with many songs reflecting Graza’s love of reggae rhythms, supplied in the studio by musicians from Poland’s top reggae band, Daab.

PABRITI STOPPELSKAPA

INDONESIA: “We set some kind of a record today,” says Jak Jazz ’96 organizer Irvan Maulana. “But pulling together an international music festival in just three weeks is something we’d rather not do again!” Planning for Jak Jazz ’96—the sixth Jakarta International Jazz Festival held in the capital since 1992—was only in mid-October, when the Baki, a major Indonesian business conglomerate, guaranteed much-needed financial backing. Headlining the Dec. 6-8 gala, which was attended by about 12,000, were Sadao Watanabe from Japan, Mezzoforte from Ireland, and American groups led by guitarist Mike Stern and saxophonist Eric Marienthal. More than 30 local bands, mostly playing electronic pop-jazz, were also featured on five stages. The five earlier festivals had featured a far broader musical spectrum, but Maulana views this year’s Jak Jazz as a step toward greater stability now that Baki has committed to substantial financial support for four more years. “Look for better-oriented jazz and pop-jazz, a five-year-and-a-half-extended international awareness that Jakarta’s a great place to hear jazz every December.”

PAUL BLAIR

IRELAND: Anuna has released its fourth album, “Deep Dead Blue” (Danu Records), with a title track by Elvis Costello and Bill Frisell. The groundbreaking choral group—best known for its vocal contribution to Bill Whelan’s single “Riverdance,” which spent a week at No. 3 in the Irish charts—made the album for the debut album of 1.7 million copies in the country. The album was produced by Michael McGlynn, a soloist with Anuna who is heard on four tracks of “Deep Dead Blue,” has quit the group to concentrate on her solo career. Quinn sang the 1996 Eurovision Song Contest entry “The Voice,” written by Brendan Graham. But while acknowledging that “Eurovision was a wonderful and unbelievable experience,” she says, “I would like to be accepted and recognized as more than just a song contest winner. I know I have so much more to offer, and I intend to prove it.”

PAUL BLAIR

FRANCE: Musicals have rarely been fashionable in France in the way they have been in the U.K. or the U.S. One of the few last lasting successes is “Starmania,” composed in 1977 by the late Michel Berger with lyricist Luc Plamondon from Quebec. First performed in Paris in 1978 with a Franco-Canadian cast including Daniel Balavoine, Claude Dubois, France Gall, Nanette Stass and Fabienne Toulouse, this rock opera about life in the underground of the fictional city of Monopole has been a continuing success ever since. Several versions with different casts have been performed in different cities. The American version was produced by Tim Rice and renamed “Tycoon” (with performances by Celine Dion, Cyndi Lauper, Peter Kingbery, and Nina Hagen); that version has been produced in London. WEA Music, which has the rights to the music, claims to have sold 25 million copies of the album in the U.K. alone. Now, the company is releasing the original 1979 recording, remastered and including a karaoke version. In addition, the main themes of “Starmania” have been given an instrumental jazz treatment by French band Quintet Debartul on its latest album, also released on WEA. Another stage production was unveiled Oct. 22 in Paris and is set to tour the country in 1997.

KENT STEWART

PABRITI STOPPELSKAPA

www.americanradiohistory.com
Exercise Video Market Gets Fit
Selective Retailers, Research Boost Sales

By EILEEN FITZPATRICK

LOS ANGELES—After suffering two years of lackluster sales, the exercise video market is slowly getting back into shape with the help of a leaner title selection and improved market research.

In the first quarter of 1996, usually the weakest quarter for the category, exercise video sales fell 20% compared with the first three months of 1994, according to VideoScan. In 1996, the picture brightened, with first-quarter sales posting an increase of 7.6% over the first quarter of 1995. The third quarter of 1996, the latest figures available, exhibited a 2% increase over third-quarter '95. This, too, was an improvement over third-quarter '95, when sales were down 18% from the same period in 1994.

"Over the last couple of years, retailers have become more selective," says Kathy Smith, Lifestyles president Russ Kamalski. "There has to be a reason to take in the product, and what they're taking in is proven performers.

When the category began to decline, dealers began weeding out poor-performing celebrity tapes and faded trends.

"It was like starting from ground zero," says Best Buy video merchandiser Joe Pagano. Last spring, the 250-store chain completely reworked its exercise selection, narrowing its title section and expanding its depth. "The total amount of units we carry is the same, but the number of titles we carry is less," says Pagano.

Since Best Buy implemented the new strategy, fitness sales have experienced double-digit increases at the chain, Pagano says.

That's good news for proven players like WarnerVision's Smith, Jane Fonda, and the Buns of Steel series, as well as PPI Entertainment's Denise Austin and BMG Video's "The Firm" series, which accounted for a majority of the exercise sales in 1996, according to VideoScan.

In VideoScan's top 10 selling exercise videos of 1996, Austin, the Firm, and Buns of Steel occupied six slots.

Within the last three months, PPI has seen Austin's market share increase from 18% to 18%, according to PPI's director of marketing and public relations Gary Korb.

In addition to being a well-established fitness pro, Austin has scored her highest sales ever at retail with "The Hit Spot, Abs.

Priced at $9.98, the title has sold 300,000 units since its release in 1996, according to Korb.

"Denise has become her own cottage industry," says Korb, "and we have some of the best pricing in the industry." Also in VideoScan's top 10 list for best-selling music video's "The Grind," "LIVE HOME Video's "Paula Abdul's Get Up And Dance," PolyGram Video's "Reebok Dance Steps," and CBS/Fox Video's "Claudia Schiffer Perfectly Fit Abs." Newcomers are slowly breaking into the market.

"Our orders were not as reduced as I thought they would be," says Anchor Bay president George Port regarding first-quarter retail buys for the company's 2-year old Crunch line.

"The numbers aren't going down, and we're not seeing any erosion of the category," Port observes.

At market leader WarnerVision, a year of management upheaval took the focus off of its core lines. But in 1997, new marketing efforts are due to pay off.

This month, Kehler low-fat and nonfat crackers will drop a coupon to 40 million households, advertising a premium offer forfitness tape not available at retail.

The ad will also tout Smith's new Functionally Fit videos, which promise "a premium offer for fitness tape not available at retail.

We're being very aggressive in expanding Kathy beyond video," says Kamalski. "We want to reach the consumer on a lot of different levels."


"The title's a major hit," says WarnerVision distribution manager Jeff Williams. "PPF won't be dropping coupons, but Austin's profile will increase through a number of media appearances.

Austin will also star in "The Daily Workout," which debuted on Lifetime in December, and she recently signed a spokeswoman deal with Seventh Avenue and the Florida Department of Citrus.

She is also a contributor to NBC's "Weekend Today" show and has appeared on "Patio Life," "Live with Regis," and "MTV's Beach House.

Korb says Austin will make numerous in-store appearances to promote the hit "Spot the Spot." Not all suppliers and retailers, however, are calling exercise the comeback category of 1996.

"I don't think it has bounced back, it's just stabilized," says BMG Video associate director of marketing Michelle Fiddler. "The category isn't on the upsweep, but it's our job to make sure the titles out there keep selling."

BMG plans extensive print advertising and a mail-in campaign to keep sales of the Firm healthy.

Some dealers say that the category probably doesn't have much growth left in it, but it can still be a profit center.

"You have to accept exercise for what it is," says one buyer for a major chain. "You can do as much business with less amount of units.

Continued on page 73

Camelot Unveils Ambitious Web Site
Retailer Aims To Put Entire CD Inventory Online

By CATHERINE APPLEFIELD OLSON

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Camelot Music is certainly the first music retailer to hang a shingle on the Internet, but with plans to put its entire CD inventory online and enable shoppers to sample every track on every album, it aims to be among the most successful.

The North Canton, Ohio-based chain made its World Wide Web foray last month with a retail site it is calling the Camelot Music CD Genie (www.camelotmusic.com). Bob Roberts, Camelot VP of marketing, says the site has been receiving an average of 120,000 hits per day.

Currently, the online store stocks the top 250 selections spanning eight musical genres, but Roberts says Camelot aims to bring its full inventory of 80,000 CD titles online, with browsers able to preview a 30-second sound bite from each track using Real Audio 3.0 software. Pricing for CD's is on par with other prices in the stores.

"We are planning to have every title and every track from every album available online, with more than 1.2 million sound bites," says Roberts.

"The way the site was built, it is a fast download and very easy to browse."

To get the site up and running, Camelot enlisted the support of Columbus, Ohio-based Web site architect MC4, which helped bring it to fruition in weeks and in time for the gift-buying season.

To help drum up online business during these heavy shopping days, Camelot is offering through the end of the year a promotion in conjunction with an online direct marketer of consumer magazines with which MC4 is also working. Customers who purchase two CDs from the Camelot site get a free one-year subscription to Rolling Stone magazine; those who purchase five or more CDs get yearlong subscriptions to Rolling Stone and Spin.

"Once someone makes their purchases, the magazines show up on their order form as a free subscription," Roberts says.

Camelot also is engaged in a cross-marketing effort with the official Jimmy Buffett Margaritaville Web site (http://www.margaritaville.com). The Camelot stores are selling Buffett collector's Christmas cards and ornaments, and the Buffett site is providing advertising for Camelot's Internet store, Roberts says.

The Camelot site has a customer service angle as well. To add a personal touch to the often generic online experience, the Genie includes a Gift Picker service that helps shoppers select the perfect gift for others or themselves. "You provide their age and genres of interest, as well as some other information, and it comes back with a list of suggestions," Roberts says.

Unlike most Web pages nowadays, there's a promotion angle. Roberts says Camelot will use the site to inform customers about such events as in-store performances, signings, and relevant concerts.

Camelot makes its Web debut at a time when the Internet is enduring growing pains as it shifts from a purely informational medium to a commercial one.

Roberts says he is not at all fazed by the recent news that MCI Corp. is shuttering its 1-800-MUSIC--NOW music service and online Marketplace, which also sold albums. "What happened with them is one of the reasons we wanted to be online in the first place," he says. "Camelot Music has significant brand equity we think we can bring to our site, as opposed to others who have attempted to sell music online online that are just starting out."
Ky.'s Cut Corner Splits The Difference

Store Sells CDs, Cassettes On 1st Floor; Videos Downstairs

By PATRICIA BATES

LEXINGTON, Ky.—At Cut Corner Records & Video, the basement tapes are in the cellar—that's where any of 2,000 movies can be rented. Meanwhile, 23,000 titles of new and used CDs and cassettes are sold on the first floor. And patrons swear they like this upstair/downstairs setup.

In 1998, sales climbed 5%-10% at the 2,000-square-foot store at 377 South Limestone. For about a decade, it has been at this location, near the University of Kentucky (UK) campus, which has approximately 25,000 students, says Wesley Miller, Cut Corner's manager since August 1985. He notes an increase in minority enrollment at UK, so one in five students is in the '80s, and says the store now has more R&B and world beat artists in its inventory along with modern rock. "We've seen a tremendous gain in rap and R&B," says Miller.

The top-selling albums in early November were E-40, Phish, and the Beatles. Other big sellers were 2Pac, R.E.M., Grateful Dead, Smashing Pumpkins, R11, Outkast, Alanis Morissette, Sarah McLachlan, and Marilyn Manson.

As for competition, the Record Cellar closed in April 1998. Another independent retailer, Bear's Wax, has the most LPs in Lexington and is next door to Cut Corner, which stocks only about 1,200 albums on vinyl and 750 7-inch singles. In the past two years, CD Central opened within walking distance of Cut Corner; it features the "Top 200" new and used CDs. That makes a trio of music stores in this downtown one-block radius.

Cut Corner has the longevity, though, and advertises itself as "home to Lexington's serious music buyer for over 15 years." It has been in the entertainment district since 1980, relocating three times.

"Our competition isn't as much from one another as it is from Best Buy on Nicholasville Road," says Miller, who was once the book manager for Media Play in Columbus, Ohio. "For us, Best Buy has affected the store the most. If they are in their direction, they are more likely to go there than here."

He adds, "We identified our market and realized that we didn't have to compete with Best Buy, which came into Lexington after we had been here for three years. Then, we couldn't stock that many new CDsteen Steeples CDs, but then they probably have to special-order the stuff."

Both a Disc Jockey store—with its Top 200 assortment—and J's BookSELLers—with 20,000 mostly classical, jazz, New Age, and blues titles—are inside the mall at Lexington Green on Eastern Avenue. Disc Jockey is one of the superstores in the 150-plus Wax/Works/VideoWorks chain based in Owensboro, Ky.

"We offer about 20% used CDs in stock—a 4-to-1 ratio—which they don't," says Miller. "It's a role reversal, as far as we're concerned. They become the customer when we purchase a used CD."

At Cut Corner, "reissues also do extremely well for us, and about 10% of our business is from classic rock," Miller says. "Not a week goes by, its season, that the labels are not releasing a digitally remastered CD."

Cut Corner says about 45% of its transactions are by women, which is higher than in many record stores. About 50%-60% of its business is from UK, and another 25%-30% is from customers who are within two miles of the store.

"We're not a rack-em-and-stack-em place," says Miller. "We keep it as neat as we can in the limited amount of space we have here. We feel we have 10 knowledgeable employees, and three or four of their friends. We give retail sales and the ownership of a section, so they are paid more than if they were working behind a counter."

Some are former times: John Howard has been with Cut Corner for 10 years; Ralf Hall for six years. Miller says the store is located in northwest Kentucky, Louisville has more independent music stores than Lexington, which is in the central region. Yet UK's nationally ranked Wildcats basketball team and the thoroughbred horse farms make Lexington a destination for alumni and sports fans.

"We sell some Japanese, British, Australian, and French vinyl, which we get through two distributors: Phantom, in Costa Mesa, Calif." says Miller. "The import albums are expensive, so we have almost 90% domestic vinyl. We give away 10-20 new CDs every day, though, because tape is always going to be the weakest sound carrier."

Surprisingly, country music is not strong here.

"Here we are in the midst of Kentucky, and we don't give away country CDs," says Miller, despite artists like John Michael Montgomery, who lives—and once played— at bars in monastery towns in the Lexington area.

MUSIC CHOICE, a provider of music programming for businesses, says that its programs will be carried in 150 TV Friday's company provides 37 music channels—with formats that include rock, jazz, classical, blues, country, Mexican, and children's—and a single source for audio and video with a DirectTV satellite dish and receiver. Music Choice is part of Digital Cable Radio Associates, a partnership among Sony Software, Warner Music Group, EMI Music, General Instrument, and several cable operators.

THE GOOD GUYS, a San Francisco-based electronics chain, reports that two of the most popular items this holiday season have been Web TV, an Internet-access service manufactured by Sony and Philips, and selling for about $300, and a digital satellite system priced below $200.

MADACY ENTERTAINMENT will be the sole distributor of K-tei International's music products in Canada. K-tei, which is based in Minnesota, specializes in action picture soundtracks and song catalog work that will dramatically improve positioning of our music products in the Canadian marketplace."

RENTAK projects that revenue and profit for the quarter ended Dec. 31 will be lower than those in the same period last year. The pay-per-view transaction video cassette distributor estimates revenue of $22 million, or $0.25 for shareholders, he reported for the same period last year. It also says that "at best, earnings will be down significantly from last year's record $1.5 million." The company contends that '96 video titles were "substantially weaker" than those of last year. Rentak also reports that the movie distribution is for content to shareholders, which it has spun off to shareholders, is $2.50 per share.

UNIVERSAL PICTURES has formed a three-year first-look production deal with director/producer Jonathan Demme. Clinique Estetic, the Richmond production company of Demme and Edward Saxon, will produce films and develop projects for Demme to direct. Demme will supervise the Robyn Hitchcock concert film "Storefront Hitchcock." In other news, Universal Studios is offering more than $100,000 in prizes through its first holiday World Wide Web site. Information about movies, music, home video, television, and entertainment is provided on a site. Through Jan. 10, visitors are eligible to win video games and other merchandise.

NEWS CORP. has established Japan Sky Broadcasting Co. Limited with Softbank Corp., to provide digital satellite broadcast services to Japan. JskyB, will begin operations in April 1998. The parties are also developing Sky Entertainment, which will broadcast 12 channels over the satellite service, including Sky Music, a new music channel associated with News Corp's recently announced partnership with Japanese producer Tetsuya Komuro.

ALLIED DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES, a CD and cassette replicator, reports net profit of $488,000 on $48.3 million in sales in the first fiscal quarter, which ended Oct. 31, compared with a profit of $511,000 on $47.3 million in sales in the same period a year ago. CEO George Fishman states, "These first-quarter results give us the first benefits of both the lower break-even point that we have been striving for in light of the general softness in the music industry and the beginning of our emergence from the seasonality of the entertainment business, as we continue to see sales initially on our current product mix."

DISTRIBUTION: Un Distribition in Universal City, Calif., appoints Michele Christiansen to national marketing coordinator and Billy Slutter to national merchandising coordinator. They were, respectively, an A&R administrator at Quest Records and senior field representative at PolyGram Distribution.

HOME VIDEO: Video Products Distributors in Sacramento, Calif., promotes Tom Kirby to VP of sales and appoints Gregory Glass to VP of video information solutions and services. They were, respectively, director of sales and national account manager for Diamond Walnut Growers Inc.

ENTERACTIVE: Jay Samit is appointed VP of Universal New Media Group in Universal City, Calif. He is the founder of Jasmine Multimedia Publishing.

RELATED FIELDS: Showtime Networks in New York City, promotes Stuart M. Benson to VP of financial operations and affiliate audit and Vicki Letizia to director of creative affairs, motion pictures, and Showtime Entertainment Group. They were, respectively, a VP of finance for Showtime Satellite Networks and manager of creative affairs.

Universal Studios Consumer Products Group in Universal City, Calif., appoints Timothy Rothwell VP of sales and promotes Rosalind Nowicki to VP of apparel and home furnishings and John Dumbacher to VP of retail. They were, respectively, national sales manager for Jet, and president of Children's apparel, senior director of licensing, and VP of sales.

Michael Boswell is appointed VP of programming, Midwest Region, and VP of programming at Storer, Ill. He was VP of programming at Ultima Communications.

(Continued on page 72)
Merchants & Marketing

Infusion Of Cash Revitalizes Ailing Alliance Entertainment

SINCE MID-NOVEMBER, when it became clear that Alliance Entertainment Corp. was having a cash flow problem, members of the industry’s financial community have feared that in mid-January, instead of making payments for holiday purchases, Alliance managers would come to them with their hats in their hands. But their worries were alleviated Dec. 20 when Alliance investors Wasserstein, Perella & Co. and BT Capital Partners agreed to put an additional $15 million into the company. In return for putting up $7.5 million each, the companies received a combination of preferred stock and debentures, which can be converted at a later date to shares of Alliance common stock.

According to Wasserstein, Perella and BT Capital executives, the infusion is sufficient to solve Alliance’s short-term liquidity needs. As for long-term capital requirements, a press release states that the company will go to shareholders with a $85 million rights offering during the first half of the year (probably in April, according to sources). In that offering, current Alliance shareholders will have the chance to buy convertible preferred stock, which can be exchanged for common stock at $22.50 or 75% of the price for which the stock is trading at the time, whichever is less.

In order to make the offering more attractive, Wasserstein, Perella has agreed to become the lead manager in the rights offering as well as to subscribe to a certain portion of the offering. That amount will be determined by the funds raised from other shareholders in the rights offering.

Robert Marakovits, a partner at BT Capital, explains the impetus behind his firm’s additional investment in Alliance Entertainment. “A lot of people have completely written off the music industry, particularly on the retail and wholesale side; they think it is dead,” states Marakovits, who sits on the Alliance board. “Our view is that the industry will recover. The right investments made in the darkest moments have the chance to generate extraordinary returns.”

In addition, the investment shows that BT Capital Partners, a subsidiary of Bankers Trust, strongly supports Alliance and its management team. “[Alliance co-chairman] Joe Bianco has built a very important and powerful distribution company, and [Alliance co-chairman/CEO] Al Teller is the right guy to deal with the rationalization of the company’s independent distribution arm and then build and leverage the distribution and the content ideas off of one another.” (Continued on page 72)

He’s Winnie the Pooh, and he’s quite a big deal!

Pooh and his friends have had quite a year in 1996. With over 1.5MM Pooh audio units sold last year, the Take My Hand album reached #138 on the Billboard 200, while the Sing-Along reached #122!

But, Pooh isn’t finished yet—he’s just getting started! With bright new packaging, exciting displays, and retail promotions, Pooh is slated to become a sell-through powerhouse for 1997. Look for these Pooh audio products from Walt Disney Records.

STOCK UP NOW!

Share the music of Disney at our website: http://www.disney.com/DisneyRecords
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Indies Can't Afford To Attend MIDEM

Fewer Attendees Sign Up For NAIRD's Booth

No Cannes do: The top of 1997 is not arriving full of good news for the National Association of Independent Records Distributors and Manufacturers (NAIRD).

For years, NAIRD has helped a booth for indie companies at MIDEM, which in 97 is being held Jun. 19-23 in Cannes. Over the last several years, the number of companies taking stands in the NAIRD space for meetings with international suppliers has steadily increased. In 1996, a record 20 companies journeyed to France with the trade group.

For ’97, however, “it doesn’t look good,” according to NAIRD executive director Pat Martin Bradley. “Thus far this year we have 14 companies going. It’s really bad.”

The NAIRD space will occupy the NAIRD booth this year, which includes Alligator, Blind Pig, Drive Entertainment, Green Linnet, Heart & Soul, High Road Music, Righteous Babe, Street Music, Winter Harvest, and Eastern Front; replicators Distinctive Products and Gelandi Designs; and wholesalers M.S. Distributing and World Music Distributors.

Given the nature of the business in ’96, the reason for the dramatic decline in midem participation by the indie should come as no surprise to anyone. A “Econica’s,” Bradley says. “They simply can’t afford it this year.

In the last month, I’ve had 10 companies that have canceled. Out of the 10, eight of those said it was strictly (for financial reasons alone.)

Bradley reports that some longtime MIDEM attendees are now weighing other options for booking with overseas reps. Unsurprisingly, given NAIRD’s increasing focus on the worldwide music trade, some are reviewing the options of hiring a music exporter as an option. Bradley says that Tom Silverman of Tommy Boy Records has told her about how he takes his independent meetings this year at the NAIRD confab, which is being held May 21-25 at the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans.

The MIDEM callout hasn’t just hit NAIRD alone: John Kuma, a member of the trade group’s board who represents reps and co-owner of the Watermelon Records label in Austin, Texas, confirms a report from his friend that Texas’ music industry will not take part in this year’s MIDEM.

In years past, the Texas booth, organized by the industrious Casey Monauck of the Texas Music Office, included such acts present and past: Lone Star indie labels as Dejaque, Arto’s, and Watermelon, as well as out-of-staters like Hall & Pravda and Pravda that feature Texas talent.

Kuma indicates that, as in the case of the NAIRD booth, Texas companies felt that the cost of attending the Cannes session was just too high after a taxing year in the industry. According to Kuma, representatives of the Nashville music business may take over the Texas space at MIDEM.

Bradley says she is in the midst of conservation with other organizers concerning the allocation of NAIRD's unused space to other parties.

Summing things up, Bradley says, “It’s only a symptom that the smaller companies in the NAIRD group stand is disappointing.”

**FOR THE RECORD:** In our Dec. 7 item about John Fahey’s new label, Revenant Records, we wrote, based on information that Revenant’s distributor Koeh Christmas International had received from label manager Ken Blackwood, that a collection of unissued Josee Holcomb’s Folkways recordings was due from the label next year.

However, we learn that a communication from Brenda Dunlap, marketing director of Smithsonian/Folkways Records, who wrote that the Holcomb sides “are among Smithsonian Folkways’ most important recordings, and we have no plans [to license] them to another company.” Dunlap adds that Smithsonian/Folkways will reissue the Holcomb material at a date to be determined.

FLAG WAV poster: A decade ago is it possible? We penned the liner notes to “Pigpen Christmas Memories,” the debut Down To Earth/Enigma release by L.A. band Top Jimmy & the Rhythm Pigs.

We had gone to know the group well — maybe too well — as the result of missing many, many Monday nights at the Rhythm Pigs’ infamous residency at the Cathay De Grande, a subterranean dive on Santa Monica Blvd.

The Rhythm Pigs’ management of the suitably heavyweight “The Cathay was and is (1995/96) a small room,” he will have a further, probably the worst thing, is everybody’s share with me for a while.”
KENTUCKY'S CUT CORNER SPLITS THE DIFFERENCE

(Continued from page 69)

"The Shania Twains and the Mavericks and all—this is the country of the '90s, and it was supposed to appeal to young college students, but it hasn't for us," says Miller. "We also ordered just one CD on Alan Jackson, though his new album debuted in the top 25 to 30 albums on the Top 200."

Lexington does support regional bands such as Catawampus Universe, whose "sound is like a combination of Grateful Dead, Bob Marley, and Phish," says Miller. Other area bands are the Hookers and Robby Feeter.

Cut Corner makes direct purchases of regional CDs, instead of buying on consignment. "We'll take 50 CDs by Catawampus Universe at a time, and that may last us for weeks or up to three months," says Miller. "They have the same markup as our other CDs. For our bookkeeping, it's eliminated stacks of paperwork and the open invoices.

Cut Corner has one-month advertising contracts with radio, instead of promoting one-nighters at Lexington-area clubs like the Wreckage, Area 41, and House of Heresy, says Miller. In late October, it was the advance-ticket outlet for George Clinton's P-Funk Allstars and filled 400 seats at $25 each at the House of Heresy.

As for radio, "WKQ-FM 98.1 has the most listener awareness for us, and they are Lexington's 40,000-watt modern and classic rock station," Miller says. "TheBeat! WTKT-AM 1580 would be next for us, with its interactive merchandising that makes the biggest impact on records."

Miller says that the Alliance board, the first meeting after the investment, "was a big thing. We agreed on the case at the last minute, to make sure that there would be a buyout clause for us."

Anil Narang, vice chairman of Alliance Entertainment Corp., says that the incremental investments by Waterstein, Perella and BT Capital should give confidence to other current and potential investors. With the $7.5 million in convertible debentures and preferred stock, Waterstein, Perella now has about a 25% stake, on a fully diluted basis, up from 18%; BT Capital Partners saw its holdings go to 23% from 15%.

One wrote that Alliance was negotiating with investors to inject additional funds into the company and was lining up a first-time investment from Apollo Advisors, a New York-based investment firm (Billboard, Nov. 23, 1996). That doesn't appear to be the case at the moment.

Ziebold points out, however, that the cash infusion solves Alliance's short-term issues. "We would rather raise capital when the company is strong, rather than in the weak music environment that we have now," he explains.

In the meantime, the first stage of the funding has resulted in a realignment of the Alliance board of directors. Under the new scheme, Waterstein, Perella controls six seats; BT Capital controls four; and Bain Capital, Teller, and Bianco control one.

When Teller came aboard, the Alliance board appeared to be under the control of Bianco, who at the time was the six board members and had a seat himself. Under the new alignment, Teller and Waterstein, Perella, the original backers in Red Ant Entertainment before it merged with Alliance, control the company.

Bianco says he has no problem with that. "AI really is the guy I wanted," he states. "I wanted a strong CEO that knew the music business and who was credible to the financial community, and AI Teller has both of those characteristics. He is the best executive I ever knew. He has been CEO since he came aboard, and now that the AI has control of the board, it's more of the same."".

Marakakis says, "Bianco has realized that he has taken the company as far as he can take it and that he needed someone who can bring it to the next level, and Bianco recognized that in AI."

Retail Track

(Continued from page 70)

Townsend Ziebold, a managing director at Waterstein, Perella and a member of the Alliance board, says that his company doesn't throw good money after bad. While the new investment is protecting the first investment made in Alliance, the new money has to stand on its own. The deal itself had to make sense.

Cut Corner Records & Video is located near the University of Kentucky campus in Lexington. Shown, from left, are Shawn McCarney, assistant manager/independent-alternative buyer; Ralf Hall, pricing and cutouts/sales; and Jami Ibrahim, sales of jazz, hip-hop, R&B, and blues. (Pho: Patricia Bates)
WHEREHOUSE
(Continued from page 3)

In terms of so-called "street cred," it would be difficult to out-
ストリートクレドにいけてきたい。スケーヤーのマスタード・リキター, "Sub" Urbia" puts a distinctly skewed spin on the
スケーヤーのマスタード・リキター, "Sub" Urbia" puts a distinctly skewed spin on the
studio sound.

This extends to the soundtrack, due Feb. 4 on DGC. The album is rife
with exclusive material, including tracks from underground stalwarts
such as Babe, The Knock, and Flaming Lips, but its most gainful
aspect is best evoked by the handful of tracks contributed by Sonic Youth,
who also provided the Castle Rock Entertainment film's score.

"We've known Eric since the late '70s, when we were all coming up on
the Sonic Youth guitarists Thurston Moore and Lee Ranaldo. Eric has always wanted to
work with us together, but we could never figure out how this came about.

While Moore scored the 1996 feature "Heaven," his solo artist, "Sub" Urbia" marks the first time
since 1980's "Made In The U.S.A." that Sonic Youth has worked in the
realm of film music, on a script that the band's singer, singer-guitarist
who also contributed the soundtrack album, "This Is Christmas 1997.

When Cerberus, which had made an investment in Wheresage, was
working on a possible buyout of the company, out of Chapter 11, it approached
Alvarez about running the chain. Alvarez agreed to take the position of
CEO, but he is retaining his post as the financial adviser to the.

In fact, his salary is split evenly between himself and his firm. But
Sonic Youth has made a commitment to Wheresage beyond becoming its
CEO. It is investing about $1 million
a year to help buy 10% of
the chain, and he has an option to buy another 10%.

I have agreed to invest money to become part owner of Wheresage,
so I am very committed to the chain. I am looking at it with a long-term view," he says.

Alvarez replaces Ogilvie, who will step down as CEO but will remain a
majority owner of the board of directors. Ogilvie joined the company as
president/CEO last summer, when Wheresage's future was not so cer-
tain. When Sundance came aboard, the non-official trade creditors
committee had just voted to liq-
date Wheresage. The trade creditors
had a contentious relationship with
Goldruss, Ogilvie's predecessor, and Ogilvie's evenhand-
ed stewardship is one of the main
reasons Wheresage is finally com-
ing out of Chapter 11 reorganization, according to parties familiar with
the proceedings.

Now that the Chapter 11 process, except for the paperwork, is behind
the chain, it is back to business as usual, says Alvarez. "We have to focus
on our customers and stores. We have to be very pointed in our marketing
(Continued on page 59)"
LOS ANGELES—C|NET: The Computer Network and Intel are teaming up to launch Mediadome, a World Wide Web site that contains exclusive entertainment content from several well-known music artists, including the Fugees, Chris Isaak, and Herbie Hancock.

Mediadome (http://www.mediadome.com), which features new "Webisode" programming every two weeks, will also contain interactive programming based on film and television properties, according to Cynthia Spence, manager of new media and entertainment content for Intel.

"We're trying to raise the bar on what is possible with entertainment delivered through the PC," says Intel spokesman Adam Grossberg. "We want to develop a branded site that marries the best technologies on the Internet into a compelling entertainment experience."

The site debuted Dec. 31 with a live Webcast of Bill Graham Presents San Francisco New Year's Eve. Video and audio streams of many of the site's music and comedy performances were available at the site. Acts that appeared on Mediadome's opening night include Isaak, Lyle Lovett, and Los Lobos.

Intel has developed interactive games based on popular minor videos by the Fugees and Hancock. Other acts are expected to be featured on the site in the coming months.

A game based on the Fugees' "Ready Or Not" clip contains three levels that challenge players to dodge missiles and other deterrents while engaging in a high-speed chase via submarine, motorcycle, and car. The game, which requires Macromedia's Shockwave plug-in, contains music samples and images of the band.

Editorial content and a streamed music video will also be featured on the Fugees' "Webisode" of Mediadome.

Web visitors will be able to immerse themselves in an online version of Hancock's "The Melody" video, which won the award for best jazz clip at the 1996 Billboard Music Video Awards. The interactive clip allows the Web user to navigate through a 3D virtual-reality re-creation of the clip's environment using Superscape's Viscape plug-in. Once inside the video environment, the player must solve puzzles contained in each of eight worlds to reach a final feature that allows participants to direct their own computer-generated versions of the clip.

Also debuting on Mediadome is interactive programming based on the forthcoming MGM action drama "Turbulence."

Intel and C|NET fully finance the development cost of the site's content and in exchange get a two-week exclusive right to use it at the Mediadome site. Ownership of the Web content remains with the copyright owner or artist. Two weeks after content debuts on Mediadome, it is archived at the site and will also be accessible at the Web site of the copyright owner or artist, including channels that Mediadome does not aim to compete with existing Web sites, such as the Fugees content that is found on Sony Music's site.

Intel, known as the maker of the Pentium processor, has made aggressive moves into the entertainment in the past year. The company recently opened a Los Angeles multimedia lab that caters to the creative community (see story this page), and it is involved in projects in companies that create compelling content for the home computer.

C|NET is one of the few multimedia entities that has been able to establish a strong brand identity on both television and the Internet. C|NET will promote the site and its programming in traditional media via several of its television programs, including "C|NET Central" and "TVCOM."

Mediadome's content aims to showcase what an Internet-connected computer can achieve, says Grossberg.

Mediadome comes as many sites experiment with ways to develop content that draws repeat visits from Web surfers; for example, Microsoft recently unveiled its "wiring" initiative with media site, Riff (Billboard, Nov. 2, 1996).

### Intel Experiments With Multimedia Lab

**Creative Artists Agency Venture Houses Latest Technology**

**BY GINA VAN DER VLIET**

Los Angeles—Intel and the Creative Artists Agency (CAA) are bringing technology and creative minds together in a new multimedia lab. The multimillion-dollar joint effort, located at CAA headquarters in Beverly Hills, Calif., aims to inspire and accelerate the development of compelling entertainment for home personal computers.

The 2,000-square-foot facility opened Dec. 12 and targets creative members of the film, television, and music industries with the latest computer technology. For Intel, the effort represents a way to cement a place in the entertainment industry. Intel is banking on entertainment content to drive sales of fast computers powered by its Pentium-based processors.

"The whole point of the lab is to showcase the creative possibilities that are enabled by technology," says Hanssan Miah, the CAA head of the new media group. "For creative people, a friend of mine represents a musician who writes songs. He E-mailed me some of his latest work … and I had to do was point and click, wait a minute or two, and I was listening to the songs. That's one application of new technology that could profoundly affect the music business."

Computer "newbies" will benefit from the instant access that the lab offers to the many cutting-edge technology tools. The lab's spare design hides many of the tools, however, so as not to overwhelm visitors. The space functions as an "interactive sandbox" in which visitors are allowed to experiment to their heart's content.

"It's not about the technology, it's about what you can do with the technology," says Avram Miller, VP and creative director for the lab. "What is unique about this project is that there's never been a physical place where a dialogue between the creative and technological communities was possible. As for the music industry; it is evolving from being a purely audio experience to an experience that includes visuals, such as music videos and the Internet sites that surround musicians and artists.

In addition to Intel and CAA, companies that have contributed products and services to the lab are Adobe Systems Inc., Bay Networks, Cisnocom, Chisholm, Compaq, Kodak, GTE, Harman International, Informix Software, Intergraph, Kinetics (a division of Autodesk), L2 Entertainment, Microsoft, NetPower, Sony Electronics, Superscape, Tandem Computers, and Toshiba America Information Systems.

"The objective is to try and identify any tool on the Internet for creation, distribution, and playback; highlight these tools in the lab; and show how they can be used to create an online product," says Intel lab director Sriman Viswanathan.

For artists, the Internet provides a safe environment in which to interact with audiences, via E-mail and World Wide Web sites.

Miller, who plays jazz piano, says that the lab is a place where artists can create music. It may soon be possible to use the lab as a place to connect and collaborate with other musicians.

As for the future of the multimedia lab, Miller says, "We have complete confidence in the PC as a new medium. After all, this is the future of entertainment, so the interest level will only increase. It's almost an economic imperative. When movies with sound began to replace silent movies, the industry changed, and people had to adjust. In an era of constantly changing and evolving technology, nobody benefits from being left behind."

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Whether you want higher visual impact, soaring sophistication, or both, let Univenture lift your packaging...to a whole new plane.
Season's Greetings. On Dec. 10, actor Jeff Bridges accepted a $100,000 check from Blockbuster for Fast Forward to End Hunger. Shown, from left, are Joseph Guido, Blockbuster associate, Jeffrey Eves, Video Software Dealers Assn. president, Al Jurado, store manager; Bridges; Scott Barrett, Blockbuster president; Steve Sprague, district manager; Chris Plau, regional merchandising manager; Sandra Genoveze, store employee; and Jack Koshn, regional director.

Who Needs Gossip? Video Industry Already Has Plenty Of Excitement

NOWHERE TO GO BUT UP: It's a truism of home video that the business is unevenful. Talk to any number of execs, as we did in the course of assembling this year-end wrap-up, and you get very nearly the same response from each one. Sales are good, they say, but nothing much is happening. Gossip, which greases the wheels of journalism, is nonexistent.

We appreciate the industrywide concern about a lack of news—we're always in the market for a breaking story—but better a boring landscape than an abyss opening at your feet. Home video has "matured," a favorite word, in the face of threats from rival media that would love to consign VHS to an early grave.

Of the pack of challengers nipping at the heels of self-through and rental cassettes, only direct broadcast satellite (DBS) remains in the race. And DBS entrants seem happier forgetting about the myth that they are running down a competitor (Picture This, Billboard, Dec. 28, 1996).

Forget video-on-demand, near video-on-demand (including pay-per-view), and the information superhighway which, press releases predicted two or three years ago, would steamroll cassette retailers. Not in this century, they won't.

In recent weeks, the business press has been loaded with reports on the demise of Baby Bell ventures into movie distribution. Time Warner's trial of a video-on-demand network in Orlando, Fla., is—by any and all measures—a very expensive bust.

Left untouched, home video continues onward and upward to more than $8 billion wholesale in '96. As will be detailed in the Jan. 18 issue, sell-through keeps hauling suppliers to greater heights (and DVD, whenever it arrives, will only help). It is estimated that two of every three wholesale dollars were derived from tapes priced below $20, a trend away from retail that accelerated in 1996.

Vendors can argue that prices are too low for anyone to make money. However; we see signs of fewer $7 and $8 cassettes simply because mass merchants find that they make terrific impulse items and prompt other, more expensive purchases. If anything, sell-through will gain importance as the studios exploit the foothold they've gained by shipping directly to key accounts.

Best Buy has doubled; Wal-Mart and Blockbuster are fully come around; others, such as Kmart, can expect to follow suit. One source predicts that every mass merchant will be taking direct delivery from one or more suppliers by the end of the year.

Handleman and Anderson Merchandisers, the primary music and video rackjobbers, can't be pleased, but there's no denying the direction retail has chosen to take. The studios are willing to ignore the issue of returns while they expand shelf space. That requires product firepower.

Of the mountains and mountains of video catalogs and new releases, some the result of the supplier-side consolidations of 1996.

Warner Home Video added significantly to its sell-through and to what it absorbed Turner Home Entertainment and took over distribution—at least for the moment—of New Line Home Video. Last year, the two were worth a combined $360 million in sell-through and rental revenue. Although, down slightly from 1995, that figure still accounted for 20%-25% of Warner's estimated domestic total of $4.1 billion.

An advance look at Bill- board's analysis of 1996's home video market share, due in the next issue, indicates how sell-through can revise a down-in-the-dumps supplier. Earlier this decade, MGM/UA Home Entertainment was given up for lost, the victim of a mamlamaged studio that was itself0inking. Two years ago, the lion on Home Entertainment's logo went on a red-meat diet of sell-through, mixed with direct-to-sell-through and rental hits.

The video division has more than doubled its sales and significantly pumped up the volume of Warner, its distributor. One of MGM/UA's additions in 1997 is a line of singing-cassette fashion, further indication that while Disney dominates kid vid, there's ample room for new labels. In fact, retailers can expect to see another big-league competitor emerge shortly. Disney can blame it all on TV, which will be carrying considerably more children's programming in 1997 than it did in 1996. Thanks to the agreement between the FCC and producers, the networks and syndication have enhanced their importance as incubators of home video releases.

Disney, Warner, and 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, the most practiced of sell-through entrepre- neurs in Hollywood, ruled last year. But the least expected also got the message. Columbia TriStar Home Video went direct to merchants aggressively; "and when you do that, it does things to your volume," says an observer who credits the studio with a lot of "nice little" winners.

Columbia starts its "Fly Away Home," which has family potential. Fox reportedly has the same target audi ence in mind for its PG-rated rock 'n' roll valentine "That Thing You Do!" One reason families might buy: Sell-through hero Tom Hanks wrote the screenplay, directed, and starred.

#1... TWO YEARS IN A ROW!

PLAYBOY VIDEO

For the second consecutive year, Playboy Video Home Video has shot to the top of the Billboard Video Sales Charts as 1996's #1 Sell-Through Video Label. To all of our retailers, friends and associates, we extend our most sincere thanks for your tremendous efforts and look forward to 1997 as a year of continued success for us all.
Universal Flexes Its Muscle
With 'Hercules And Xena'

STORNG-ARMING: Walt Disney's animated "Hercules" summer movie is bound to inspire a parade of similarly titled releases. Leading the pack is Universal Studios Home Video's "Hercules And Xena." The direct-to-video, feature-length cartoons will be based on the Universal television live-action syndicated programs "Hercules: The Legendary Journeys" and "Xena: Warrior Princess." Universal Home Video president Louis Foela says the title should be in stores this fall.

In a clear example of corporate synergy at work, Foela says, the video project should "enhance the brand name of the television show." Kevin Serbo, star of "Hercules," and Lucy Lawless, star of "Xena," will voice their characters and, in the case of Xena, sing their songs. The video has three original episodes. Both programs debuted on TV in 1995 and are the top action family series in syndication, according to Nielsen. Each beats "Baywatch" and "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" in reaching young demographic groups.

Public awareness of Lawless took a big leap recently when she was injured while taping a stunt for a comedy sketch for "The Tonight Show." Host Jay Leno was overwhelming with frequent on-air apologies following the mishap and had Lawless as a guest after she healed. Meanwhile, Universal established distribution for "Hey, Did You Know," "The World Before Time" and "The Wizard of Oz" to continue to perform at retail. The fourth installment arrived in stores Dec. 10 and, according to VP Andrew Kairey, "hit the ground running." Recorders are good, he adds.

The fifth and sixth installments are expected for release this year.

RETAIL RETURNS: Usually, the only thing retailers return is excess inventory. In 1996, however, the trade game back to the community.

According to the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA), members have collected more than $500,000 for the Fast Forward to End Hunger campaign. Additional supplier and retail contributions pushed the total to $1 million, including $100,000 from Blockbuster Video and $100,000 from VSDA. Both will make annual matching contributions for the next three years.

Other donations were made by MGM/UA Home Entertainment, Billboard Video, DMG Video, Cabin Fever Entertainment, Hallmark Entertainment, Ingram Entertainment, Orion Home Video, Republic Pictures, Sony Wonder and Madacy Motion Picture Co. and Screenplay.

A consumer campaign organized by VSDA and launched this summer, Fast Forward, is a partnership between VSDA and hunger charities. The co-chairs are actors Jeff Bridges and Valerie Harper.

Funds were collected from counter-top boxes in more than 8,000 stores.

NEW TENTANTS: Trans World Entertainment opened a Record Town store in Los Angeles Nov. 27, the first in the city limits.

The chain took over a space previously occupied by Sam Goody and Suncost Motion Picture Co. in the Beverly Center mall near Beverly Hills. A combo music/video store, it will most likely be the only L.A. location Trans World will open this year, according to senior VP/CFO John Simpson. Like the competition, Trans World has been closing more stores than it has been opening lately. Trans World has about 400 locations but figures to reduce that number to 250, including new units, over the next two years. Some 100 were shuttered in 1996.

The chain has seven stores in Southern California outside of L.A., under the names Record Town, Trans World, Coconuts, Saturday Matinee, Music World, and EYE.

MEATY PROMO: Sony Wonder and Thorn Apple Valley are teaming to release a "Seasame Street" video, audio, book and tape promotion.

Those who purchase a "Seasame Street" item in any configuration and two Thorn Apple sliced-luncheon- meat products will receive a $2 rebate. Thorn Apple will tag more than 10 million packages from Feb. 1 to April 30. Consumers must call Sept. 30 to receive the rebate.

New titles in the program are "Kids' Guide To Life," "Telling The Truth" and "Get Up And Dance," at $12.98 suggested list. The release date for both is Jan. 28.

NEW YEAR'S WISH: As the VSDA heads into its 17th year, it's about time the trade had an accurate independent source for unit sales. VSDA's VidTrac system is fine for rental titles, but self-through has been left out in the cold for too long. Selling has become as important as renting, and the association should begin keeping an accurate count especially since suppliers would rather eat grass than go on record with sales figures. In the rare occasion they do put out a number, it's often suspect.

With 100,000 or more outlets carrying cassavas, getting an accurate count isn't easy. But it's not impossible, because precise numbers do exist. Even if the VSDA isn't involved, the trade desperately needs to become accountable. Record labels saw that five years ago with the introduction of SoundScan, the truth may have hurt a little bit, but in the long run, the music business has made it work. It could work for video, too.
**SING ALONG WITH LEO:** On March 4, MGM/UA Home Entertainment will take a soaring leap into the realm of preschool product with the debut of children’s line, MGM Sing-Alongs. Four cassettes, each at $12.98 suggested list, will be released initially. Cassettes feature film songs from MGM’s vast vault and include titles as “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,” “Meet Me In St. Louis,” “Anchors Aweigh,” and “All Dogs Go To Heaven,” as well as from such television fare as “The Patty Duke Show.”

Each program features new animated characters: Leo, the big-voiced lion on MGM’s logo, and his family. The lion is depicted finding the big white cross’s symbol, “punching out, and going home to his wife and three kids,” says Blake Thomas, senior VP of marketing for MGM/UA Home Marketing. “These characters introduce the sing-along songs and do interstitial patter.” Each tape runs 30-40 minutes.

MGM/UA created the line to “participate in the successful sing-along category,” says Thomas, adding that more than 15 million units were sold in 1995.

The audience of 6-year-olds and younger, he says, “is a segment we hadn’t addressed with our other family products [mostly movies], and we have assets that lend themselves to this kind of programming. The early childhood group really goes for sing-alongs—they love predictability and routine.”

The first five titles, says Thomas, are “enough to make a merchandising statement at retail.” Six to eight volumes would be “foreseen,” with the timing and assets at hand, four can do an excellent job.”

According to Thomas, the studio is waiting on this point. The property launch at least will one likely involve a manufacturer of packaged goods. “We’ve also tested print advertising for parents’ magazines,” he notes.


“Being Happy” features numbers from “Meet Me In St. Louis,” “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,” “Gulliver’s Travels,” “Babes In Toyland,” “The Pebbl And The Penguin,” and “All Dogs Go To Heaven.” MGM is sending a screener with excerpts from all four cassettes to retailers and distributors.

**KIDBITS:**

*Chanteuse Quebecoise Carmen Campagne,* whose French-language children’s albums typically sell well in the tropics, is working MGM Music Video Canada with her home video sales: 155,000 copies of a box set of the “La Moutache A Papi,” a country where 5,000 earn a gold certification. The latest from the Just for Kids Home Video/Celebrity Home Entertainment is the animated feature “Happy News, The Secret Of Loch A’ Ch,” a fully licensed toy and party goods line. The property’s creator is Abrams Gentle Entertainment, which brought you the popular toy (and new video) line Sky Dancers.

The uproarious computer-animated Bible series VeggieTales had a holiday release, “The Toy That Saved Christmas,” based on the story of Nebuchadnezzar, is available from Nashville-based Evergreen Entertainment. It features original tunes “I Can’t Believe” and “Salu Song.”

The Video Adventures of Lost and Found, a new series from Attainment Co. in Verona, Wis., is described as particularly appropriate for children with learning disabilities. “Staged Set,” “Stolen Sounds,” and “Learning Tunes” reinforce early educational concepts like safety and predrilling skills.

Sony Classical has released the latest installment of its superb series the Composer Special, “Handel’s Life & Career” (60 minutes, $19.98) is set in 18th-century Dublin and focuses on George Frederic Handel’s efforts to stage “Messiah.”

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**Billboard Top Kid Video Rentals**

**BY THE NUMBERS:**

**NO. 1 ★★★★★**

**ENGLISH ONLY**

**FILM TITLE**

- *Independence Day* (PG-13)...
- *Carrie* (R)...
- *Scream* (R)...
- *Sniper* (R)...
- *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* (PG)

**LEADING ROLE**

- Will Smith...
- Jeff Goldblum...
- Edward Furlong...
- Mike Myers...
- Jennifer Jason Leigh

**PARENTAL ADVICE**

- Parental advisories...
- Parental advisories...
- Parental advisories...
- Parental advisories...
- Parental advisories...

**PRINCIPAL PERFORMER**

- Will Smith...
- Jeff Goldblum...
- Edward Furlong...
- Mike Myers...
- Jennifer Jason Leigh

**LABELS**

- Columbia Pictures...
- Universal...
- Universal...
- Universal...
- Universal

**DISTRIBUTOR**

- Sony Pictures Classics...
- Sony Pictures Classics...
- Sony Pictures Classics...
- Sony Pictures Classics...
- Sony Pictures Classics

**PRICING**

- $29.99...
- $29.99...
- $29.99...
- $29.99...
- $29.99

**LENGTH**

- 94 minutes...
- 94 minutes...
- 94 minutes...
- 94 minutes...
- 94 minutes

**SYNOPSIS**

- The battle of the independence heroes...
- The battle of the independence heroes...
- The battle of the independence heroes...
- The battle of the independence heroes...
- The battle of the independence heroes

**REVIEW**

- The battle of the independence heroes...
- The battle of the independence heroes...
- The battle of the independence heroes...
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**JANUARY 11, 1997**

**COMPiled FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE REENTRAL REPORTS:**

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- *Scream* (R)...
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**Lion’s Share Of MGM Sing-Alongs**

**by Moira McCormick**

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WASHINGTON, D.C.—Already profiting from a rich partnership, CBS/Fox Video and the National Basketball Assn. (NBA) hope to mine some real gold with the Feb. 4 release of "NBA At 50," the definitive commemoration of the league's golden anniversary.

The two-hour tape, packaged in an elegant black sleeve with a foil design and narrated by actor Denzel Washington, is clock-full of NBA history and trivia designed for wide appeal. Television will help attract an audience beyond just hardcore fans.

"NBA At 50," which begins airing this month on TNT, is interspersed with segments trumpeting the recent figures who are paradigmatic of what the league represents: "The NBA at its most majestic," says Peter French, marketing VP of sports and fitness for CBS/Fox. "With this product, the guy who grew up with basketball remembers the early stars, the people who passed the torch to the others. This is a true collectible."

Although CBS/Fox won't reveal sales figures of its NBA line, French says that he's happy with sales now that the company and the NBA juiced up marketing with a new logo and packaging. There are also better-defined product categories and price points.

"We have been very pleased with the results," he adds. "You can see the effects when you go into a store and see the releases on the shelf together. The programming has succeeded comparable sales on programs before we started the campaign."

To ensure that no basketball fan goes without at least a cursory awareness of "NBA At 50," CBS/Fox is pumping $250,000 into TV and print advertising. In addition, it expects to benefit from retail awareness generated by "NBA At 50: A Musical Celebration," released in November on Mercury Records, and a coffee-table book published by Random House unit Park Lane Press.

Promotions for the video have become a staple on the official NBA World Wide Web site (http://www.nba.com). Christmas wasn't missed opportunity. Charlie Rosenzweig, director of the photos and video group for NBA Entertainment, says that the partners never intended to get "NBA At 50" in stores for the fourth quarter. The goal instead is to capitalize on the momentum generated by the All-Star game in early February.

"We wanted to take advantage of the documentary airing on TNT and the celebration of the league and its key players," he says. "And what better showcase than at the conclusion of the All-Star game?" Another attention getter is the $19.98 suggested list, the standard price for CBS/Fox's NBA championship titles, which are usually less than half as long.

VIDEOS AIM FOR SPIRITUAL FITNESS

(Continued from page 76)

the exercise to see results."

The 55-minute tape offers a four-step program that includes breathing and stretching exercises, acupressure, and meditation to help reduce stress, lower blood pressure, increase circulation, and strengthen muscles and joints. Priced at $24.95, the tape can be ordered through Time-Life Video or Joon Rhee Productions.

"Chinese Yoga" splices its recipe for well-being with tai chi. The hour-long cassette features a brief history of the ancient exercise routine and includes the 37 most important postures in the 18-step drill. It shows close-ups of the major hand and foot movements.

Released in July, "Chinese Yoga" is for 30-somethings who are "looking to prolong their youthfulness," says Michael Graziano, marketing director for distributor Lightworks Audio & Video.

Bored with the solemnity of the martial arts approach, Irene Lamberti, chiropractor and author of the "Stop Pain Now" book and video, rooted "Sings My Soul" in cultural dance forms. "Yoga, tai chi, and chi kung are just too slow," says Lamberti. "Sings My Soul" is of a different energy. "It's not an exercise tape, it's a vehicle of spiritual practice."

Using dancers ranging from beginner to expert, Lamberti has combined African, Polynesian, Native American, and Caribbean sacred prayer and priest dances to compose a kind of spiritual aerobic workout. "It's the ultimate integration of mind, body, and spirit," she says. Aimed at customers of new age bookstores, the $19.95 title is distributed by New Leaf, Tape Worm, and Baker & Taylor Video.

"We have kids in our class who are 10," Lamberti says. "One of my students is 92, and she does what she can. Anyone at any fitness level should feel comfortable using this tape.

Still more meditative is WVII Co.'s "The Art Of Breathing." Based on the book of the same title published by Bantam 10 years ago, the video demonstrates the correct breathing techniques and postures needed to carry out daily functions, play sports, speak coherently, and sing. "People think breathing is a natural instinct," says author Nancy Zi. "But through years of imitating others and traumatic experiences, people lose the innate ability to breathe. Watch a baby's breathing technique, and you see that many people do the opposite."

"Shallow breathers are fighting with every breath they take," says Zi. "They are compressing their chi energy, which is the center from which we all perform." Zi distributes the $32.95 video herself. It can be found in Barnes & Noble, Borders, and catalogs.

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Your call: "The Art Of Breathing" from WVII demonstrates the correct way to inhale.

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CBS/Fox Gets Into NBA's 50th

BY CATHERINE APPLEFELD OLSON

By Catherine Applefeld Olson

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Never miss a

Billboard Chart

THE JANUARY 4TH UNPUBLISHED CHARTS ARE AVAILABLE:

- Individual Charts - $5.00
- Hot 100 & Billboard 200 - $7.50
- Entire Chart Package - $20.00

Send your check or money order to:
Billboard, 1515 Broadway, NY, NY 10036-8986
Attn: Silvio Pietroluongo,
or call for credit card order: (212) 536-5054

Billboard's January 4 Charts Are For Sale

- The Billboard 200
- Hot 100 Singles
- Hot 100 Singles Sales & Airplay
- Bubbling Under Hot 100
- Hot Adult Contemporary/Adult Top 40
- Mainstream Rock/Modern Rock Tracks
- Billboard Latin 50
- Hot Latin Tracks
- Dance Club/Maxi-Singles Sales
- Top R&B Albums
- Hot R&B Singles
- Hot R&B Singles Sales & Airplay
- Bubbling Under R&B Singles
- Hot Rap Singles
- Top Country Albums/Country Catalog Albums
- Hot Country Singles & Tracks/Country Singles Sales
- Heatseekers
- Top World Music/Blues/Reggae Albums
- Top Pop Catalog Albums
- Top Kid Audio
- Top Gospel Albums
- Top Contemporary Christian Albums
- Top Music Videos
- Top Christmas Albums

Each line represents an individual chart.
Learning To Get Along

The Lines Between Formats Blur, As Audio, Video and Computer Technologies Increasingly Merge

By Brett Atwood

Today's television could be tomorrow's computer—or is it vice versa? Competing appliances, including the home computer, television, telephone and radio, are all merging into one computer-controlled device, and many manufacturers are banking that the line between these and other electronic devices will continue to blur.

The next generation of television sets promises to bring digital sound and audio, as well as computer-delivered content. In late November, the Federal Communications Commission finally approved a long-delayed national transmission standard for digital television, which aims to replace existing analog TV sets with

Continued on page 80

Ces Debuts

Manufacturers Are Eager to Introduce State-of-the-Art Technology

By Steve Traiman

"M"usic and audio delivery will play an increasingly vital role in the convergence of technologies on display at the 1997 International Winter Consumer Electronics Show (WCES)," emphasizes Gary Shapiro, president of the sponsoring Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Assn. (CEMA).

He sees three major opportunities for the creative music community, impacted by products converging from the audio, video and multimedia computer areas.

"DVD is in all its formats— DVD-Video for movies; DVD-ROM for interactive games, productivity and entertainment software; and DVD-Audio itself—will require closer cooperation between the creative community, software developers and hardware manufacturers. DVD overall not only will open up a new market for existing CDs, but also will provide expanding opportunities for the creative use of music in these new formats.

"High Density TV (HDTV), while a video format, will deliver multichannel, digital Dolby sound, opening up a new level of excitement for music videos and soundtracks, as well as another sales product in itself.

"Digital radio is another major area where the music industry should play a much larger role. With the extraordinary growth of CDs in the mobile [car audio] and home environments, radio in the U.S. has become the 'inferior' audio-delivery medium. Given radio's importance in promoting new artists and new releases, the music industry can't afford to watch passively as the major radio networks and the National Assn. of Broadcasters continue to drag their feet in delaying the adoption of digital radio. It is already a fact of life in Asia, Europe, Canada and Mexico through the Eureka system. The U.S., which exports more than 60% of the world's music, will have the world's worst radio."

Shapiro notes that DSS (digital satellite service) and home theater are both hot categories. According to a CEMA consumer survey due for release very soon, the big surprise last year was the demand for music services from DSS owners.

Here's a sampling of "convergence" products on view at WCES.

Web TV

For Internet access through their new set-top terminals, both Philips Consumer Electronics Co. and Sony hooked up with the WebTV Networks. For $19.95 a month, this service offers unlimited online access for E-mail, viewing World Wide Web pages, home shopping, online banking and a built-in parental-control screening feature. The Philips Magnavox Internet TV Terminal has

Continued on page 82
DVD INSPIRES MORE SKEPTICISM THAN ENTHUSIASM FROM
RETAILERS, BUT CES SEMINARS WILL FURTHER EXPLORE THE ISSUE

BY EILEEN FITZPATRICK

Last year's Consumer Electronics Show billed DVD as the home-entertainment product for the 21st century. However, by year's end, after months of industry squabbles causing numerous delays, the DVD story read more like the boy who cried wolf.

After promising DVD machines on shelves by Christmas 1996, the product was released only in Japan with a limited number of software titles. Without a doubt, retailers are skeptical about the format, and the upcoming CES will reflect that mood. Unlike last year, the show floor probably won't be buzzing about DVD.

Publicity staffs aren't burning up the phone lines with invitations to elaborate press presentations. Although Toshiba, Philips, Sony, Pioneer and the rest of the big hardware manufacturers will demonstrate "consumer models" (as opposed to last year's prototype models), retailers still aren't convinced the format will be available anytime soon.

"At this point, I still haven't seen a real demo, so I'm skeptical," says Tower VP of video John Thrasher. "With all the publicity, I also think consumers have been frightened away from viable configurations, like laserdisc."

In addition to the public-relations fiasco, Hollywood studios—two years since announcing the format—haven't committed to releasing their hit movies on DVD.

"We believe retailers were disappoint-

ed that it didn't launch this season," says Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Assn. VP Cynthia Upson. "We all heard the concerns about the product and weren't surprised that it didn't happen this year, but they're still looking forward to having a brand-new product."

Upson says all of the major hul-

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THE CES ANGLE

But show organizers downplay the format's struggles over the past year.

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Only licensed manufacturers fit into our profile.

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a suggested retail price of $329.95. The Sony INTW1000 Internet Terminal is $349, with the bonus of a free 400-page "What's On The Web" guide to hot Web sites, a $23.95 retail value.

Thomson Consumer Electronics, using Oracle subsidiary Network Computer Inc.'s (NCI) design, will offer an RCA-brand Internet terminal this spring at a targeted $300, with Pro-Scan and GE models to follow. All will be linked to a Net-Channel subscription-based service. Zenith has postponed introduction of its first two 27- and 35-inch interactive TV sets featuring Net-Vision, a new Internet-access technology developed with software firm Diba Inc. At $999.95 and $3,499.95,

According to a CEMA consumer survey, the big surprise last year was the demand for music services from DSS (digital satellite service) owners.

respectively, the new TVs will allow viewers to access the Internet with an infrared remote control or optional wireless keyboard.

MUSICAL COMPUTERS

Yamaha's PC Music Studio at $499.95 enables users to make music with their computers. It includes a Yamaha portable keyboard with 61 full-size keys, 128 MIDI wavetable voices, built-in speakers and amplifiers, power adapter, Vvystara Discovering Keyboard program and a MIDI to Joysick adapter to connect the keyboard and computer.

Panasonic's WJ-AVE55 AV Mixer combined with FutureVideo's V-Station editing device uses Windows video storyboards (EDLs) into fully functional HTML Web pages.

GOOD TO GO

In the mobile market, Clarion has a breakthrough VRN1100 voice-activated CD-based audio navigation system at $600, with a 17-command vocabulary that gives exact directions when you tell the system where you are and where you want to go. A multichanger switches between music and navigation CDs. A

adding a wireless remote control. In multimedia, Denon offers the DRD1408 20-disc dual transport 8X CD-ROM drive.

Among new video products, Casio has the pocket-size Cassiopeia handheld PC with Windows and Internet Explorer at under $500; Toshiba bows the TLP-411 MediaStar, said to be the first multimedia LCD projector with a built-in "Visualizer" color document camera that projects text and 3D objects from the projector surface. JVC announces the GR-

LEARNING TO GET ALONG

problems, some Web developers are beginning to create sites that are TV-like in their look and style.

Video streaming technologies, such as VDOnet's VDO Player, Xing's StreamWorks and VivoActive, bring video-on-demand to the Internet. The problem is that the video transmission is jerky to computer users who have a 28.8 kbps speed modem or slower. In addition, the video delivery is limited to a small window that is far from broadcast quality. As higher-speed Internet connections, such as cable modems, become the norm, the visual quality between Internet and TV content will become more comparable, using Internet-connected programmers, such as OnlineTV and InternetTV, exist on the cutting edge of what is likely to eventually be a widely used Internet application.

RADIO TO COMPUTER

Internet-delivered audio, such as Progressive Networks' RealAudio and Xing Technologies' StreamWorks, have already altered the world of radio forever. These Internet audio streaming technologies have brought radio to the computer, and are one of the few successful "killer apps" of the Internet.

Many regional radio stations are using Internet-connected computers to extend their broadcasts to a global audience, and several grass-roots Internet-specific radio networks are also taking advantage of this technology.

Some radio broadcasters are also exploring ways to add data broadcasts to their existing over-the-air programming.

document of the DVD format, is expected to soon develop souped-up audio DVDs that take advantage of the additional storage space that is unavailable on a standard CD. The DVD audio disc of tomorrow aims to deliver on the often-failed promise of today's Enhanced CD.

At least one major music company is already planning to re-release many of its top-selling catalog albums in the DVD format. In addition to repackaging the original music on DVD, these discs will also contain additional audio and multimedia content, including unreleased tracks and alternative takes from the original studio sessions, extended versions of songs, video interviews and performance footage.

Since many catalog albums already have several accompanying music videos completed, it is expected that these clips will also be included in many enhanced DVD audio releases.

In addition, it is likely that there will soon be DVD compilations of an entire body of music by a single artist on a single disc.
more companies will be showcasing DVD at CES, and the show will also focus on how to sell the product once it finally arrives in stores.

In one session, titled "DVD Basics—A Primer," readers will be given a crash course in DVD's myriad of capabilities and how that can translate into sales of home theater and computer hardware. Representatives from Panasonic, Pioneer and Toshiba are expected to appear at the session.

Retailers will also get an update on DVD developments in another session, "DVD Is It? The Digital Messiah?" Upson says the panel will also discuss some studies about consumers' interest in DVD.

Panelists include Warner Home Video president Warren Lieberfarb and Toshiba's VP of DVD marketing, Steve Nickerson.

CONSUMER INTEREST

According to CEMA research conducted on 1,000 U.S. households in 1995, 22% said they would be very interested in having a DVD player.

Although the number appears small, Upson says any new product with more than a 25% interest level is considered good.

Interest in DVD jumped to 35% when consumers were told the DVD picture quality is clearer and sharper than VHS. The survey notes that the top reason for non-interest in DVD is redundancy with existing VCR equipment, not that the DVD player was too expensive.

"The trick is to get consumers to visualize the increase in picture quality that DVD represents," the survey says.

The CEMA survey also notes that, among computer households, interest in a PC/DVD combo is substantially higher than for a stand-alone TV-only DVD.

"Take away the cost of the PC, and 50% of consumers would prefer to purchase a DVD they could use with both their computers and their TV," the survey says.

"Dick Kelly, president of home video research firm Cambridge Associates, agrees that convincing consumers to purchase another piece of video player hardware won't be easy. "It's hard to break people of the VCR habit," he says, "especially when they own a couple of VCRs already and the studios have been slow to support the format." Kelly predicts that the videocassette business will see little impact once DVD arrives.

"Tower president Russ Solomon agrees. "You have to explain to the public what DVD is, and that's going to take time," Solomon says.

Panasonic Consumer Electronics Group Television VP/CMO Jeff Cove concurs. "We have to provide some convincing arguments for DVD," Cove notes, the format's prolonged life cycle, whereby consumers won't have to worry that the DVD player they buy today won't need to be replaced in a few years, affordable pricing, and superior playback quality.

"What retailers saw last year was a first glimpse of DVD," says Upson. "This year is not only showcasing DVD, but sharing information on how to sell it."
most promising young lioness of the label's pride. Indeed, McLean's wry, keeling allude to Jobim's thoughtful, brilliantly constructed solos, especially on her buoyant, tumbling original theme "Jackie's Hat." In a set rich with standard material, standouts include a sharp, up-tempo take on "Falling in Love Again," a playful run through Milt Jackson's "Round The Clock," a slyly wuzzy version of "Sentimental Journey," and a briskly swinging "Will You Still Be There?"

"Left Alone" is performed by McLean and Onishi with fitting fineness.

**REVIEW**

**REGGAE COWBOYS**

Tell The Truth

PRODUCER: Del Marley

REGGAE COWBOYS

Pure/Part/Plan 36423802

Expect some fever-in-the-bunkhouse guts on the vocals, smoothly somni- pose of high plain drifters, whose beautifully crafted blend of rhythm musicians that endeavor to dissect its complex rhythms. Featuring long-time mem- bers Velas, Eva Attisul, Glen, Jan Hugwara, and Yusif Sheron- ick—plus guest musician Arthur Brown on trombone, conch shell, didgeridoo, and the instruments—"Rhythmcolor Exotica" is music for audiences around the world, from India to the Middle East, Brazil to North America. Like the Paul Winter Consort, of which Velas is an integral member, Han- dance manages to effortlessly weave together colorfully diverse musical fabrics, casting the light on the music itself rather than on the bar- riers it breaks. A work of poetical beauty.

**LATIN**

**ALEJANDRO FERNANDEZ**

Muy Dentro De Mi Corazon

PRODUCER: Chris Rrans

SONY DISCUS 8208

The latest album from Alejandro Fernández, who is heralded as "The King of Tex-Mex," is a seamless blend of his traditional roots with a modern, contemporary sound.

**NEW AGE**

**CHRIS SPHERES**

Wander Traveler

PRODUCER: Chris Spheres

ESSENCE 1000

Documentary soundtracks are usually facile when aborn of their visual images, but that's not the case with Chris Spheres’ "Mythic Traveler." Based on the veteran keyboardist's score for the TV series "Mythic Lands," this album transcends the usual collection of soundtrack cues, tak- ing listeners on a soothing and rewarding journey into a transglobalystery. Gamelan orchestras cycle next to Peruvian singers. African drums transcend, while Latin American samba, reggae, and Spanish guitar flow seamlessly.

"Vital Reissues" was produced by Carib Carambola/Deb Nicholson.
KRISTINE W. Land Of The Living (c) PRODUCERS: Rondell, J. E. Writers: Kristine W., Warren A.伴奏员: Charles E. Bickford, MI, BMG Rights: Durty Nelly, ASCAP 评论员: Jennifer VanZante, R&B, Latin Remakers: Jennifer VanZante, J. Terrace Chat club diva Kristine W. made a lot of friends at top 40 radio last year with the gorgeous “George’s Pink Rolls.” This release, however, has nothing to do with that. Apart from her gorgeous Euro-Jive cruise is the album’s most interesting cut. Now, if we had heard a Cutie Pie last week…”

CHRISTINE ROSE Land Of The Living (c) PRODUCERS: Rondell, J. E. Writers: Christine Rose, J. Terrace Chat club diva Christine Rose had a lot of fun with the gorgeous “George’s Pink Rolls.” This release, however, has nothing to do with that. Apart from her gorgeous Euro-Jive cruise is the album’s most interesting cut. Now, if we had heard a Cutie Pie last week…”

JITTERY Version of Me (c) PRODUCERS: Tico Torres, Bruce Springsteen, MI, BMG Rights: Tico Torres, Bruce Springsteen, J. Terrace, Yondi Remakers: Tico Torres, Bruce Springsteen, J. Terrace Chat club diva Jittery Rose had a lot of fun with the gorgeous “George’s Pink Rolls.” This release, however, has nothing to do with that. Apart from her gorgeous Euro-Jive cruise is the album’s most interesting cut. Now, if we had heard a Cutie Pie last week…”

SINGLE PICKS | (c) New releases with the greatest chart potential. CRITICS CHOICE | (c) New releases, regardless of potential chart action, which the reviewer highly recommends because of their musical merit. NEW AND NOTEWORTHY: Highlight new developments worth acting upon. Attention: vinyl and CD singles equally important for all formats are reviewed in the broadest audience. All releases available to radio and/or retail in the U.S. are eligible for review. Send copies to Larry Flick, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036. Country songs should be sent to Deborah Evans Price, Billboard, 69 Music Square W., Nashville, Tenn. 37203. Contributing: Doug Race (L.A.), Shawn Smith (N.Y.).
**SPORTS**

**NBA at 30**

**Votes**

120 minutes, $19.98

All that glibsters is most definitely gold in the recently released, collected edition celebration of the National Basketball Association’s 30th anniversary. The tape, which includes interviews with a number of big names, is surprisingly self-righting. Washington, overlooks with the making of any good anniversary celebration a tale of two forefathers, which will begin airing this month; best-of highlights; a look at the recently selected 30 Great Moments and an NBA history; and additional cheer courtesy of a music video tribute led by Vanessa Williams. A must-have for current NBA enthusiasts as well as “old timers” who will enjoy each of these two hours and Placky fans and party favors not included.

**CHAMPIONS FOREVER**

American Home Entertainment 115 minutes, $19.98

The grueling, glorious, interlocked careers of heavyweight boxing champions Muhammad Ali, George Foreman, Joe Frazier, Ken Norton, and Larry Holmes are revisited in great detail in this officially filmed documentary. Fighting footage abounds and leaves few memorable moments untouched. Not surprisingly, many of the highlights involve the indestructible Ali, including his taking of the heavyweight title from Sonny Liston, his ill-fated “Rumble in the Jungle” against Norton, and the Thrilla In Manila Frazier remars, and, according to the former “Jung- le” against Foreman. Also included is a half-hour “Dinner With The Champions” segment, which features an “Oympah-style” revue of the glory days and a little talk. Interest in the new genre of book reviews and movie reviews, “Baby, Kings,” about that fateful Ali-Foreman fight in Zaire, can only help sales prospects. Contact: 800-422-6484.

**INSTRUCTIONAL CHESS STARTS HERE!**

20 minutes, $14.95

Chess is experiencing a renaissance of sorts, with a new generation eager to lay down the fast- and-furious joystick action of computer games and instead adopt a strategic, non-executional strategy. This instructional program, led by two celebrated players and instructors, Fathead Man and Paradox, emphasizes the unique aspects of chess in a “DinoPandolupe”-spokes to beginners of all ages. Framed with upbeat music and a hint of sensibility, the tape gets down to business, teaching viewers the moves and basic concepts that can be combined to produce a checkmate. Contact: 212-636-5466.

**WEEKEND PHOTO OPPORTUNITY**

125 minutes. $49.95

If one of the world’s oldest and largest photographic schools can’t make an expert photographer out of you, you’re out of luck. This intensive two-week video course guarantees viewers will be taking better snapshots before the end of the weekend—and its content is proof. Students will use their cameras and framing won’t be able to avoid pleasing some important tips. The first tape focuses on the basics and includes a series of still images of the components of the family business. The second home in on holiday celebrations and parties, outdoor sporting events, and other

**PHANTASMAGORIA II: A PUZZLE OF FLESH**

PC CD-ROM

The sequel to one of last year’s most controversial CD-ROM titles is sure to stir up a few more conversations from conservative game players. The multimedia adventure game contains a creepy story line and several gory full-motion video sequences that rival the best of the worst B-movies. The player assumes the role of a twenty-something office executive who discovers that there is something unusual going on at the office. The major thrust of the game is to avoid being involved in a full-motion video, which is usually bad for news hardcore gamers. However, Sierra hopes to avoid the fate of video-based games with an intriguing story line and an intuitive navigational interface. Hilarious comedienne Lucy Dalm and Desi Arnaz Jr. will take a liking to this interactive retrospective of America’s pioneer TV comedy couple. Come and drool over the rare and unreleased material, which includes lovely letters, photographs, home movies, and audio recordings. Lucy Arnaz and Desi Arnaz Jr. will talk it all together with a solid narrative that the contact of intimate relationships that only close family members could make. A digital scrapbook of substance.

**RETURN OF THE JEDI**

By Brian Daley, based on the screenplay by Lawrence Kasdan and George Lucas Performed by salt cast

Highbridge Audio 3 hours (unabridged), $25.95

This stunning production, first heard on National Public Radio, is a must for all fans of science fiction, “Star Wars,” or radio. Daley’s 3-CD “radio” audio program, with outstanding production, full-sound effects, and dramatic music performed by the London Symphony Orchestra. The acting and accents are superb. It might seem a bit of a stretch that includes Edward Asner as the Hutt, John Lithgow as Yoda, and Anthony Daniels reprising his loopy role as the android C-3PO. Highbridge has produced successful NPR productions of the first two popular Star Wars films and “Empire Strikes Back,” this final chapter should prove as phonemically popular as the first two. The universities and the “Star Wars” movies in theaters should provide a boost to sales and audiobooks.

**WRITING SEINFELD STYLE**

By Peter Mehlman

Read by the author

50 minutes. $12.95

This is not a how-to book; instead, it is a reading of a lecture given by “Seinfeld” writer Mehlman at an Austin Writers’ League seminar in Texas. Mehlman speaks in an entertaining and informative way about the writing challenges of “Seinfeld,” including working with such TV heavyweights as Jerry Seinfeld and Larry David. How are the jokes selected? Mehlman says it’s his family’s. Among his points is the fact that “Seinfeld” has a real life feel, the cardinal rule of “Seinfeld” is “no hoo-hah learning”—there are no poignant moments. Also, he’s held in great favor in the situation the characters are in; if the humor is solid in the dialogue, it won’t work for the show. Mehlman and his co-authors have tried their best until now to have more than six scenes. The biggest challenge, says Mehlman, is to try to get the various plot lines to connect in some way. Mehlman also talks about the writing of the characters, saying that most writers who submit to tape scripts make two mistakes: They don’t write for a family audience, and they make Kramer act too crazy. Most of all, Mehlman advises writers not to look at the characters as if they were a kind of story would work for them? Instead, he says, one should look at one’s own life, where does the ‘Seinfeld’ character have their weaknesses and come up with ideas that way. Contact: 512-476-1616.

**LEADING WITH MY CHIN**

By quoted

Rudolph迂回

50 minutes. $12.95

A gift for those in existence, Stewart has made his stoked into a niche as a producer of wonderfully clever, comic dramatizations. This CD release of “Leading With My Chin” features the Royal Shakespeare Company, and special guests. Mur- dud and Sullen investigate an apparent case of “Santa Possession.” In “Doopel,” the television star of “The Andy Williams Show,” host Kris Kringel is the real Santa and sets out to solve the mystery by saving and saving Christmas. He stumbles across a stocking stuff for “The X-Files” fans.

**REVIEWS & PREVIEWS**

(Continued from preceding page)

The MAGIC OF TELEVISION Song Of The 70’s is being released today. The songs, a collection of the best of the 30s that made television the most popular form of entertainment in the world. Cantorolee O4-14 is their special edition for the fans of the series. Have a listen and enjoy the ride. Contact: 415-620-8677.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITORS**

Dear Editor,

I recently watched the film “The Odd Couple,” and I was so impressed by the chemistry between the two characters that I decided to write this letter. I’ve watched the film twice now, and each time I come away with a new appreciation for the different aspects of the characters. I hope that the audience will also enjoy the film as much as I have.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Chairman of the Board, XYZ Studio

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BILLBOARD JANUARY 11, 1997

www.americanradiohistory.com
Those three divisions represent some $600 million in revenue for Poly-Granum. Alvarez says the company is in the back seat to the marketing of hits, priority titles, and new releases from developing artists, according to Jim Conover.

In reorganizing how the company markets its catalog, Caparros says, Poly-Granum is shifting its strategy to a more cohesive focus to a business that normally is taken for granted or, if not taken for granted, does not receive the attention it should. He says that at how that business has traditionally been handled, the three areas have been separate and disconnected; this is an area that needs to focus on all to that repertoire.

The reorganization marks the second time PGD has taken to refocus its catalog sales.

Over the last 18 months, the music industry has seen catalog sales slow, while some industry observers suggest that sales are off by as much as 25%. PGD was the first account to the strategy of focusing on its catalog, according to John Esposito, formerly COO of music and video at the Carteret, N.J.-based Nobody Beats the Wiz, as VP of field marketing, with the primary responsibility of managing catalog sales.

With Esposito working catalog, PGD didn't suffer the downturn in catalog sales that the other major companies experienced. In fact, in 1996 catalog sales increased by 2%, according to Caparro. Since Esposito joined PGD, three of the five major distributors—EMI Music Distribution, Universal Distribution, and Sony Music Distribution—have either reorganized their catalog sales efforts or created positions similar to the post Esposito held at Carteret.

As part of the last restructing of catalog sales at PGD, Esposito has been named senior VP and will oversee all of the sales areas.

"If you look at Poly-Granum's special market division and Chronicals and what I did overseeing catalog titles, you can see that we've seen this successfully, but we never worked together before on an ongoing basis," Esposito says. "The labels were getting competing efforts from the marketing staff, from the Chronicals; Bob Bell, senior VP of Special Markets; and myself, each with our separate requests and ideas. What the three areas needed was a way to come together instead of having each of the three previously separate groups set their own strategies and then come together to exploit the catalog that is artist-driven.

A key ingredient behind the restructuring is to be sensitive to the needs of artists and labels.

For example, special products, which can include licensing, historically have been considered at the bottom of the hierarchy of marketing efforts. The assignation by labels and artists, according to Esposito. "No artist of repute would want to see his catalog as a merchandising play. The Butter if we can show them it is just another avenue to raise was part of an overall scheme the integrity of the catalog but adds value, then that's why it makes sense to have all those areas exploiting the catalog under the same roof.

Caparro says staffing within the three groups may be reorganized or beefed up as Esposito determines the best way in which to staff the supporting organization for catalog development.

In addition to raising the profile of catalog titles, the PolyGram Catalog Development Group will interact with the PolyGram family of labels around the world, according to Esposito. "I will spend most of January in Europe to meet with key players of our organization, making sure our catalog strategy is working. The catalog approach in America is different from the way they do it there. We have to make sure all of our efforts are designed to be in step with them."

Moreover, Esposito says he expects to pick up a few pointers in developing catalog from his European counterparts. "Europe is very good at putting together compilations and using television to drive sales," he says.

Esposito says that with Poly-Granum's European counterparts in developing catalog, the company will be able to "reduce import/export problems."

Caparro says that he sees the PolyGram Catalog Development Group as a vehicle to be "much more aggressive in creating opportunities for reissue around titles in the PolyGram catalog. For instance, Esposito says, Mercury Nashville put together a special for radio syndication; and Marty Stuart donated his huge collection of Williams records to the Country Music Hall of Fame Museum.

In order to support the exposure, PGD assembled a discount program for Williams titles and provided accounts with cooperative advertising money.

The result, according to Esposito, was the "PGD identification reissue from the Williams catalog. For the last three months, Williams sales have consistently been stronger than they have been in the past five years," Caparro says.

More recently, over the last few weeks, Poly-Granum has enjoyed a sales boost, thanks to a similar effort.

That sales spurt began when TNN decided to broadcast "Grease" and lined up one of its stars, John Travolta, as a host. "They called us up to see how we would do together," Esposito recalls. "So we ran some radio spots on the album saying don't forget to tune in TNN's showing of the movie. Also, we put up some in-store signage. And TNN ran commercials during the show for the "Grease" soundtrack and the "Pure Disco" compilation album, which contains the "Grease Megamix."

Esposito attributes the sales run of "Grease" to knowing how to bring the forces to bear on catalog. "We created opportunities and then capitalized on it. We scanned 118,000 copies of the 'Grease' compilation album, according to SoundScan."

"Grease" was No. 3 on the Top Pop Catalog Albums chart in the Dec. 28 issue of Billboard.

This year, Esposito says, he hopes to create the same excitement to celebrate the 25th anniversary of "Saturday Night Fever."

"We will work with the Bee Gees to capitalize on it from every angle possible," Esposito states. "Who knows what new compilations we might come up with?"

The key to Poly-Granum's anticipated future success with catalog, according to Caparro, is that the same effort that "hereforefore only had been exerted for new releases will now be focused on catalog.

Esposito adds, "Now we are creating an ongoing marketing plan and purpose catalog."

WHEREHOUSE LOOKS TO FUTURE

(Continued from page 73)

efforts to the demographics we serve, and we have to invest money in upgrading our stores and improve our stores' trading areas, he says.

Alvares says that a distinguishing characteristic of Wherehouse is that it runs neighborhood stores, as opposed to many national chains. "The music specialty chains, big-box discounters have put a lot of pressure on the music-specialty store, and many are undergoing a restructuring to help them compete," he says.

In the long term, there will be more consolidation among music specialty merchants, according to the executive. "We are watching the developments in that area. We are well prepared for it. There are some of those opportunities, given our capital structure—and the financial clout of Cerberus. Euro-Disc, a big player from that New York-based firm were unavailable for comment.

In the meantime, Alvares says, he is upbeat about the future of Wherehouse. "I have visited in excess of 60 stores, and I am very, very positive with what I've seen. At the core of our store management staff, the level of their experience, and their dedication to the company. He adds that the strong field staff will make it easy for Wherehouse to reach its potential.

The Internet, and that piracy of copyrighted works will not be tolerated," Murphy continued.

Garnett and Rosen share the view that their two groups will not have an easy time persuading governments to ratify the WIPO conference's conclusions, in the face of fierce opposition from some countries that have national and Internet access providers. Says Rosen, "Getting legislatures to ratify WIPO is a tremendous achievement, and it is easier than getting them to ratify something.

"We have done a few off-week events. However, the people who are really undermining the market are not the national chains but the independents," he says. "They have been selling top 40 albums at $10.99 ($18.22)."

He believes Adams and the entire superstore sector will continue to grow in strength in 1997. "We still haven't gotten everything 100% right, and there is a good chance for improvement. There is still a need to get the message of our music offer across to more customers. But I think we are in a very exciting period of growth. The market looks to be flattening off, but I am confident we can outperform that."

Safeway is another supermarket chain that sees growth opportunities in the home entertainment market. "We recently added selection in about 160 of its 380 stores. However, before Christmas, it made an immediate impact by introducing top 10 chart selections to all its stores, carrying all a one-off retail price of $16.56 (9.99 pounds)."

Steve Craven, category buying manager for home entertainment, has been pleased with the results. "Top 75 sections will be introduced to all stores in the group this year, and Craven adds that a certain number of stores are likely to carry wider selections.

"We have got about a dozen or so stores that carry a range of between 350 and 500 titles beyond the top 75. We aim to increase the number of stores that are able to do 200 ranges to about 70," Craven explains.

He is not ruling out the possibility of expanding on the entertainment section in all stores, but he is not committing to a certain number of stores that are likely to carry wider selections.

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by Kara DioGuardi: Real Estate to the Stars

JANUARY
Jan 5-7, Mobile Beat DJ Show & Conference, Crowne Plaza, Las Vegas. 716-385-9979
Jan 7, "Songwriters In The Round," presented by the National Academy of Songwriters, Park Central Hotel, Miami Beach. 305/944-3592
Jan 7-10, Macworld Expo, Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco. 800-645-EXPO
Jan 9-12, 1991 International Winter Consumer Electronics Show, various locations, Las Vegas. 703-907-7674
Jan 16-19, 18th Annual Concert Industry Summit, presented by Performance magazine, Hotel Inter-continental, Miami. 817-338-9444

FEBRUARY
Feb 3-6, Combat Conference & Exposition, various locations, Washington, D.C. 800-545-EXPO
Feb 8, 28th Annual Image Awards, Pasadena Civic Center, Pasadena, Calif. 213-938-2364
Feb 9-12, MILIA, multimedia publishing market, Palais des Festivals, Cannes. 212-689-4220
Feb 22-26, National Assn. For Campus Activities Convention, Pennsylvania Convention Center/Philadelphia Marriott, Philadelphia. 800-732-6222
Feb 24, Tribute-Roast Honoring Stan Gaman, hosted by the American Jewish Committee's music video division, Copacabana, New York. 212-751-4000 extension 338
Feb 24, MasiCares Person Of The Year Dinner, Concert, And Silent Auction Honoring Phil Collins, Valdost-Astoria, New York. 312-392-3777

FOR THE RECORD
A story on Jamiroquai (Billboard, Dec. 21, 1996) misidentified the group’s debut album. The correct title is "Emergency On Planet Earth." (Columbia).

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MAP
CALIFORNIA 1997

MARCH
March 5-8, Country Radio Seminar, Opryland Hotel, Nashville. 615-327-4487
March 8, How To Start & Grow Your Own Record Label, Holiday Inn, Brookline, Mass. 508-526-7983
March 8-11, National Assn. Of Recording Merchandisers Annual Convention, Marriott Hotel, Orlando, Fla. 609-596-2221
March 9, Producing & Marketing Music Toward The Year 2000, Holiday Inn, Brookline, Mass. 508-526-7983

LIFELINES

BIRTHS
Girl, Marisa Nicole, to Kari Temares-Testa and Pete Testa. Dec. 15 in New York. Mother is the senior coordinator of administration at Atlantic Records.

Girl, Kaitlyn Adele, to Jamie and Heather Rowe, Dec. 18 in Nashville. Father is the lead singer of Myrrh Records act Guardian.

Girl, Paloma Hula, to Bill and Beth Thom, Dec. 20 in Austin, Texas. Father is president of the Harmony House chain.

MARRIAGES
Doug Stone to Beth Snyder, Dec. 4 in Nashville. Groom is a Columbia Records recording artist.

DEATHS
David Evans, 45, of cancer, Dec. 11 in London. Evans was a marketing executive for the Warner Music International companies in Europe, with stints at WEA Germany in the '70s and at the multinational's London headquarters from 1987 to 1994. Evans also worked for Atari, Apple Computers, and Warner Interactive Entertainment and was most recently managing director of multimedia for toymaker Lego. He is survived by his wife, Blanche, and sons Oscar and William.

Eddie Del Rubio, in her 70s, of cancer, Dec. 16 in Torrance, Calif.

Bugs Music Signs Richard Thompson (Continued from page 62)

"Great, unique songs always have a home in Nashville, and Richard Thompson writes great, unique songs," says Velletti. "We'll have to be selective and handpick the right songs for the right artists, since his catalog is enormous and the songs are so individual and not written in one blanket style. But they're timeless, so we have that on our side, and I think the artists are there, as we've already seen."

Osia's version of "A Heart Needs A Home," which graces her current album, "My Roots Are Showing..." resulted from her search for a '70s tune, since the concept of the album was to cover numerous musical eras.

"There was something about the lyric and melody that was very haunting and stuck in my mind," she says. "It's very '70s, but what's interesting is that the people who latch onto it seem to be 30 and younger."

Harriss, for her part, included "Dimning Of The Day" on her "Portraits" boxed set simply because, she says, "Richard Thompson is one of the most original singers, songwriters, and musicians of our time."

Notes Griffith, who's including "Wall Of Death" on her "Other Voices, Too" set, "Richard's songwriting and guitar style have been such a major influence on a generation of folk rock, he is in his own category. But his songs are so well written and structured that singers of any genre can sing them."

Still, the Thompson catalog is almost an embarrassment of riches for Big. As Hirshland notes, with such a wealth of material to pitch from, it's unclear yet just how to best promote it. But he says that Big will likely not produce a promotional Thompson catalog compilation, since much of the focus will be music supervisors.

"You have to be more specific when approaching music supervisors," says Hirshland. "If they're working on an action picture, you want to send a tape of three or four songs that are appropriate. It doesn't make sense to send out a compilation of 30 or 40 songs and have them wade through the ballads—which might be more suitable for a different kind of picture."

Hirshland adds that Thompson, who scored the 1990 comedy "Sweet Talkers," qualifies for film music not only because of his songs, but for his distinct musical and instrumental sound. Big, he further notes, looks forward to working Thompson's future album projects alongside his back catalog.
4th U.K. Nat’l Radio Service Studied
Demand, Technical Feasibility Under Examination

By Mike McGeever

The possibility of a fourth U.K. national radio service inched a step closer to reality recently when the Radio Authority announced that it would study the feasibility of offering such a licence. The service would be on long wave, using a frequency (225 kilohertz) that is no longer utilized but was once used by the BBC in Scotland.

In theory, the new national service could be enhanced using a number of AM frequencies in regions where the reception of 225 kHz is poor.

There are three national commercial stations in the U.K.; classical Classic FM, mainstream rock Virgin Radio AM (which also has an FM London license), and news/talk Talk Radio AM. The BBC also has five FM national networks.

Also, long wave broadcaster Atlantic 252 is an Ireland-based top 40/recurrents station that broadcasts mainly to the U.K., reaching about 66% of the population. Atlantic 252 is owned and operated by CLT U.K. radio, which also owns Talk Radio. Since it broadcasts from foreign soil, Atlantic 252 is not regulated by the U.K. Radio Authority but is included in the "official" ratings system, RAJAR.

While examining the technical feasibility of proceeding with a new national license, the authority wants to determine if there is actually a demand for another station.

Unlike the bidding process for local commercial licenses, in which services are awarded by the regulator on the merits of applications—which include format proposals—U.K. legislation mandates that national services be awarded to the highest cash bidder. However, on two occasions, licenses were given to the runners-up—Classic FM and Virgin Radio—because the winners could not secure funding in time to meet Radio Authority deadlines.

A fourth national commercial service's format by law would have to differ from what is offered by the three other commercial networks, so head-to-head competition on a national scale is unlikely.

In due course, the authority will invite views from prospective applicants, existing commercial operators, and the advertising industry about the potential development of a new service.

A main consideration for the authority and the radio industry is what impact a fourth commercial service would have on the start-up of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) and how such a service's format by law would have to differ from what is offered by the three other commercial networks, so head-to-head competition on a national scale is unlikely.

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A main consideration for the authority and the radio industry is what impact a fourth commercial service would have on the start-up of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) and how the timing of the advertising of any new service would fit into the 1997-98 schedule for DAB. Whether a new license could claim guaranteed access to the national DAB system is another concern the Radio Authority must address.

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**CLASSIC NETWORK OFFERS CLASSIC COMO**

**BY DOUG REECE**

LOS ANGELES—Newly formed syndicator American Classic Network (ACN) gave oldies fans a new reason to shout “Hot Diggity” last month with its first production, “Perry Como And Friends Music Hour.” The two-hour holiday special was the first in a 13-week series featuring music by the highly regarded crooner.

Como acted as co-host with radio veteran Russ Knight in the first episode, which aired on more than 100 affiliate stations, playing music and reminiscing on his rich history in the music business.

Succeeding shows, beginning this month, will feature taped interview segments with Como and such artists as Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett covering Como tunes and commenting on the singer’s contribution to music.

“Along with all the stories Perry has about his records, there are other great stories about Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, and his television appearances,” says ACN VP of programming and show host Knight. “We also have other special guests planned. It will be one legendary icon commenting on another.”

The new syndicated network is the result of a several-year partnership between New York-based Melcor Broadcasting and advertising agency the Stogel Group.

Melcor and Stogel have already partnered in the development of syndicated music and news shows—“A Sentimental Journey” and “A Moment In Musical History”—as well as several two-hour specials, such as “Barbra Streisand Coast To Coast.”

With this newest announcement, Melcor has effectively become ACN while Stogel acts as a partner, supporting the network with its promotions, art, and public relations.

“Perry Como And Friends Music Hour” is the companies’ 11th special featuring Como that was created by Melcor and Stogel (though the first under the ACN banner). With the oldies format on the wave, ACN is a rare content provider for programmers looking for items to spice up their presentation.

“At our FM’s, we’re always getting calls from syndicators and people with rock concerts to pitch, but there’s not a lot of people out there providing music that has a special appeal to our AM station,” says Capitol Broadcasting VP of operations and programming Dave Brown, who fills double duties at mainstream rock WDYC-FM and oldies WWDCA in Washington, D.C. Still, ACN is anticipating a demographic shift that will provide the network with its largest market ever.

The network has another five years with nostalgia programs, then the baby boomers will be the older demographic and we’ll start getting more into the Baby Mansions and Neil Diamonds,” says ACN president George Kalman. “That’s why we’re moving to grow and expand now.

“We’ve always been the people keeping American popular standards alive,” he adds, “but as the market changes, we’re going to change right along with it.”

Knight suggests that the show could easily move into country or dance genres with shows branded around core artists such as Gloria Estefan.

Kalman says the network is also creating considering a talk show modeled after late-night entertainment programs such as “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno.” Still, ACN will continue to cater to its older audiences with programs featuring Johnny Mathis, Rosemary Clooney, and Andy Williams.

Additional evidence of a demand for older-skewed programming can be seen in the development of the one-hour weekly syndicated program “The Best Of Bennett,” which debuted on 50 stations Thanksgiving weekend.

Hosted by radio veteran Sid Mark and produced by Philadelphia-based Orange Productions, the show features Bennett performances and interview segments.

Oldies WLIM Long Island, N.Y., GM/SD Jack Ellsworth says syndicated oldies programming offered by Melcor, and now ACN, has enticed broadcasters to increase their number of spots.

Ellsworth is particularly excited about the Como Christmas special. “We’ve always been able to sell extra spots around these kind of programs, especially the ones that run during the holidays,” he says. “It’s going to be a nice feature because of [Como’s] enduring appeal. He is a distinguished gentleman respected by everyone.”

**DIGITAL AUDIO BROADCASTING**

(Continued from preceding page)

ment of digital services, the economies of DAB do not yet add up for the private sector.

Paul Brown, chief executive of the Commercial Radio Companion Assn., represents commercial broadcasters in the U.K., says that his members are concerned that the licensing of multiplex providers may lead to business conflicts. A multiplex provider, licensed by the Radio Authority—which is responsible for commercial radio regulation in the U.K.—may also be a broadcaster of commercial radio services. Other, perhaps competing, broadcasters’ access to the digital airwaves may be possible only via the multiplex provider, and Brown foresees that stringent Radio Authority supervision will be needed to ensure fair practice.

Commercial DAB is still far in the future in Britain. Against this backdrop, the Radio Authority has announced that the first commercial digital multiplex will be advertised in 1997.

**U.K. RADIO SERVICE**

(Continued from preceding page)

al station and expect it to be a profitable business,” he says. “All the existing national stations are losing money. If we didn’t have the London FM license, there would be no hope of us making money—even”
Garbage's mouthpiece extraordinary, Shirley Manson, knows the difference between high romance and undue obsession, of course. But she also knows that the nature of dedication points to the fine line between the two.

"All real love is a form of obsession," Manson says. "If you love someone more than anything else, that degree of exclusivity requires an abnormal amount of passion and care. And that can be positive. It's just that keeping it short of unhealthy, short of violence, really requires a bit of moderation. You can't let something like that take over all your thought processes."

Abnormal passion often fuels the greatest dramas, and with "Romeo + Juliet," you have a surfeit of charged desire. Garbage's No. 1 Modern Rock Tracks hit, "I Crash," comes from the Capitol soundtrack to the new film version of Shakespeare's story of star-crossed lovers, and the song's "I would die for you" refrain and fractal, sensual pulse apply to evoke the drive of romantic preoccupation.

A great boomer of the Bard in all varieties ("I'm a snacker for tragedy—I love the death scene," she says), Manson recommends this latest celluloid translation of his work. "So many movies are just violence, women with big tits and 'fucking this' and 'fucking that,'" she says. "But art is about so much more than that. This 'Romeo + Juliet' is divine."

Being the soul-plumbing artist that she is, Manson takes inspiration from experience. Some of her past crushes have proved indelible, for instance.

"Dwain Bivens was my No. 1 crush, when I was 7 years old," she says. "He had those enormous ears and was really skinny, but I thought he was fabulously. However, I never looked at him that way, though. I guess I wasn't his type, but he had that beautiful, straight, blond baby hair, and I've loved baby blond hair ever since. So he might never have taken me, but Donald left his mark."
Say Goodbye Vox Jox, Hello AirWaves: FCC OKS CBS/Infinity Deal, KTU No. 2

WITH THIS FIRST ISSUE of 1997, Billboard embraces a new era in the music and entertainment industry. Introducing: AirWaves.

Since 1948, this space has served radio’s after-hours: the same Vox Jox column devoted weekly news but also assuming a predominant role in connecting the dots on major formats, research, promotions; and, until recently, personnel changes within the on-air lineup of stations nationwide.

But with the launch of our sister publications specifically targeted to radio—the Top 40 and Country Airplay Monitors in 1993, and the Rock and R&B Monitors shortly thereafter—we have seen a need to refocus our programming—er, the Vox Jox column—covered in Billboard’s radio column. The task of reporting on air-personality promotions, moves, and exiting a qualitative aspect of the AirWaves column in all four Monitors. In an effort to minimize duplication and increase readers exclusive information, beginning with this issue, this space will be utilized to demonstrate the rapid industry changes as its pertains to the music and entertainment industries as a whole.

With the unveiling of AirWaves, we intend to bring to Billboard a consistent and exclusive look at how AirWaves play over multiple-target demographics—record labels tailor releases to top 40, AC, dance, R&B/R&B adult, country, triple-A, modern rock, and mainstream rock stations via exclusive remixes, edits, and outright reconfigurations of material which will become a regular addition to our coverage of the relationship between radio programmers and music companies.

As always, the column will continue to cover weekly breaking radio stories, and it was a busy week when it comes to station changes. Key personnel changes, however, will be covered in Executive Turntable on this page. The remainder of the Programming section will continue to cover in-depth news, the Washington, D.C., out-of-town counseling, and radio promotions.

AirWaves and its companion columns included “Spinner Spatter,” “Tune Touting,” and “Gotham Gripes.” OK, maybe things have changed more than we first thought. And that, we suppose, stands to prove that life is all about for change. Today’s radio environment is one of big business, involving publically traded companies worth billions of dollars, the owners, talent, and formats approach a scope that potentially affects industries—both those still around and entertainment field—as a whole.

Our deepest respect goes out to those previous authors of the radio stations, their owners, talent, and formats approach a scope that potentially affects industries—both those still around and entertainment field—as a whole.

LOTS OF BIG NEWS from the FCC: First, the commission unaniously approved the merger of CBS and Infinity the day after Christmas. You may recall that this represents the largest merger in radio history. The U.S. Department of Justice approved the deal earlier in the month. In a press release sent out the holidays, Mel Karmazin, former Infinity chief and newly named the head of CBS, "Office of the Chairman," said that the combined group will be able to offer advertisers "a critical mass medium to reach their customers. The radio industry is poised to expand its 7% share of the advertising market, and we intend to lead that expansion."

A new name for the CBS Radio Division was expected as early as Monday. FCC Commissioner James Quelio, who announced plans to retire last summer, affirms that he will probably settle out by June. The declaration came after a request from the president to vacate the seat so that Clinton could nominiate another Democrat. It’s no secret that Quelio and FCC Chair- man William Kennard have been at odds to see one’s interests. But the commissioners are still in control of the FCC, currently freely current counsel.

Talk about a hangover: Nine stations, including the flagship station of the line, have been swapped in the past two years. The FCC will swap a million dollars to 17 FCC-approved states, then exchange one FCC license. The FCC rules allow the swap to be done.

New network: ABC Radio Net- works is set to launch "Show Prep Tool," a morning prep service that will deliver in-depth info on lifestyles, trends, money, entertainment, and other categories. The next FCC to congregate will start up the breakfast affiliates for the restaurant, nationwide newspapers, wire services, and national magazines. The network currently serves more than 2,900 affiliates.

Rollouts rating: AcuRatings has released its latest reports rollouts, which show New York’s celebrated dance station WKUR falling from No. 1 to 2, dropping from a 9.7 summer share to a 7.5. But on the rebonds 7.5-8.8 to capture the No. 1. Plus-plus rank. News WINC and WBAM-AM & READ adult WRKS round out the market’s top five.

In Los Angeles, top 40/rythm KFWR maintained the lead, followed by KIIS-FM and KIWW. Spanish KLVY, and top 40/KH- AM-AM. Top 40/rythm WBBM Chicago was at a 9.4 but had rebounced 7.5-7.6, to take the No. 1 spot. It’s followed by R&B WGGI, full-service WGN, modern rock WQXQ, and news/talk WBAM-AM.

STATION SALES & SWAPS: Get this one. Just for fun, Communications and American Radio Systems were each ordered by the Justice Department to unload stations in order to get approval of prospective pending transactions. The two companies, in a savvy move, decided to simply swap their Justice-offending stations and get the WQKQ in Pittsburgh, WSMW Atlanta, WKBX Cincinnati for American Radio Sys- tems’ WHAM/WVOR/WTIT Ro- chester. The move was to be decided a few months later, cash. Jack also gains the option to buy WNYE Rochester.

Then there are the more tradi- tional swaps, including the "The Fox" in Myers, Fla., and WKKI Port Car- lotte, Fla., from Osborn to Ceara Clear Channel for $11 million; KMIJ Sacramento, Calif., from American Radio Systems to Salem Broadcast- ing for $3.5 million; and WCOL Cincinnati, and WVLV Philadelphia, PA, from Philadelphia, and WVTM Nashville, Tenn. Both WCOL and WVLV will maintain their longstanding black gospel formats.

Anton Brings Bloomington To Indianapolis Via WITS

WEERE LIKE THE VIE NT CONG of Indianapolis radio—Indiana’s tiller-wa- rior radio station,” says Rich Anton, PD of triple-A WITS Bloom- ington. Anton explains that market of license to create a “border radio” vibe for the “90s. And in Indi- anapolis, WITS has seen a consistent ratings increase through the past year, moving 1-7.2-1.2-2.5-2.6.

The beautiful thing about KBCO in Boulder, says Anton, “was that it was a Boulder station that tried to export Boulder to Denver. It was cool to listen to that Boulder station.”

And that’s what we’re doing. It’s cool to listen to that Bloomington station.”

We want to be called ‘That Bloomington station.’”

That’s our image.

And we’re ashamed of that, nor do we try to hide it.

And that’s one thing that the other stations in Indianapolis cannot be. That’s our edge.”

Like Boulder, An- ton says, there’s a mystique in Bloom- ington. “There’s a hip factor of Bloomington, outside of that 10 college town.”

The music scene is a very good one. There’s a lot of arts and things that go on, backed up by the univer- sity. People come from all over the state to do their boating on Lake Monroe in Bloomington.

Anton can stretch that_magic north to Indianapolis because “there’s a lot of Indiana University alumni living in Indiana.”

There’s a connec- tion there that they still can have to Bloomington through WITS. At Lake Monroe, the water boats docked there are from Indianapolis. So we know they’re there. Some folks like to hang on to that Bloomington connec- tion. We’ve got a hangover, and cultur- ally . . . it’s two different worlds.

That uniqueness factor allows WITS the musical freedom of a triple-A, although, Anton says, “it’s a conserva- tive radio market here in Indiana, and they’re not tolerant of a whole lot of wild and different things.”

When he flipped WITS to triple-A in ’84, there was an awful lot of unfa- miliarity and hungover. It was a lot of songs, but it’s a lot of growth, he says. “Because we have the opportu- nity in this format to embrace the artist, embrace the good songs, and play them and play them loudly.”

We’re not the spirit as the hit stations do, make sure you’re playing other tracks, to other artists. Of our own programs, we’re always there more than one great song off an album.

“Will never reach off too far to try to image myself as a modern station, as an AC station, or as a mainstream rock station,” he adds. “We can do that when we want to, but we have to react to it, and we can just be who we are. That’s a nice position to have.”

MARSHALL DEAN
DON'T SPEAK
TONI BRAXTON (LAFACE/ARISTA)

A
THE CARDIGANS (STOCKHOLM/MERCURY)

BLUES WHO
TRACY

EVERYTHING BUT THE GIRL (ATLANTIC)

MISSING

#1 LET'S GET DOWN
GHOST TOWN DJ'S

FLY

Hot 100 Singles chart.

KELLY (WARNER SUNSET BOUCHE (RCA)

GUÉGUÉTÉSVEEG)

Rational sample of

TRAVELER
BABY ME

ME ARGENTINA

BACK

ROBERT SMITH (PEACHES, ASCAP)

DO YOU KNOW WHERE IT'S AT?
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FLY

Hot 100 Singles chart.
NEW CONGRESS

(Continued from page 6)

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BILBOOARD JANUARY 11, 1997 99
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>WEEKS AT NO. 1</th>
<th>WEEKS AT NO. 10</th>
<th>WEEKS AT NO. 20</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
<th>RELEASE DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NO. 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>TRIUMPH 92000/ISOTOPIC</strong> (10.98/16.98)</td>
<td>4 weeks at No. 1</td>
<td><strong>TRIUMPH 92000/ISOTOPIC</strong> (10.98/16.98)</td>
<td><strong>TRIUMPH 92000/ISOTOPIC</strong> (10.98/16.98)</td>
<td><strong>TRIUMPH 92000/ISOTOPIC</strong> (10.98/16.98)</td>
<td><strong>TRIUMPH 92000/ISOTOPIC</strong> (10.98/16.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE TOP-SELLING ALBUMS COMPILATED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE AND RACK SALES REPORTS, COLLECTED, COMPILED, AND PROVIDED BY THE BILLBOARD WEEKLY MAGAZINE.</strong></td>
<td><strong>SHANIA TWAIN</strong></td>
<td><strong>TRENT REAGAN'S CREATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SOUNDTRACK</strong></td>
<td><strong>TRENT REAGAN'S CREATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>VARIOUS ARTISTS</strong></td>
<td><strong>TRENT REAGAN'S CREATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
<td><strong>THE MIRROR HAS TWO FACES</strong></td>
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*Albums with the greatest sales gains this week.* Recording Industry Asso. Of America (RMA) certificare for sales of 500,000 album units (125,000 for LPs). **RMA** certification for shipment of 1 million units (500,000 for LPs), with multiplier indicies. Began cing largest unit increase. Percentage indicates biggest percentage growth. **Identify** staffer reveals albums removed from **Identify** staffs this week. 1991. Billboard/BPI Communications, and SoundScan, Inc.
Go For The Gold. Columbia Records executives recently celebrated the gold certification of R&B artist Maxwell's debut album, "Maxwell's Urban Hang Suite." Pictured, from left, are Demmette Guidry, VP black music marketing; David Pas-sick, Maxwell's manager; Will Bowin, senior VP; Mitchell Cohen, VP A&R; Maxwell; Don Ienner, president; Michael Mauldin, executive VP black music; and John Ingrassia, senior VP Columbia Records Group.

Hit The Road. Morcheeba celebrates backstage following its sold-out performance at the University of London. The band recently kicked off a U.S. tour to promote its China/Discovery album "Who Can You Trust?" Pictured, from left, are Syd Birenbaum, president/CEO, Discovery Records; Skye Edwards of Morcheeba; John Loken, GM of China Records U.S.; Morcheeba's Ross and Paul Godfrey; Derek Greene, chairman, China Records; and Paul Ablett, Morcheeba's manager.

Clinton Walks The Walk. Funk master George Clinton, center, was recently inducted into Hollywood's RockWalk, along with the P-Funk All-Stars, which features members of Parliament/Funkadelic. Shown, from left, are Dave Weiderman, director of Hollywood's RockWalk; Clinton; and David Sears, executive director of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences Foundation.

From Queens To Times Square. Silva Screen Records' newest label, Times Square Records, celebrates its first signing with the five-man band Q-South, from Queens in New York. Pictured, from left, are Craig Abbott, Q-South member; Yusuf Gandhi, president/CEO, Silva Screen Records America; Michael Arfin, Q-South's manager; Q-South member Walker, Eddie Klinger, Eddy Joe McCabe, and Matt McCann; and Reynold D'Silva, managing director, Silva Screen Records.

Twain's Trophy. Shania Twain, right, accepts a multiplatinum plaque commemorating sales of more than 8 million copies of her album "The Woman In Me." Recording industry giant, of America chairman Jay Bernan presents the award backstage at a fund-raising gala for the Larry King Cardiac Foundation.

Mr American Pie. Hip-O Records signs an agreement with Don McLean to rerelease five of his most successful albums. First up will be the two-CD "Greatest Hits, Live," due in February. Pictured in the back row, from left, are Andy McKaie, VP of catalog development and special markets, A&R, Universal Music Group, and John Austin, coordinator of licensing and A&R, Hip-O/Universal Special Markets. Shown in front, from left, are Bruce Reinskoff, executive VP/GM, special markets, Universal Music Group, and McLean.

Dad's Song. Word Records artist Cindy Morgan surprised her father, Cova Morgan, with a live performance of his single "Listen" at the Bijou Theater in Knoxville, Tenn. The track is the title cut from her latest album. Pictured, from left, are Sigmund Brouwer, author, Word Publishing; Cova and Cindy Morgan; and Eric Arnold, promoter.

Elektric Diva. EastWest World/Warner Music Latin America songstress Amparo Sandino, second from right, wooed company executives with her performance at Warner Music Latin America's biannual marketing meeting in New York. Congratulating Sandino, from left, are Bill Berger, senior VP Elektra International; Maribel Schumacher, VP of marketing, Warner Music Latin America; and Sylvia Rhone, chairman/CEO, Elektra Entertainment Group.
### Top Albums A-Z (Listed by Artists)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
<td>One In A Million</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>$15.98</td>
<td>sold 7.7 million copies in 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aretha Franklin</td>
<td>The Queen of Soul</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>$19.98</td>
<td>sold 2.4 million copies in 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbra Streisand</td>
<td>The Essential Barbra Streisand</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>$19.98</td>
<td>sold 3.5 million copies in 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy Joel</td>
<td>Greatest Hits I</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 5.3 million copies in 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Marley &amp; The Wailers</td>
<td>Legend</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>$12.98</td>
<td>sold 10 million copies worldwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bon Jovi</td>
<td>Slippery When Wet</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 12 million copies in 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>Born In The U.S.A.</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 20 million copies in 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos Santana</td>
<td>Supernatural</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 4 million copies in 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine Dion</td>
<td>The Colour Of My Love</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 5 million copies worldwide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay Aiken</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$9.99</td>
<td>sold 9 million copies in 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destiny's Child</td>
<td>Survivor</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 3 million copies in 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleetwood Mac</td>
<td>Rumours</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 5 million copies in 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Harrison</td>
<td>All Things Must Pass</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>$14.98</td>
<td>sold 3 million copies in 1970</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Billboard 200 Chart (January 11, 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Labels/Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oasis</td>
<td>Stop The Clocks</td>
<td>Reprise/EMI 2599.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Blackstreet</td>
<td>No Diggity</td>
<td>RCA 2399.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Garth Brooks</td>
<td>P grease</td>
<td>Reprise/EMI 2399.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>R.E.M.</td>
<td>Out of Time</td>
<td>Reprise/EMI 2399.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Warner Bros 2399.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dave Matthews Band</td>
<td>Crash</td>
<td>RCA 2399.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Isley Brothers</td>
<td>The Isley Brothers</td>
<td>Capitol/Capitol 2299.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Smashing Pumpkins</td>
<td>Siamese Dream</td>
<td>Reprise/EMI 2299.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Puff Daddy</td>
<td>No Way Out</td>
<td>Bad Boy/Interscope 2299.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No Doubt</td>
<td>Tragic Kingdom</td>
<td>Interscope 2299.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The Billboard 200 chart is a weekly chart that ranks the best-selling albums in the United States. The chart is based on sales data from music stores, streaming services, and other outlets. The information is compiled by Billboard and published weekly.
Lion since its release, trails Boston's self-titled 1976 bow, currently at 15 million, as the best-selling debut of all time.

There were other major sales stories as well. The Beatles’ “Anthology 1” (Apple/Capitol) was certified at 8 million units this year (based on sales of 4 million units for the two-CD set). Celine Dion’s “ Falling Into You” (Sparrow), the “Waiting To Exhale” soundtrack (Interscope, the Smashing Pumpkins’ “ Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness” (Virgin), and 2Pac’s “ All Eyez On Me” (Death Row/Interscope) hit 7 million; the Pumpkins’ album is a two-CD set, so the award denotes sales of 3.5 million units. The Fugees’ “ The Score” (Ruffhouse/Columbia) and No Doubt’s “Tragic Kingdom” (Trauma/Interscope) arrived at 5 million.

These landmarks aside, certifications tumbled in some significant areas during the year.

The number of multiplatinum albums certified in 1996 dipped to 234 from 294 the previous year; multiplatinum singles rose, from three in 1995 to eight in 1996. Platinum albums slumped from 191 in 1995 to 158 in 1996, although platinum singles climbed from 26 in 1995 to 31 in 1996. Gold-album certifications moved up from 278 in 1995 to 317 in 1996; gold singles also brightened, from 74 in 1995 to 91 in 1996.

In certification news for December, Kenny G took home his sixth multiplatinum album as “ The Moment” (Arista) was certified double-platinum. Joining the album million-sellers in the last month of the year were rock acts Marilyn Manson, (Capricorn/Mercury), hip-hop unit 112 (Bad Boy/Arista), and alternative thrush Fiona Apple (Work Group/Columbia). A complete list of December RIAA certifications follows:

MULTIPLATINUM ALBUMS
Whitney Houston, “ The Bodyguard” soundtrack, Arista, 16 million.
Beetles, “ Anthology 1,” Apple/Capitol, 8 million.
No Doubt, “ Tragic Kingdom,” Trauma/Interscope, 5 million.

PLATINUM ALBUMS
Clint Black, “ Greatest Hits,” RCA Nashville, his sixth.
Nirvana, “ From The Muddy Banks Of The Wishkah,” DGC/Geffen, its sixth.
Luther Vandross, “ Your Secret Love,” LV/Epic, his 11th.
Marilyn Manson, “ Antichrist Superstar,” Nothing/Interscope, its first.
Donna Lewis, “ Now In A Minute,” Atlantic, her first.

Recent albums were modern rock bands the rock act Marilyn Manson and George Michael, “ Faith,” Warner Bros., its fourth.
Choosing to sign with their first gold albums were modern rock bands the Bad Flowers (Interscope) and Cake (Capricorn/Mercury), hip-hop unit 112 (Bad Boy/Arista), and alternative thrush Fiona Apple (Work Group/Columbia). A complete list of December RIAA certifications follows:

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Donna Lewis, “ Now In A Minute,” Atlantic, her first.
BEAUSOIL RING IN 20TH RHINO SET (Continued from page 11)

Jimmy C. Newman; and Harry Simonone, another R&B Raft member and saxophonist on Charlie's seminal “See You Later, Alligator.”

“Having Augie and Bessy and Tokyo together made it into swamp-op- pop, says Doucet. “A marriage of Gulf Coast music.”

Also present on the album are Josh Graves on dobro, Munel Babinouk on pedal steel guitar, and all electric bassist Wes White, who has played with Bea- nfield and with numerous New Orleans Jazzmen, including Wynton Marsalis and the Preservation Hall quintet. “It’s a kindred spirit,” notes Doucet. “He’s into Creole New Orleans music, and we’re all based on that, but there’s a bridge because our music is influenced by New Orleans, and New Orleans music is influenced by the music of the [Caribbean] islands,” says Doucet. White plays on Doucet’s island-infect- ed instrumental “Dance Caribe” and “IFPI Asia Revamp to Put Focus on Chinese Piracy (Continued from page 10)

shows; they do the industry awards; they are very involved as well as na- tional events and conferences.

In Thailand, Giouw says, there is the “willingness to take over, but they don’t have the infrastructure to take over the anti-piracy but will continue to report and will continue to report to the international IFPI offices stationed there.”

Recently, Giouw attended a weekend of meetings with Giouw early in December to discuss the issues, adds. “We’re now looking at national groups in other territories to see whether they are ready to take on full responsibility in the same way.”

The shift in responsibilities in Thailand and Malaysia can be seen as a part of the plan to make the national IFPI groups not only self-sustaining, but also contributing to the international anti-piracy efforts.

Another aspect of the restructuring is the relocation of the IFPI’s senior office in Hong Kong to its native Singa- pore. Giouw says he is eager for the move to be developed in oper- ational areas such as licensing and nego- tiations with broadcasters. Giouw adds that IFPI is aiming to create a new entity, “Singapore International” to which the IFPI will lend its support. However, Giouw says, the new entity will be self-financing and will be managed by local Singaporean companies.

The IFPI states that Singapore’s role as a center for anti-piracy efforts will be increased.

Giouw comments, “Piracy is an international problem, but some things are best dealt with at a local level.” This is why Giouw says, “The IFPI’s new structure is designed to work closely with the local anti-piracy organizations.”

A new regional coordinator for Thailand and Malaysia will be appointed, and Giouw will be in charge of the IFPI’s anti-piracy efforts in these regions.

IFPI To Hire Int. Enforcer
Staffer To Coordinate Global Efforts

LONDON—The IFPI’s interna- tional anti-piracy operations are set to be bolstered by a global enforcement team.

The organization’s director gen- eral, Nic Garnett, says that IFPI is committed to expanding its operations across the globe.

The new staff member will be based at IFPI headquarters in London—though he or she will travel extensively—and will, according to Garnett, have a back-

ground in law enforcement. The position was approved in principle at the fall IFPI board meeting in Tokyo.

“We all have a growing sense that while we have very effective enforcement at a national level, the problem of piracy is totally inter- national,” Garnett says. “A lot of international pirates are exploiting the gaps that exist between different national operations.”

JEFF CLARK-MEADS

by Geoff Mayfield

A NOISE: The reporting period that ended the Sunday before Christ- mas saw year-to-date album sales fall back 1995’s pace, as sales for that week again lagged behind that of the comparable prior-year week. However, a small rally in the last full week of ’96 pulled album sales ahead by a small fraction of 1% compared to last year’s Week 46 sales. Album sales for the week, as reflected by this issue’s charts, during which Christmas fell on a Wednesday, are down from the prior shopping week but manage to outdo album sales for the comparable ’96 week, in which Christmas fell on a Monday.

The year-end chart is now largely the story of the major labels’ efforts to greater growth, but at least ‘96 escapes the dubious and almost unique distinction of seeing album sales decline from those of the previous year.

ONE HOT NUMBER: The first charting album by No Doubt continues to lead the pack, chalking up a fourth straight week (including the one in which we did not publish) at No. 1 on The Billboard 200, well ahead of Celine Dion’s 500,000 units. With a gain exceeding 25,000, No Doubt hits 500,000 units for the week, which makes its “Tragic Kingdom” the first album in eight weeks to top the 500,000 mark. No Doubt’s singular success underscores one of the reasons that 1996’s final quarter was such a struggle: the only other album that was able to surpass 500,000 during any week in that March-October period was the post-holiday 2Pac set (released under the Makaveli alias), which debuted with 664,000 units in the Nov. 25 issue. By contrast, the week before Christmas 1996 saw Mariah Carey top 700,000 units, and the Beatles and the “Waiting To Exhale” soundtrack each surpassed 600,000.

The Beatles’ “Anthology 1” also exceeded the half-million milestone when it debuted with 855,500 in the Dec. 9, 1995, issue, and Garth Brooks’ “Fresh Horses” was within shooting range that same week, with 480,000 units.

RAP IT UP: Most of this week’s specialty sales charts, including Top Coun- try Albums, cue the finality. So do weeks 47 and 48, for the climb of Billboard 200 shows it was a hot week for rap. Throughout the fourth quarter, we saw rap titles open with big numbers, followed by inevitable sales eras- ons. But 21 of the big chart’s bullet quotes of rap sales are more than double the sales of the previous week. The changes in the charts followed rather than as gifts. The new sales for the week in that month period was the posthumous 2Pac set (released under the Makaveli alias), which debuted with 664,000 units in the Nov. 25 issue. By contrast, the week before Christmas 1996 saw Mariah Carey top 700,000 units, and the Beatles and the “Waiting To Exhale” soundtrack each surpassed 600,000.

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SOAR BOWS NATIVE AMERICAN CHRISTIAN LABEL
(Continued from page 12)

one of his goals for SOAR was to release consistently high-quality product, in both terms of sound and packaging.

Developing a label that will focus on Christian music from a Native American perspective is something Bee has wanted to do for a long time, and he says that he has had with the other SOAR labels as laying a foundation for Red Sea.

“We want to reach out to the young Native American people and educate them about the grace of God, because there are so many things permeating the young people’s life, alcohol, and satanic worshiping—

even on reservations,” he says. “We want to reach out and teach our people, educate them about a different way of life.”

GENERATING AWARENESS

One of Bee’s goals is to dispel the misconceptions some people have about Native Americans and their spirituality. “I want to tear down the stereotypes... people have about Native America, and our beliefs and way of life,” Bee says. “Not that we don’t still have our beliefs and ceremonies, but the Christian scene is so much bigger and well known in North America and the native communities.”

Bee anticipates discovering and signing Native American Christian acts from all over the country; he says the label is now negotiating with several acts. He compares label act Generation Exodus to Star Song’s Newsboys.

Bobby Bee agrees with his father that Red Sea will generate greater awareness of Native American Christians. “I think it will show the human side of Native Americans and that you can’t throw any race in one box and say, ‘This is how all of them are,’” Bee says.

Another project already recorded for Red Sea is “One Holy Night” by the duo Red Nativity, a Christmas album slated for release during the ’97 holiday season. Tom Bee anticipates it being one of the new label’s most successful releases. “It has a commercial sound with an Indian flavor,” he says.

Bee is also optimistic about the prospects for Red Sea overall. “We are really excited about the label,” he says. “We’re not just doing it because it’s fashionable. We’re Christians, and it’s something we’ve always wanted to do.”

SONY STRATEGIZES FOR SPRING DVD LAUNCH
(Continued from page 10)

place. Toshiba has announced that DVD-ROM drives for desktop computers will ship by the end of January. Current PC owners will be able to purchase Toshiba’s drive through an upgrade kit offered by Diamond Multimedia. Pricing had not been announced at press time.

Other companies, including Phillips and Matsushita, are expected to unveil their plans for DVD-ROM at CES. Consumers will be able to purchase DVD-ROM-equipped computers by the end of the first quarter.

Several computer software companies, including Electronic Arts, Activision, and Synergy, have already started to develop DVD-ROM titles that take advantage of the high-density format.

On the home video DVD front, Briesch and other Sony executives reiterated at the late-December meeting their reliance on early adopters—consumers eager to own the newest device—and positive word-of-mouth to propel the DVD industry. Sony would parallel the 1986 introduction of the CD, which began with a handful of releases. “It’s not going to take off immediately,” Briesch said. “There’s a tremendous amount of infrastructure to get in place.”

He estimates that 1997 sales will be very respectable but not a mass market. “Demand should ‘ramp up quickly’ thereafter, Briesch added, finishing the decade with an installed base of 10 to 15 million units. Sony-owned Columbia TriStar Home Video is equally conservative. President Ben Feingold forecast the release of between 50 and 75 titles this year, about as many as Warner Home Video had planned for its introductory package in 1996. An announcement by Warner Home Video president Warner Lieberfarb about Warner’s 1997 DVD release plans is expected Thurs.

Warner and Columbia, however, are the only two of the Hollywood majors to publicly commit to a DVD schedule. It’s a market Feingold is eager to tap. “I’ll have the ability to sell old and new material,” he noted. All releases will be encrypted to prevent digital-to-digital and digital-to-analog copies.

Several companies, including Universal and Paramount, have muted their enthusiasm for the format pending resolution of the copyright protection dilemma. Sony and 20th Century Fox remain convinced that DVD will fly.

Feingold and Warner differ on another score: Columbia will price releases for rental, as high as $80-$100 suggested list, as well as through Warner Home Video’s LieberFarb, seeking immediate mass-market exposure, has been an ardent advocate of sell-through-only pricing of DVD titles. “Our current thinking is different from Warner’s,” said Feingold.

Columbia, he said, will work with Smart Consumer to use the label to introduce DVD to hardware retailers. “We can go into Best Buy, Circuit City, the Good Guys, and Tower together. The structure of the studio will also allow us to do things that we could do to energize the market.”

“Drum is not really looking to define a Santa Barbara sound, and there really isn’t one,” he adds. “What attracted us to this area and these bands is range. Embodying that idea is Papa Nata, which, along with several other bands on the albums, has signed a one-album deal with Reptile to release a live performance.

The music act together those songs that have elements of reggae, R&B, funk, alca, and even jazz. Papa Nata lead vocalist Guy Jean says the bands’ participation on the album has many benefits. “It doesn’t cost us anything, and we’re getting television exposure,” he says. “They promote the band through this album. It’s just an absolutely incredible deal.”

For A Good Cause
Elton John and MTV Networks were honored at the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center’s 25th Anniversary Gala held in Century City, Calif. Actress Elizabeth Taylor presented John with the Rand Schrader Distinguished Achievement Award for outstanding individual achievement in championing gay and lesbian health issues, and Hole lead singer Courtney Love gave Judy McGrath, president of MTV, the Corporate Vision Award for helping to combat homophobia by enhancing gay and lesbian visibility on the network. The charity raised more than $500,000 for the center. Picture, from left, are Love, McGrath, L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center director Lorrie Jean, John, and Taylor.
Another Record For ‘Macarena’

Could THERE POSSIBLY BE anything more to say about ‘Macarena’ (Bay City Boys Mix)? Well, yes. In its 56th chart week, the RCA single sets a record for being the longest visitor to the Hot 100 since the chart was born on Aug. 4, 1940. It passes the 55-week record set on Aug. 24, 1946, by Everything But The Girl’s “Missing.” The difference between the two is that “Missing” had a consecutive 55-week run and “Macarena” took two 26-week runs to rack up its total. The single from Spain made its first appearance on the Hot 100 on Sept. 2, 1989, and had a 26-week run, ending exactly a year ago this week. It returned on May 11, 1990, and has been on the chart ever since.

That means “Macarena,” now in its second year on the chart, has actually appeared on the Hot 100 in three consecutive calendar years. Aside from seasonal singles that return each year, few titles can make that claim. One that can is Chubby Checker’s “Twist,” which charted in 1960, 1961, and 1962.

By returning to the top 10 on last week’s unpublished Hot 100, “Macarena” cements its record as being in the top 10 last week in chart run than any other single. Given that only one other single has been on the chart for 55 weeks, it’s remarkable that “Macarena” was No. 10 in its 56th chart week. As the Los Del Rio song shows no sign of disappearing from the chart soon, “Macarena” isn’t going to beat “Missing” by just one week. The RCA single seems a sure bet to be the first to hit the million-week mark on the Hot 100, but doesn’t dismiss the prospect of it also being the first to reach 70 weeks.

CHESTNUT: As long as the “Macarena” has been around, it has quite a way to go to match the record set by the song that moves to No. 16 on this week’s Adult Contemporary chart. In fact, “Macarena” will have to be charting in September 2045 to match the achievement of Nat King Cole’s “The Christmas Song,” which amassed enough airplay during Christmas week to rise 10 places on the AC chart. Cole’s original recording of “The Christmas Song” (first charted in Billboard on Nov. 30, 1944). It’s currently listed on the TTV Soundtracks label, thanks to its inclusion in the “Sing Along The Way” soundtrack.

After cut from that album, Bobby Helms’ “Single Bell Rock,” is right behind Cole’s on the AC chart, at No. 18. The difference is that Cole has charted AC before, peaking at No. 19 in December 1962. “Single Bell Rock” is making its AC debut, 39 years after the Helms single first appeared on the Hot 100, on Dec. 23, 1957.

KNOWS IT ALL: Kevin Sharp’s “Nobody Knows” (Asylum) moves to the top of the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart. This is the first No. 1 listing for the song. Sharp’s recording is a remake of the Tony Rich Project hit from last year. It may seem like the original version of “Nobody Knows” was No. 1, because it was around so long—47 weeks on the Hot 100— but it only peaked at No. 2. It also went to No. 2 on the Adult Contemporary chart, and, surprisingly, it only peaked at No. 11 on Hot R&B Singles.

SUMMIT SHOUTOUT: 1996 is over, and as Larry Cohen of Trumbull, Conn., points out, not one British artist went to No. 1 on the Hot 100 during the year. The two U.K. acts that came the closest were Everything But The Girl with “Missing” and Donna Lewis with “I Love You Always Forever.” Both titles peaked at No. 2. Last year was the first since 1972 without a U.K. No. 1.
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Either you or someone you know knows one of the 250,000 individuals who saw them live or the 250,000 who bought their records this year. Or knows someone who works for their slavishly devoted label. Or all of the above. Ask around.

Barenaked Ladies spent the past year releasing the kind of records that radio dreams about. Ask your friend whose friend’s cousin-in-law spun “The Old Apartment.” The response has been huge. Or maybe you’re Jason Priestley and you directed the video. If not, then your old sorority sister’s step-brother knows someone who once met him and heard how it turned out really good.

Were you one of the many devout who threw mac and cheddar at any of the sold-out shows on this year’s non-stop tour? Or was that your ex-roommate? Maybe you’re the guy who called us looking for a list of all upcoming shows within a 500 mile radius of Denver after you finally saw them live. Ask your neighbor about that one. Maybe it was her.

Our friends The Barenaked Ladies are bigger than you think and we believe they’re going to get even bigger.

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