After Just 10 Years, BMG Entertainment International Has Established Quite a Record.
But Our Past Accomplishments
Only Hint At The Future...
Turkey, a record market straddling the borders of Europe and Asia and on the cusp of the secular and the spiritual, has now received a vote of confidence from four of the five major labels.

PolyGram has this month established a joint venture in the country, which means that it has followed BMG Entertainment International, EMI Music, and Sony Music Entertainment in being directly represented in Turkey. The man who will oversee PolyGram’s activities in Turkey, Sevket Gözalan, says that his company is already aware of the creative potential of the country through Curtil, a Turkish hip-hop outfit signed to Mercury Germany whose last album sold 400,000 copies in Turkey.

PolyGram and the other labels are also aware of the power in the growing Turkish market held by such domestic artists as Ibrahim Tatlıses, Denet, Melvan, Hasan Chatr Otter, Ahmet Kaya, Serdar Ortac, Sezen Akşam, Tarkan, Bulent Ersoy, Orhan Gencebay, Tuğce San, and Sefika Küthner. PolyGram’s commitment to Turkey is in the form of a 25% stake in the four

Country Music’s Drop In ’96: Cause For Worry?

BY CHET FLIPPO

NASHVILLE—Country music sales suffered a significant downturn in 1996, according to SoundScan. After peaking at U.S. sales of 76 million albums in each of the years 1994 and 1995, total country album sales for 1996 slipped to 67 million, a 12% drop.

By comparison, the overall U.S. music marketplace finished 1996 up about 3% in unit sales over 1995, according to SoundScan, with album sales about flat, at a .05% rise over the prior-year period.

While many industry executives consider the country music downturn a correction in what had been a healthy five years of go-go growth that reached a 400% increase in market value from 1980 to 1994, some also express a conviction that the country music industry is hearing a wake-up call.

Most disturbing was a more severe dip in sales in the final quarter of 1996, as compared with the same period in prior years. Where sales in the final quarter of 1994 were 27 million, increasing to 28 million in 1995, fourth-quarter sales for 1996 were 22 million—a drop of 18%.

According to label and retail executives, two factors emerge in analyzing the sales results. First, they say, a

By Paul Vernia

NEW YORK—When then director of Amnesty International Jack Cashman wanted to call attention to human-rights abuses in the late ’80s, he persuaded Bruce Springsteen, Peter Gabriel, and Sting to participate in the worldwide Human Rights Now! tour. Nearly a decade later, healey is still pushing the human-rights cause, now as director of his new Human Rights Action Center.

(Continued on page 107)

Artists Rally for Human Rights On Ark 21 Set

BY PAUL VERNIA

NEW YORK—When then director of Amnesty International Jack

No Less Person

(Continued on page 107)

IN RETAIL NEWS

Musicland Talks Could Yield Cash Infusion

SEE PAGE 10

SESAC Blanket TV License Is Milestone For Rights Group

BY IRV LICHTMAN

NEW YORK—SESAC, the performing rights group, has negotiated its first blanket local-TV licensing deal in the U.S.

The license, successfully capping more than a year of negotiations with the Television Music Licensee Committee, is regarded as a milestone in SESAC’s continuing bid to compete more aggressively with its two bigger rivals, ASCAP and BMI.

“It’s a milestone for SESAC in lots of ways,” says Stephen Swid, who, along with fellow co-chairmen Freddie Gershon and Ira Smith, acquired SESAC from private owners in October 1992.

“It’s a big reduction in cost,” he says, “because we’ve previously licensed local TV on a station-by-station basis. These five-year deals have been coming up for renewal on an everyday basis. This has greatly streamlined our infrastructure, along with our program of putting everything on computer.”

(Continued on page 109)
ONE INCOMPARABLE FAMILY OF LABELS
BILLBOARD'S YEAR-END RANKINGS!

TOP 40

#1 Soundtrack Album - Waiting To Exhale (Arista)
#1 New Pop Artist - The Tony Rich Project (LaFace)
#1 Pop Marketing Label - Arista
#1 Hot 100 Singles Promo Label - Arista
#1 Singles Label - Arista
#1 Hot 100 Singles Producer - Babyface (LaFace)
#1 Hot 100 Singles Songwriter - Babyface (LaFace)
#1 Pop Catalog Album - Kenny G - Miracles (Arista)

R&B

#1 R&B Album Distributing Label - Arista
#1 R&B Single - Toni Braxton - "You're Makin' Me High/Let It Flow" (LaFace)
#1 Hot R&B Singles Label - LaFace
#1 Hot R&B Singles Promotion Label - Arista
#1 New R&B Artist - Total (Bad Boy)
#1 R&B Artist/Female - Monica (Rowdy)
#1 R&B Label - LaFace
#1 Promotion Label R&B Mainstream - Arista
#1 Label R&B Mainstream - Arista
#1 Promotion Label R&B Adult - Arista
#1 Artist R&B Adult - Toni Braxton (LaFace)

COUNTRY

#1 Hot Country Singles & Tracks - Brooks & Dunn (Arista Nashville)
#1 Country Artists - Duo/Group - Brooks & Dunn (Arista Nashville)

ADULT CONTEMPORARY

#1 Contemporary Jazz Artist - Kenny G (Arista)
#1 Contemporary Jazz Album - Kenny G - The Moment (Arista)
#1 Contemporary Jazz Label - Arista
#1 Combined Jazz Label - Arista
#1 Hot Adult Contemporary Singles & Tracks - Take That (Arista)

DANCE

#1 Hot Dance Music Maxi-Singles Sales Label - Arista
#1 Hot Dance Music Maxi-Singles Sales Distribution Label - Arista
#1 Hot Dance Music Label - Arista
#1 Hot Dance Music Marketing Label - Arista
Scandal Hurts S. Korean Music Industry

**Country's Largest Record Distributor Linked To Cult**

**BY CHO YOON-JUNG**

SEOUL, South Korea—The prosperous $600 million South Korean music market, Asia's largest after Japan, has been hit by uncertainty and a slowdown in sales. It follows the public revelation last month that Syn-nara, the country's largest record distributor, with nearly a third of the market, is owned and operated by a religious cult. The news came to light in connection with a murder investigation in which one of the leaders of the Aga Dong-san cult, an unnamed woman, and other high officials within Syn-nara were implicated.

Syn-nara is a major record retailer and wholesaler, with eight sizable record stores and a large wholesale center, accounting for a countrywide wholesale market share of about 30%. The company made a significant impact upon the Korean industry when it began aggressive price-cutting in late 1995, reducing retail prices by 20%. It has been alleged that Syn-nara was able to do this by employing cult members who worked without pay.

The firm's immediate fate remains unknown, as a case involving allegations of slave labor, murder, and other charges awaits deliberation in the courts. Representatives of Syn-nara could not be reached for comment.

However, top international music executives say that with Syn-nara's operations and future in doubt, they are already seeing a drop in sales on a scale that corresponds almost directly with Syn-nara's market share. Some companies are also alleged to be suffering because of large unsettled accounts with Syn-nara. "It will cast an immediate concern," says EMC's Tony Smith.

LONDON—In the increasingly heated dispute between the U.K. and the European continent's mechanical collecting societies, the European competition authorities have been asked to investigate.

The company at the center of the row, PolyGram International Music Publishing, complained on Jan. 10 to the European Commission's antitrust body, DG4, about what PolyGram Publishing says are unfair practices by Scandinavian mechanical rights society NCB and its French counterpart, SDRM. PolyGram Publishing's complaint says that NCB and SDRM have taken illegal sanctions against the company in retaliation for its pivotal role in the new and controversial system of direct distribution (Business, Jan. 19).

Under this system, the U.K.'s Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS) makes mechanical payments directly to publishers worldwide, with a 10% levy. This means that the local collecting society in each territory is deprived of significant amounts of business through lost commissions.

MCPS is the only society within the EU to offer such a service, and, while it is open to all its members, to date only PolyGram Publishing has taken advantage of it. PolyGram's record arm has its pan-European central license deal with MCPS, an agreement that was concluded virtually simultaneously with the publishing arm adopting direct distribution.

PolyGram Publishing's complaint to the commission, the governmental civil service of the EU, is under Articles 86 and 86 of the Treaty of Rome, one of the constitutional documents of the union. Article 85 aims to safeguard fair competition, and Article 86 legislates against abuse of a dominant market position.

PolyGram Publishing's director of legal and business affairs, Cristian Evans, says NCB is the subject of the complaint because, he argues, it has withheld rebates due to PolyGram's record arm. SDRM is also cited because of its declared termination of the reciprocal-rights representation deal it has with MCPS.

PolyGram group general counsel Richard Constant says, "We do not want to do this." (Continued on page 111)

**EU Antitrust Body Asked To Probe Royalty Dispute**

**BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS**

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Follows Page 58

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LaFace co-president Antonio "L.A." Reid has joined with music publisher Windswept Pacifica to launch a joint venture, Hitco Music Publishing, which will replace his Staff Shirt Music firm. Deputy editor Irving Lichtman has the story.

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**SCANDAL HURTS S. KOREAN MUSIC INDUSTRY**

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**ANOTHER BILLBOARD WEEK IN REVIEW**
In recent months, members of the music industry have begun to receive a variety of national newspaper think pieces about the downfall of our business—doomday death knells praising blame for the sagging sales a wide variety of factors. While there is no denying that there are problems, the main reason for the crisis is much more basic—our music industry has forgotten, or has chosen to deviate from, some of the fundamentals that made it so successful in the first place.

At the end of the '70s, when we faced a similar crisis, MTV saved the day by giving a new purpose to music. Time this, there is no new MTV to save the industry. This time, it’s a case of “physician, heal thyself.”

The prescription must begin with a renewed commitment to the singles marketplace and, in tandem, to pre-teen and early teenage fans, who have largely been forgotten.

Music—from Rudy Vallee and Bing Crosby through Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, the Beatles, etc.—has always been teen-driven. As teens, we all bonded with our favorite icons by hearing songs, buying singles, watching them rise up the chart, and feeling as though we were part of that rise. Every time one of our favorite artists sat atop Hot 100, we felt as if we were sitting there with them. The result: Long-term bonding was forged between artist and fan. To this day, these artists still draw loyal crowds and sell anthologies of tried-and-true songs. In other words, these acts have proved to be long-playing stars, who have largely been forgotten.

How can this bonding, which is so essential to the long-term health of the music industry, occur in 1997, when the “postcard” between artist and young fan—the commercially available single—hardly even exists anymore?

Jimi Laiumia, former front man for ‘70s punk outfit Jimi Laumiue & the Psychotic Frogs, is the author of The Record Connection in Lake Ronkonkoma, N.Y.

CHART SCENES & CHARTS SEEN

Thanks for being a publication that gives serious space to a multitude of musical styles. We at Black Music Vox are heartened to see the various covers of our “U.K. Cuts” feature. Music industry has forgotten, or has chosen to deviate from, some of the fundamentals that made it so successful in the first place.

Entire album when you want to own a song that captures their imagination. This is why the future of a decades-spanning relationship.

Instead, kids denied access to a low-price commercial single will view artists as greedy (as well as wealthy) and unworthy of our long-term loyalty. They also will (and do) tape the songs they desire from the radio or MTV and pass on copies of these tapes to friends. This is the fault of no one except the record labels that choose not to make singles available at retail. These labels have forgotten that tangible, artwork-bearing commercial singles (not radio dubs on unmarked cassettes) are the basic building blocks of long-term fan loyalty.

Cut off this vital first step and the whole relationship founders.

Nurturing the teenage market must go further than making more singles available, however. We must also consider the music. At some point in the last few years, the music industry has come to require the musical needs of the 8- to 15-year-old market—and particularly the very young female sector.

That’s why we have to make Christmas gifts of Elvis’ music in the ’50s, the Beatles in the ’60s, the Jacksons and Osmonds in the ’70s, and New Kids On The Block in the ’80s. Each of those acts introduced the next generation of music buyers to the joys and rigors of their world. What can parents offer pre- and young teens now? Gangsta rappers shooting one another and alternative rockers shooting themselves? I think not.

The U.S. industry should take a long, hard look at the U.K., where pop music—Girls Aloud, Elastica, Blur, Oasis, etc.—offers an encouraging and thriving market for young music fans who are not hard enough or cynical enough to consume some of the more dangerous choices on the market.

To ignore this young audience, hunger for pop music, is to run the risk of losing it forever, thereby bringing the industry to its knees in the next 10 years. Remember, everything does not have to be “underground.” In fact, an underground can thrive only when there is a flourishing underground (read “mainstream pop market”) for it to react against.

Perhaps a strong dose of this thinking will mean that more of us in the industry will be feeling better this time next year.
CASSANDRA WILSON
NEW MOON DAUGHTER

GRAMMY NOMINEE
BEST JAZZ VOCAL

Best Album 1996 - Time Magazine

"One of the greatest pop albums of the decade..." - Stephen Holden, New York Times

"Instant Classic!" ★★★★★ - Down Beat

On tour February and March with Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra in "Blood On The Fields," a jazz oratorio.

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Music Land In Negotiations For Important Infusion Of Cash

ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—The Music Land group, which in the last month has been unsuccessfully courted by two potential buyers, is involved in negotiations with financial firms that could bring much-needed infusion of capital into the company, sources say.

According to those sources, Apollo Advisors, a financial firm begun by former Drexel Burnham Lambert executive Leon Black, is in discussions with the company about making what would likely be an equity investment in the company.

Additional sources say that Music Land also is having discussions with other financial firms about making such equity investments. Also, some sources say Music Land is talking to GE Capital about its lending cash to the chain through a debt vehicle. An equity investment and debt deal would not necessarily be mutually exclusive.

GE Capital executives could not be reached for comment at press time.

If these negotiations succeed in bringing cash into Music Land, it would come at a critical juncture for the company, which has been struggling to attract sales and profits.

Music Land sees its January, which marks the launch of TK News Venture To Develop Talent

BY GEOFF BURGESS

HONG KONG—Premier Japanese musician, songwriter, and producer Takayo Komuro has various record projects projects have generated sales of 100 million albums in his home country. He has his own record label, television show, and Internet home page. What next? A deal with Rupert Murdoch.

Next month marks the launch of TK News Venture To Develop Talent, a joint venture between Komuro (also known as “TK”) and Murdoch’s News Corp. The new business is a music and TV software development company. TK News Venture To Develop Talent will produce music in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China.

Komuro, who along with Lachlan Murdoch, the eldest son at age 25 of Rupert Murdoch,

TK News officially takes flight Feb. 7.

The first of the new venture’s first show, “First,” says Lachlan Murdoch of the new venture, “it’s not a record company. We’re not in the business of distribution. Our commitment is to managing developing, marketing artists, and therefore the upfront investment is nowhere near as big as that which would be required in acquiring or building an international record company with a full distribution network.

“Secondly, on the personal front, once I got to TK and what kind of an extraordinarily talented man he is, I found the prospect of working with him very exciting.

The main focus for TK News’ talent search will be Taiwan, Komuro says. “Because many people there know my music and like to find artists who already know and like of my style of music. At first, it will probably be girls singers.”

The company’s first Asian shows will take place in May, featuring established Komuro-produced acts and the company’s new discoveries. The idea is to present the cream of the producer’s(...Continued on page 109)

Japan’s Komuro, Murdoch Link

Their TK News Venture To Develop Talent

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THE WALT DISNEY STUDIOS WOULD LIKE TO
CONGRATULATE OUR GRAMMY AWARD NOMINEES

"BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME"
From the motion picture "Up Close & Personal"
Performed by Celine Dion, Written by Diane Warren, Produced by David Foster
SONG OF THE YEAR • RECORD OF THE YEAR
BEST SONG WRITTEN SPECIFICALLY FOR A MOTION PICTURE OR FOR TELEVISION
BEST FEMALE POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE • PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

"CHANGE THE WORLD"
From the motion picture "Phenomenon"
Performed by Eric Clapton, Written by Tommy Sims, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Gordon Kennedy
Produced by Babyface
SONG OF THE YEAR • RECORD OF THE YEAR
BEST MALE POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE • PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

PRODUCER OF THE YEAR
Don Was
"Crazy Love" (Aaron Neville & Robbie Robertson)
"Have A Little Faith In Me" (Jewel)
From the motion picture "Phenomenon"

BEST METAL PERFORMANCE
“I’m Your Boogie Man” • White Zombie
Track from “The Crow: City of Angels” Soundtrack
Miramax/Hollywood Records

BEST INSTRUMENTAL COMPOSITION WRITTEN FOR
A MOTION PICTURE OR FOR TELEVISION
"Unstrung Heroes"
Thomas Newman, Composer
Hollywood Records

"The Star Maker"
Ennio Morricone, Composer
Miramax/Hollywood Records

BEST INSTRUMENTAL ARRANGEMENT
WITH ACCOMPANYING VOCALS
“When You Wish Upon A Star” • Take 6
Take 6, Arrangers
Track from “Music From The Park”
Walt Disney Records

BEST POP PERFORMANCE BY
A DUO OR GROUP WITH VOCAL
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Track from “Music From The Park”
Walt Disney Records

BEST FEMALE COUNTRY VOCAL PERFORMANCE
“Baby Mine” • Alison Krauss
Track from “The Best of Country Sing The Best of Disney”
Walt Disney Records
EVERYBODY KNOWS

RADIO KNOWS: EIGHT #1 SINGLES

RETAIL KNOWS: OVER SEVEN AND ONE HALF MILLION ALBUMS SOLD

CRITICS KNOW: "EVERYBODY KNOWS" IS ONE OF THE YEAR'S BEST ALBUMS IN COUNTRY OR POP HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

YOU KNOW: 1991 POLLSTAR INDUSTRY, BEST NEW COUNTRY ARTIST

1992 AMERICAN MUSIC AWARDS, FAVORITE NEW ARTIST, COUNTRY ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC TOP NEW FEMALE VOCALIST

1994 COUNTRY MUSIC ASSOCIATION AWARDS, ALBUM OF THE YEAR FOR COMMON THREAD: SONGS OF THE EAGLES

1996 GRAMMY AWARDS, BEST COUNTRY VOCAL COLLABORATION FOR "FALL TO PIECES" WITH AARON NEVILLE

1996 GRAMMY NOMINATIONS, BEST FEMALE COUNTRY VOCAL PERFORMANCE: "BELIEVE ME BABY (I LIED)"

BEST COUNTRY SONG: "BELIEVE ME BABY (I LIED)"

BEST COUNTRY ALBUM: EVERYBODY KNOWS

BEST COUNTRY VOCAL COLLABORATION: "HOPE: COUNTRY MUSIC'S QUEST FOR A CURE"
Pointblank Goes Regional With Soul Legend Burke

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK—Even with a 40-year career filled with surprises, soul legend Solomon Burke was somehow still startled by the recent turn of events that led to the release of his new album, “Defini-
don Off Soul,” on Pointblank/Virgin.

In 1966, Burke was playing the Jazz Aspen festi-
val. Despite a downpour, he noticed one couple having a particular joyous time, singing along with his early '60s pop and R&B hits, such as “Just Out Of Reach (Of My Two Empty Arms),” “Cry To Me,” and “Got To Get You Off My Mind.” The couple came into Burke’s tent after the show to introduce themselves.

“I felt so bad because I didn’t have anything to offer the man to drink but some fruit juices and some tea, and there was only one chair. So we gave the chair to this young lady, and I said [to the man], ‘Listen, you can sit right here on my knee,’” recalls Burke.

Though he didn’t know it, Burke, who was without a record deal—or as he puts it, “between opportuni-
ties”—was talking with longtime admirer Jim Fifield, president/CEO of EMI Music. In fact, as a board member of Jazz Aspen, Fifield had been one of the few to suggest that the festi-
val book Burke.

“I’ve been a fan of Solomon Burke’s ever since he was with Atlantic and the Jerry Wexler days. I had all his recordings,” says Fifield. “He did a show at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival three years ago, and that was the first time I’d seen him again after not seeing him in a long time. He had a fuchsia suit and his cape, and he blew the whole place apart.”

Even after Fifield introduced himself, Burke still did not know who he was. Moreover, Burke says, it wasn’t until Fifield had connected him with Pointblank president John Wooler and Burke was signed to the EMI-distributed label that he realized Figielf was anything other than a very well connected independent pro-
motion man.

Burke recalls, “I called him after I was signed and said, ‘Mr. Fifield, please forgive me for being so stupid and ignorant. I just didn’t know who you were, and I deeply apologize.’ I felt like a little ant.”

Burke is one of the music indus-
try’s true characters. Dubbed the “Wonder Boy Preacher” when he began delivering sermons from his church in Philadelphia as a child, Burke started his recording career with Apollo Records (1956). Disillu-
sioned with the industry, he quit and opened up a chain of mortuaries. He signed with Atlantic Records in 1960 and released a slew of hits under Wexler’s tutelage. Although never as famous as contemporaries Otis Red-
ing or Sam Cooke, he is considered by many to be just as vital a part of R&B history.

He has recorded only sporadical-
ly over the past two decades—most recently for Black Top Records in 1990—but he continues to tour, play-
ing up to 75 dates a year with his 11-
piece band. (He also has appeared in a number of films, most notably playing Daddysy Mention in 1987’s “The Big Easy.”)

“Definition Of Soul,” co-produced by Burke and his son Selassie, is a collection of songs that mines vintage soul territory of love lost and found, and the attendant miseries and pleasures.

Heatseekers Blossom Home And Abroad

R&B, Country Newcomers Well-Received At Radio

BY DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—Island Black Music R&B act Dru Hill is on a promotional tour, planting seeds for its self-titled debut set in England, but the fruits of the band’s tireless efforts are already being felt in full bloom in the U.S.

“Dru Hill” has sold more than 97,000 units since its release Nov. 17, 1996, according to SoundScan. The group became a Heatseekers Impact act when the album entered The Bill-
board 200 at No. 90, for the week end-
ing Jan. 18.

Coming off the success of the group’s single “Tell Me,” which was featured on Island’s “Eddie” sound-

R&B radio programmers have also gotten behind the second single, “In My Bed,” en masse.

The song, which was serviced to R&B stations Dec. 17, 1996, began to show its power after the Christmas holiday.

For the week ending Jan. 10, Broadcast Data Systems reported “In My Bed” as the “greatest gainer” at mainstream R&B stations, posting a 224-spin increase.

Cliff Winston, PD at R&B KJLH Los Angeles, suspects the song could have been even more popular, had “Tell Me” not proved so resilient.

The only thing keeping “In My Bed” from getting more play on our station right now is that “Tell Me” just won’t die,” says Winston. “With the ice bro-
ken, we’re expecting ‘In My Bed’ to be a natural.”

Breaking the ice is exactly what Island senior VP/GM (U.S.) and “Dru Hill” executive producer Hiriam Hicks had in mind when he set out to intro-
duce the band to radio programmers at various trade conventions.

“We want them to be the people’s group,” says Hicks. “We wanted Dru Hill to be a group that people could sit down with and touch. A lot of acts today are more standoffish, and I wanted them to defy that.”

Rikko, music director and night personality at R&B KJLH, San Antonio, Texas, caught a glimpse of the band’s endearing charisma and acces-
sibility during an in-
station interview.

“It’s hard getting bands on that haven’t been combed through and just want to talk about getting girls at their shows,” says Rikko. “These guys understood the value of air time, and when they came in, it was, boom! They sat right down and knew their stuff.

“If they were coached,” he adds, “they were coached well.”

Numerous in-store appearances have also served the band well. One such appearance received press attention when the act required a police escort to help its members maneuver through the throngs of young female fans.

Dru Hill member Nokio says the band’s intimacy with the public has proved to be more stabilizing than intoxicating.

“We are definitely here for our fans,” he says. “Things like stopping to sign autographs even when we don’t have the time and talking to the people on the radio keep us grounded and keep us from getting too caught up in the business.”

Next on the band’s busy agenda, says Hicks, will be more even radio appearances, visits to major and local distributors, and stops at select mom-
and-pop retailers.

Sharp Measures Up With Asylum Debut

BY GINA VAN DER VLIEET

LOS ANGELES—After winning a batt-
tle with bone cancer, country singer Kevin Sharp’s musical dreams are coming true. His debut album, “Mea-
Sure Of A Man,” has cracked the top-
half of The Bill-
board 200, making Sharp a Heatseek-
ers Impact artist.

Sharp, 25, was diagnosed with the disease at age 18 and was told at the time that the prognos-
is was dire. It was a meeting with producer David Foster, arranged through the Make-A-Wish Foundation, that inspired Sharp to pursue his musical aspirations.

After undergoing high-intensity che-
motherapy, Sharp’s career went into remission and he started to build his musical career.

“No song is like a cliché, but it all still feels like a dream,” Sharp says. “And if it is a dream, I better not wake up.”

“Measure Of A Man” entered the Heatseekers chart at No. 48 for the week ending Nov. 24, 1996. The album reached No. 1 on the Heatseekers chart for the week ending Dec. 28, after only nine weeks on the list.

This week, the album, which has sold 186,000 copies, according to Sound-
Scan, is No. 63 on The Billboard 200.

Asylum Records co-president/CEO (U.S.) Joe Mansfield admits that the success of “Measure Of A Man” is sur-
prising, even though the label knew it was dealing with a strong album.

“For a debut, it’s the best launch I’ve ever had.”
Virgin Underground Aims To Develop Dance Talent

BY LARRY FLICK

NEW YORK—Virgin Records is strengthening its commitment to the dance-music market with the formation of Virgin Underground, an imprint geared toward developing new dance-oriented artists.

Virgin Underground is being spearheaded by Rick Squillante, who previously served as Virgin’s manager of dance music promotion. Working from Virgin’s New York offices, Squillante will handle all aspects of the new label, with an eye toward possibly adding staff in June.

“We’ll launch the label in March with two singles, each carrying a different logo. “I’m In The Mood” by Swedish producer/DJ Pierre J. will sport the Virgin Underground flag, while “Everybody Needs To Be Loved” by the Los Angeles-based Groove Junkies Featuring Ajainti will be issued under the U.V. banner,” Squillante says Virgin Underground will initially focus on singles, although he holds album options on every signing. The label will start by offering a minimum of four releases in each year, with the flexibility for expansion. A multi-act compilation album is planned for June.

Smashing Pumpkins Sue Chrysalis

Band Claims Its 1992 Publishing Agreement Is Void

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—Multimillion dollar rock act the Smashing Pumpkins have filed a $10 million lawsuit against the Chrysalis Music Group, claiming that the band’s 1992 publishing agreement with the company is void.

In the suit, filed Jan. 9 in Superior Court here, the Pumpkins’ Billy Cor- gan, James Iha, and D’Angelo Wextley and their publishing companies Cinder- elia Music and Celphephone Star Music are seeking damages for breach of contract and the establish- ment of a trust for royalty revenue.

The suit claims that the contract was made void and unenforceable from its inception, since it purport- ed to grant Chrysalis the rights to Pumpkins compositions up to 12 years after the release of the band’s fourth album.


Even if the contract was not void from its inception, Chrysalis breached the terms of the contract when it exploited compositions off the band’s fifth album, the suit claims.

In addition, according to the suit, the company “demanded” the rights to two more albums. “Chrysalis’ improper demands are so extreme in their overreaching that they would result in Chrysalis’ exploiting rights in the compositions in seven more years rather than the agreed four albums and in three times the number of composi- tions that were anticipated when the contract was made,” the suit claims.

Chrysalis Music had no comment on the action.

Virgin Underground To Bow Music Performance Show

Network, Hard Rock Cafe, Warner Team For Series

BY BRETT ATWOOD

LOS ANGELES—Robert Small, the man who co-created “Unplugged,” is preparing to follow that MTV series with “Hand Rock Live Presented By Pontiac Sunfire,” a new music performance show for VH1.

The cable pro- grammer is partner- ing with Hard Rock Cafe and Warner Bros. Pay- TV, Cable & Net- work for the week- ly one-hour series, which will debut March 30.

“In many ways, it is the polar oppo- site of “Unplugged”,” says Small, who is producing the show with his pro- duction company RZE. “The only sim- ilarity is that they are both platforms for artists to identify themselves and to create a rapport with viewers.”

The show, which will be taped in a studio in New York, will feature live performances by established and developing artists.

Most episodes will contain perfor- mances by two artists, but some established acts with a larger catalog will have the opportunity to perform for the entire show.

“This will create a platform for artists to show the viewers what they can do,” says Small. “It is a chance to see artists perform outside the context of a music video.”

Jim Gaspin, senior VP of programming and production for VH1, adds, “This show is about highlighting great music performances. For us, this is a way to increase our appeal beyond music videos. VH1 is about all forms of music programming, and live music fits into our desire to be viewed for many types of music programming.”

Concert footage will be mixed with behind-the-scenes, documentary-style footage of the artists as they prepare for their performances.

In addition, the show will be inter- spersed with segments highlighting Hard Rock’s expansive rock’n’roll memorabilia collection.

The series will be supported by a $30 million marketing and promotion campaign, according to Gaspin. A total of 18 episodes are scheduled for 1997.

In a throwback to the early days of television, the show’s sponsor, Pontiac Sunfire, will receive prominent billing in the program’s title and credits.

“There will not be any signage for Pontiac during the actual show,” says Small. “This is not a sponsored show or a merchandising vehicle for Ponti- ac covered up with music.”

Gaspin has lined up several new acts for the series, and VH1 will support the show with numerous promos, and aots will also run on Hard Rock’s in-house music video channel, which operates in 62 of the chain’s restaurants.

New episodes will air Sunday nights at 8 p.m., while reruns will be scheduled each Saturday night at the same time.

Most of the performers on the show will come from the pop and rock genres that already characterize VH1. However, there will be opportunities for some country and R&B acts on the show, according to Small.

Former “Late Night With Conan O’Brien” writer Jim Flit has been hired to book the show. Specific artists for the program have not been announced by press time.

The series is produced internation- ally by Warner Bros. Interna- tional Television.

Smashing Pumpkins Sue Chrysalis
Band Claims Its 1992 Publishing Agreement Is Void

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

GOLDSTONE LEVY PATRICK COHEN WELK MUELLER CONOLLY

RECORDER COMPANIES: Michael Gold- stone is named the fourth member of the executive team at DreamWorks Records in Los Angeles. He was VP of A&R for Epic Records.

Ken Levy is promoted to senior VP of creative services for Arista Records in New York. He was VP.

Kevin Patrick is appointed VP of A&R for Columbia Records in New York. He is founder of the Medicine Label, which he will continue to over- see.

Robert M. Cohen is promoted to VP, senior West Coast counsel, for Sony Music Entertainment in Santa Monica, Calif. He was director of busi- ness affairs at Sony Music.

Chris Lopes is appointed VP of pop promotion, West Coast, for Mercury Records in Los Angeles. He was VP of promotion for EMI Records.

Vanguard Records in Santa Monica promotes Kevin Welk to VP/GM and Mac Magdon to director of pro- motions and names Aaron Yeagle national sales and marketing coordi- nator and Lory Kaschmitter adver- tising coordinator. They were, respec- tively, director of artist development, publicity director, operations manager with Sam Goody, and advertising exec of Bycicle Distribution.

Melanie Mueller is promoted to director of media relations for RCA Real Seal/BMG Critical. She was media manager of relations.

Andrew Stephanopoulos is pro- moted to VP of A&R at the Track Factory in Los Angeles. He was product manager.

EMI Records appoints Hal Lie- neck Midwest promotion/marketing manager in Chicago and Bob Dickey Cleveland promotion/marketing man- ager. They were, respectively, Mid- west promotion manager for Curb Records and West Coast promotion manager for RCA Records.

PUBLISHING. Teresa Connolly is pro- moted to associate director of execu- tive administration at BMI in New York. She was executive assistant to the VP of executive administration, special projects, and corporate secre- tary.

DISTRIBUTION. Joyce Castagnola is appointed senior VP of sales and dis- tribution for Universal Music & Video Distribution in Universal City, Calif. She was senior VP of sales for Virgin Records.

RELATED FIELDS. Arlen Kantarian is promoted to president/CEO of Radio City Productions in New York. He was COO.

David Scheiman is appointed director of tour sound marketing for JBL Professional in Northridge, Calif. He was a consultant.

Scott N. Bartlett is elected VP and a member of the executive committee for the International Recording Media Assn. (ITAM). He is VP of the Custom Entertainment Group at Sony Disc Manufacturing.

Fred Parker is named director of electronic commerce for The San Diego Daily Transcript and The San Diego Source in San Diego. He was director of marketing for CERNet.
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Royal Wade Kimes: "This Kansas-bred singer-songwriter has a gift for unflinching and honest imagery and this album contains some of the year's best dance grooves. *** - USA Today

Kevin Sharp: No. 1 debut single "Nobody Knows." "Measure Of A Man is an album that more than measures up to country's highest standards." - Music Row

Thrasher Shiver: TNN Music City News Country Awards Vocal Doo nominee. "So much for the theory that only siblings can produce the type of harmonies offered by Neil Thrasher and Kelly Shiver. A very strong and highly recommended first effort." - Music City News


Thanks, Sylvia, for believing in us.
L7 Readies 'The Beauty Process'

**Marilyn Manson Tour Sets Up Slash Act's Set**

**BY CHRIS MORRIS**

LOS ANGELES—On Jan. 7, L7 joined the Manson family—the Marilyn Manson family, that is.


The tour could be a winfall for veteran act L7, according to Reprise director of artist development Linnea Nan. "A lot of people are leery of touring a band in front of a record release, especially for an eight-week run, but we think this is a great way of reintroducing the band to some core fans, bolster some awareness there, and also introduce the band to some new fans. Some of Marilyn's fans were 15 years old when the last L7 record came out (three years ago)."

"We were important to Donita Sparks says wryly, "We're looking to tap into the eyeliner and lunchbox crowd."

Bob Bell, new-release buyer at 265-store Warehouse Entertainment in Torrance, Calif., believes the tour could supply a handsome launch for "The Beauty Process." "The Marilyn Manson tour will be a very high-profile tour, and we know from experience that Marilyn Manson fans are very active music buyers, so I'd imagine that would boost sales."

Hurried preparations for the tour followed the taxing process of recording "The Beauty Process," which was produced by Rob Cavallo, Joe Barreiro, and the band. Bassist Jennifer Finch, who had been with L7 for a decade, abruptly quit the group after sessions had commenced.

"She wanted to go to school," Sparks explains. "She didn't really want to tour at this point. I think she was burnt out. She also had a side band while L7 was going, and I think she wants to pursue that."

L7, which also includes co-founding guitarist Busy Gardner and drummer Dee Plakas, quickly secured New Yorker Greta Beazley to serve as bassist on much of the album. Sparks also filled the role. Sparks says, "You're in the recording studio, it's thousands and thousands of dollars every day. So we didn't really even have time to think about it, and we just went ahead."

"It's hunt for a more permanent bassist ended when Sparks ran into guitarist Gina of the New York band that the L7 tour will support, A.A.

Sparks recalls, "She, Oh, my God, I think the perfect person for you is my friend Gail Greenwood. She used to play to band, but don't hold that against her..." She had another band called Walter that was just about to agree, but she bailed. The plan was literally two weeks away from signing. And she was a creative force in that band—she was writing."

"As she passed by the title, you think..."

(Continued on page 153)

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**Rykodisc Hopes To Build On Bill Hicks' Cult Base**

**BY JIM BESSMAN**

NEW YORK—Many felt controversial cult comic Bill Hicks was on the brink of a mainstream breakout when he died Feb. 26, 1994, at age 32 of pancreatic cancer. A comedy-writer's-comedian often likened to Lenny Bruce, Hicks also had a rock sensibility and enjoyed a rock musician's following that continues after his death.

With the Feb. 23 release of his fourth album, Rykodisc is hoping at least to garner Hicks the following that eluded him while he was alive, and is counting on his fans in rock and throughout show business. Radiohead, for instance, dedicated its 1996 album, "The Bends," to Hicks, while Tool's current set..."Amenina," includes both a painting of him in the CD booklet and a vocal sample near the disc's end. Hamell On Trial's Ed Harrell, meanwhile, plans to include the tribute "Bill Hicks" on his next album.

"Hicks should have been and was going to be a phenomenon," Hamell says. "My biggest thing in singing 'Bill Hicks' is to build awareness. Thank God Rykodisc's putting out his albums, so he'll at least posthumously get the attention he deserves."

Rykodisc is making known such celebrity endorsements in its awareness campaign for the Hicks titles, which include two previously released but out-of-print albums, "Dangerous" and "Relentless" (released in 1990 and 1992, respectively, by Invasion Records) and two new ones, "Arizona Bay" and "Rant In E-Minor," which Hicks was working on when he died and have been completed with the help of his friend..."
"Carpenter cleverly mixes it up on this, her sixth album since her 1987 recording debut. For every blazing torch song there’s a rustic rocker bearing the deep fried chops that, to borrow from the CD’s title, anchor her own place in the world."
—PEOPLE

"Carpenter’s warm, conversational vocals and the emotional bull’s-eyes of her songs generally have bridged any gaps between the singer and her diverse audiences."
—USA TODAY

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James Takes New Crack With ‘Whiplash’
Fontana/Mercury Band Ends Hiatus With Seventh Set

BY DAVID SPRAGUE

NEW YORK—In recent times, a fair number of alternative rock’s success stories have happened overnight, but there are still those who’ve climbed the ladder one rung at a time. Such is the case with James, the Manchester, England-based septet that struck gold in 1993 with “Laid,” the seventh album in its decade-plus existence.

“I think the success we’ve had has been more of a cumulative thing than anything,” says frontman Tim Booth. “In a lot of ways, ‘Laid’ was less commercial than anything we’d done in the past, but it ended up selling loads of copies in the past couple years when we’ve been all but dormant.”

That reappearance will end Feb. 11, when Fontana/Mercury issues “Whiplash,” the first release from the band since 1994’s experimental remix set, “Wah Wah.” (In the interim, Booth released “Booth And The Bad Angel,” a collaboration with composer Angelo Badalamenti.)

“We desperately needed time off after working basically nonstop for 13 years,” says the singer. “We needed to find a new way of working, because we were going mad—or I was at least. I used to drive James and be there for every note, and I didn’t want to do that anymore.”

While he’s still at the forefront of much of “Whiplash,” Booth does cede more control to his bandmates on surprisingly abrasive, industrial-tinged tracks like “Greenpeace” and the largely improvised “Go To The Bank.” Fans of the band’s trademark aggro-folk sound will find plenty to like in songs like the first single, “She’s A Star,” which goes to radio the last week of January.

“They’ve delivered a very strong, very deep album, and I think ‘She’s A Star’ is their best chance yet at a multiformat hit,” says Josh Ziem, Mercury senior director of marketing. “Since it has been a while, we may have to solidify the foundation at radio and retail, but James does have a very loyal fan base.”

Anticipation is strong for new material from the band. “We’ve supported James since the beginning, and the band has always done extremely well here,” says Jane Purcell, PD at modern rock outlet WWC Columbus, Ohio. “We played several cuts off the last album to good response, and quite a few things from their catalog are still in our gold rotation.”

Zieman says the band—which is signed to Fontana in Europe—will come to the U.S. for a promotional visit in late February. On that trek, James will perform on shows such as MTV’s “120 Minutes” and “Late Show With David Letterman.”

While he’s still a bit hounded, Booth and the band have been making a push to break the group into the mainstream. While “Laid” has been a good achievement, Booth is hoping for “Whiplash” to be a step up to further commercial success.

“I think we’ve managed to keep ahead of the curve,” Booth says. “It’s been a bit of a struggle, but we’ve been trying to work hard to make a difference. I think we’re a band that people can identify with, and I think this album will set us apart from the rest.”

(Continued on page 22)

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KEVIN SHARP
(Continued from page 11)

rare," says Mansfield. "Especially since the CD has only been out since the end of September. Initially, we only shipped 20,000 units, since Kevin was an unknown artist. Who would have guessed that only a few months later the record would be pushing gold?"

According to Joseph Vetter, store manager at the Camelot Music outlet in Daytona Beach, Fla., "Measure" sold out shortly after he placed a copy in the in-store listening station.

"We originally received somewhere between 20 or 30 units of the album. Then the buzz on Kevin started, and people started to walk in and ask for him by name, which is exceptional for a debut album," Vetter says. "With thousands of new CD releases every year, very few new artists tend to stick out in the public eye."

TONY RICH COVER

The first single, a cover of the Tony Rich Project hit "Nobody Knows," topped the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart for the week ending Jan. 11 and remained at the summit for the week ending Saturday (13).

KUZZ Bakersfield, Calif., PD Evan Bridwell moved the song into heavy rotation Jan. 13. "So far, we've been playing it about 22 times a day, but in heavy rotation it will receive 34 daily spins," he says. "The reactions to the single have resulted in very positive call-out research."

According to Mansfield, Sharp's new single, "She's Sure Taking It Well," will be serviced to radio in February, depending on how much play "Nobody" receives.

Sharp, who has been recovering from hip surgery Dec. 26, will hit the road Sunday (19) for a six-month U.S. tour with Sawyer Brown. The singer will also perform at New York's Carnegie Hall on Wednesday (22) at a Gay Men's Health Crisis benefit organized by Foster. In addition, Sharp will make several TV appearances during the trek, including a Wednesday (22) stop on "Fox After Breakfast" and a Friday (24) date on "Good Morning America."

Sharp is also scheduled to play gigs with fellow country star John Michael Montgomery in the spring. Sharp is booked through the Monterey Booking Agency.

TV AND TOURING

"Kevin has already done a number of radio shows," Mansfield says. "We've also got radio sound bites in seven markets this week to promote the album and are advertising his chart position in connection with the tour. Next, we are looking into more television appearances ... We are trying to expand to doing some morning shows in New York and programs such as [the late-night shows hosted by David] Letterman and [Jay] Leno."

Sharp is one of the 10 artists select to perform on the Country Radio Seminar's New Faces show on March 8. The show has previously featured artists such as George Strait, Randy Travis, and Reba McEntire.

Mansfield adds that Sharp's management company, Sound & Serenity Management, was instrumental in promoting "Measure Of A Man," as well as getting a six-piece band together for the upcoming tour.

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**Artists & Music**

**VIRGIN MAKES NOISE FOR SNEAKER PIMPS' BOW**

(Continued from page 18)

Pimps’ B-sides and several mixes of "6 Underground.

In fact, the set’s music seems especially suited to studio tinkering, as two of the band’s songs have been remixed by noted producers Flood and Nellee Hooper. Sneaker Pimp’s music is published by BMG Music Publishing in their home market.

Sneaker Pimp’s dazzling array of sounds was created in a do-it-yourself fashion on decidedly low-tech gear:

Keyboardist Lachan Hume—who is fond of breaking out his first portable keyboard, a “20-quid Casio,” during the set’s live sets—relates the unusually modest circumstances under which "6 Underground" was recorded.

“We did it all in the bedroom at my father’s house, which is about 10 square feet,” says Hume. “There wasn’t anywhere we could record vocals, so we lined this cupboard and [singer] Kelly [Dayton] did the entire vocal track in the cupboard. It gave it a quality of genuine claustrophobia.”

Virgin America VP of A&R Susan Collins, however, found nothing to fear in the band’s unique sound.


While "6 Underground" will not be serviced to modern rock, dance, and triple-A stations until Feb. 3, several West Coast outlets have begun spinning the track.

Public station KCRW Los Angeles DJ and Quango Records co-owner Jason Bentz has been playing the single since late last year. The song will also be included on the Quango compilation "Abstract Vibes 2," which bows Monday (20).

Modern rock KITS San Francisco music director Aaron Axelsen says that the station was also early on the track, playing the import on specialty shows before putting it into regular rotation on Oct. 29.

“We have easily spun it over 100 times, and it’s getting great phone reactions,” says Axelsen. “All the indie import buyers I know have been inundated with calls on this record, and we’re not seeing any burn at the station.”

The track has been included on the soundtrack to “The Saint,” a Paramount film starring Val Kilmer that will open in March.

Like several tracks on the album, "6 Underground" displays a lush assortment of synthesizer loops and genuinely chilling vocals by Dayton. Though guitarist Chris Corner and Hume have years of experience mixing and producing music as electronic artists, translating the album’s sound to a live setting was a challenge.

The band recently had a chance to hone its live chops during a European tour opening for Neneh Cherry.

“Playing live took a lot of adjusting to,” he says. “And it took Chris and I a while before we felt we could perform something that was not just a replication of the album, but a good live interpretation.

“It’s all good and well sitting home and making remixes, but when you go out and tour, every single night you get a sense that you are earning your success,” he adds.

The band, which is booked by New York-based Artists Direct, begins a major-market promo tour Jan. 30 and will return in March for a regular club tour.

**Trust Never Sleeps.** The members of Morcheeba take a breather following a show at the University of London to support their China/Discovery Records release “Who Can You Trust?” Shown, from left, are Syd Birenbaum, CEO/president of Discovery Records, Morcheeba’s Skye Edwards; John Loken, China Records’ U.S. GM; Morcheeba’s Ross and Paul Godfrey; China Records chairman Derek Greene; and Morcheeba’s manager, Paul Ablett.

---

**amusement business**

**BOXSCORE**

**TOP 10 CONCERT GROSSES**

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**ARTISTS/ALBUMS**

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**BUSINESS**

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March 12-16, 1997
Austin, Texas
Austin Convention Center

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Artists & Music

L7's 'Beauty Process'
(Continued from page 16)

have to answer your country!' She said that she had always dreamed of being in rock and roll and that she was born to be in our band." said Greenwood.

Greenwood joined the group on a 10-date West Coast tour in November that was filmed for broadcast overseas by the German TV show "Rockpalast." Reprise is setting up "The Beauty Process" with the Jan. 26th release of a CD-5 that includes the single 'Off The Wagon' and two non-EP cuts, "Guard" and "Punk Brake (My Heart)" (L7) songs published by Sea Sloth Music/Zomba Publishing (BMI).

Sparks admits that there's some risk involved in releasing a song about getting drunk as a first single and that making a video could be a dicey affair.

"Yeah, that's a tough situation," she says. "We're speaking with the video person at Reprise to find out what he thinks our limitations are video-wise, and how literal we can get with the lyrics. It's gonna have to be a delicate approach to the video."

Reprise's Nan says, "It is about getting drunk, if you take the literal interpretation of the song. I look at it as a song about freedom and fun and liberation...Those are definitely factors that are being taken into consideration as far as the video goes, and I think there are ways to introduce some elements of social responsibility."

Regarding the single's promotion, Nan says, "We're obviously going to active rock radio and commercial alternative radio, but we are by no means ignoring some of the formats that have always supported L7 and will always, i.e., college radio, the metal/hard rock specialty shows. And we'll also be doing some special things for club and dance and mix shows as well. There are definitely plans for some remixes."

Live events will be important in the album's campaign, with invitiation release parties around the release date set for L.A., New York, and possibly such other L7 strongholds as Chicago, Seattle, or San Francisco.

Nan adds, "Staying in the next couple of weeks, though, our alternative marketing staff and our WEA product development representatives will be putting together some listening parties all over the United States in relevant markets, to have the retailers and people be able to come out and hear the record."

Promotional items will likely reflect L7's daily sense of humor, according to Nan: "Runners have it that we'll be an L7 'Beauty Process' commemorative delousing comb, and perhaps, and I won't commit to this, you might see a nice little vanity powder puff coming your way that could possibly be sold on the retail level as well."

Sparks says that L7's business is managed by Brigitte Wright of Curtis Entertainment and booked by Leave Home Booking in L.A., won't be kicking back after the Manson tour concludes.

"The plan now is to do this until the end of February, do some promotion for Europe in March, tour Europe in April, and then come back probably in May or June and do a headline tour of our own here in the States. We're working it, baby."
DEANA CARTER

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GENE HALLAM, VP/PROGRAMMING, KKBQ-AM/FM

ROLLING STONE'S 1997 READER'S POLL
BEST COUNTRY ARTIST

"NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE; A PRETTY FACE WITH TALENT"

DETROIT NEWS

"THE COMPLETE PACKAGE... ARTISTRY AND COMMERCE CAN VERY HAPPILY COEXIST. LOOK FOR CARTER TO FLOURISH NO MATTER WHERE THE COUNTRY ROAD LEADS."

RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH

"UNIQUE, FULL OF HELD-BACK PASSION AND INSULATED HEARTACHE."

MEMPHIS COMMERCIAL-APPEAL

© 1997 CAPITOL NASHVILLE • MANAGEMENT THE LEFTBANK ORGANIZATION
JAMES TAKES NEW CRACK WITH 'WHIPLASH'
(Continued from page 28)

than the rest of us,” Gott’s replacement is Adrian Oxley, formerly of Shakti, who doubles on coo’s, making him a fine foil for longtime violinist Saul Davies.

“Bringing Adrian in shook us up, which was a positive thing, since we needed to find a new approach to things,” says Booth. “We’ve always tried our best to do that.”

Since a nascent fascination with the stripped-down style of bands like the Violent Femmes gave way to the more ornate, jaunty stylings of albums like 1986’s “Stutter” and 1988’s “Strip-Mine,” James’ career has been marked by more zig-zags than that of an all-star running back.

After moving from Blance 7 Negro/Sire to Fontana in 1990, the band (which is managed by Peter Rudge of Mad Dog) reconfigured its sound, emphasizing grand structures, including string and horn sections. The enlistment of producer Brian Eno, who produced both “Wah Wah” and “Laid,” brought yet another about-face.

“Brian is as far from perfectionism as you can get,” says Booth. “He’s very much into immediacy, into seeing what he can disrupt,” says Booth. “Stephen [Hague, who shares production credits with Eno on ‘Whiplash’] is just the opposite, which made for a fascinating mix.”

Mercury’s Zieren says he views James’ mercurial nature as one of the group’s strengths. “This isn’t the kind of band that will become stagnant,” he says. “They always manage to stay a step ahead.”

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P R I M E D T I M E: TVT Records is gearing up for the Jan. 28 release of "Vallejo," the self-titled debut by the Austin, Texas-based rock quintet, and the act may soon be making ripples nationwide.

Where There's Smoke
The Hazies, whose EMi debut, "Vinnie Smokin' In The Big Room," came out in April 1996, are beginning to break through at rock radio with their single "Trip Free Life." Stations such as KILO Colorado Springs, Colo., and KTUX Shreveport, La., have been playing the song heavily. bolstering EMi's radio push, the act's cover of "Tuning Japanese," will be featured on the soundtrack to "Beverly Hills Ninja." The album was released Jan. 14.

A limited release on Chicago-based 1M1 has already proven fruitful at radio and retail. That band's first single, which was serviced to modern and mainstream rock stations, Jan. 7.

A major mailing to likely "Vallejo" buyers has also been initiated by TVT and will reach about 100,000 people, says Burgess.

"Outstanding of brothers A.J., Alejandro, and Omar Vallejo, with additional members Bruce Castleberry and Steve Ramos, the band is noted for its Latin-inflected rock songs, reminiscent of Santana.

The band, which is on tour in the south central U.S., will perform a mini- 

R E G I O N A L H E A T S E E K E R S N O . 1 5

The Heatseekers chart lists the best-selling titles by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 10 of The Billboard 200 chart. When an album reaches this tier, the album and the artist's subsequent albums are immediately eligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart, as well as various specialty charts on country and CO. 

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BIG NOYD

Big Noyd's single "All Pro" is gathering steam on specialty shows.

C O R R E C T I O N: The Chemical Brothers' "Loops Of Fury" EP was released in February 1996.
Braxton, Fugees Lead Images
Nominations Reflect Genre's Diversity

By J.R. Reynolds

LOS ANGELES—Reprise executives are taking advantage of debut act Nu Flavor's bilingual success by releasing Spanish- and English-language versions of the quartet's self-titled set. The ambitious endeavor will be driven by a sweeping campaign that taps the marketing and promotion departments of several label entities, domestically and outside the U.S.

Says Reprise artist development/creative marketing senior VP Craig Kostich, "the key to this project is the bilingual, micromarketing approach that we're taking. We're going to several totally different consumer demographics with product targeted specifically for them, so we're not going to radio with 'just another song by another debut act.' We're going in with something that has a unique story behind it."

The English- and Spanish-language versions of "Nu Flavor" are slated for U.S. release by Reprise March 11. The English-language set is scheduled for international release about the same time, with Reprise handling marketing duties for that version in the U.S. and foreign territories. The Spanish-language album will be marketed and promoted domestically by Viva Latina, and non-U.S. territories will be handled by Warner Music International. The Spanish-language version will be released internationally in 15 months after the state-side street date.

Both albums will bear the same cover artwork. However, the Spanish version will feature Spanish translations of song titles and liner notes. The musical arrangements for both sets are identical, with singles featuring "demographic-enriched" remixes.

Nu Flavor consists of Frank Pangelinan, Jacob Colon, Anthony Nu Flavor, and Rico Lara. The four, who reside in Long Beach, Calif., wrote the majority of the cuts on their 11-track debut. Nu Flavor was produced by Gary St. Clair, whose previous credits include work with All-4-One and Joe Quintanilla, who has produced tracks for Luis Miguel.

The record was produced in the set's own Long Beach studio, nicknamed the Flavor Station.

The Latino quartet, who is managed by Santa Monica, Calif.-based Vincent Corry, came together after meeting at a party, where they discovered a shared passion for R&B. "The chemistry was there in our vocal blend, so we decided to take things to the next level as a group, which eventually led to our recording deal," says DaCosta.

The set's creative approach was developed internationally with Reprise, and DaCosta dismisses the notion that their bilingual approach is just a gimmick. "It's about the music," he says. "We want to be regarded as a universal act, with no color lines."

(Continued on page 32)

Braxton, Fugees Lead Images
Nominations Reflect Genre's Diversity

By J.R. Reynolds

LOS ANGELES—LaFace recording artist Toni Braxton and Ruffhouse/Columbia act the Fugees led all NAACP Image Awards nominees in music categories with four nods each. Following a close second was the former known as Prince and debut Columbia vocalist Maxwell, who earned nominations in including outstanding new artist and outstanding album. The Image Awards will be taped Feb. 8 at the Pasadena (Calif.) Civic Auditorium. The show will air on Fox TV Feb. 27. MCA diverse LaBelle and comedic/former talk-show host Arsenio Hall will host the 28th annual awards show.

Awards will be taped in 35 categories representing music, film, TV, and literature. The Image Awards nominations committee comprises national NAACP officials and 500 arts and entertainment industry professionals who can cast votes in categories not of their specialty. Image Awards winners are voted on by the general membership of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The diverse list of the music nominees suggests a growing consumer interest in the creative sounds that are emanating from the R&B genre.

For example, the best new artist category is composed of rhythm-and-blues artists Benet, Maxwell, and Tony 'Treach' of the hip-hop/ R&B vocalist Fat Joe, hip-hop/R&B vocalist Fat Joe, hip-hop/R&B vocalist Fat Joe, hip-hop/R&B vocal...
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**TOP R&B ALBUMS**

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**TOP R&B SINGLES**

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**NEW**

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**Hot Shot Debut**

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*Albums with the greatest sales gain this week. Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for shipment of 500,000 album units (250,000 for EPs). The RIAA certification for shipment of 1 million units (500,000 for EPs), with multiplication titles indicated by a numeral following the symbol. *M* indicates LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for WEA and BING labels, are suggested lists. Tape prices herein EQ, and all other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. Greatest Gainer shows each album increase. Pacesetter indicates biggest percentage increase. Heatseeker Impact shows albums removed from Heatseekers this week. *indicates past or present Heatseeker title. ©1997. Billboard/SP Communications, and SoundScan, Inc.*
R&B Airplay

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R&B Singles A-Z

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MUSHROOM & BMG

A COMBINED HARVESTER
SOWING THE SEEDS
AND REAPING THE REWARDS
John McDermott's Irish-Scotch Folk Crosses Borders

BY LARRY LEBLANC

TORONTO—The possessor of a soft, bell-like tenor, EMI Music Canada artist John McDermott is one of the unlikely success stories in Canadian music today.

Performing mostly traditional Scottish and Irish songs, the 41-year-old McDermott—who can't read or write music and has little vocal training—has become one of Canada's top recording artists.

According to Eddie Colero, director of special market sales with EMI Music Canada, McDermott's 1998 debut album, "Danny Boy," has sold 178,000 units to date in Canada; its 1994 follow-up, "Old Friends," 75,000 units; "Christmas Memories" (1994), 82,000 units; and "Love Is A Voyage" (1995), 67,000 units.

"John is a label's dream because he works so hard for his own career," says Colero. "He'll do anything [promotionally] we ask, and he'll ring at the drop of a hat. His catalog sells consistently."

"Danny Boy" was retitled "Battlegrounds Of Green" and released in the U.S. by Angel Records. According to Soundscan, the album has sold only 11,000 units, but McDermott is now becoming better known to American audiences due to aggressive marketing of a compilation album on which he appears.

In October 1995, EMI Music Canada licensed tracks from "Danny Boy" and "Old Friends" to the Beautiful Music Co. in Newport, N.Y., for the 15-track compilation, "The Danny Boy Collection." Two-minute televised commercials began airing in Boston last January and have run in "most major U.S. markets," according to consultant Bill Gilland, who has been supervising the U.S. effort.

According to Colero, the U.S. direct-response spot buys have resulted in "The Danny Boy Collection" selling 303,922 units to date via mail order in the U.S.

A grass-roots U.S. strategy devised by McDermott/O'Neill & Associates of Boston to boost McDermott's popularity with Irish-Americans was supported by the singer with promotions in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, and Boston.

With six to eight events booked daily, McDermott performed the U.S. national anthem at several sporting events, including games with the Pittsburgh Steelers, Pittsburgh Penguins, and Chicago White Sox. He also performed at veterans' hospitals, local pubs, and numerous political events. He sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" at a governors' reception at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago and "Happy Birthday to Ethel Kennedy at a Robert F. Kennedy memorial event at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh.

"Every city we go into, he also did three or four Irish radio shows," says Pamela McDermott (no relation), president of McDermott/O'Neill & Associates, which has coordinated the singer's U.S. promotional campaign. "He was obviously very strong with the print media as well."

This year, McDermott will continue to concentrate on making inroads into the U.S. market. To further boost his profile there, he will visit 19 American cities in the next three months.

Between Feb. 14 and March 20, McDermott will perform in 11 cities, including Fairfield, Conn.; Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; Boston; St. Paul, Minn.; Pittsburgh; and Chicago. The tour is booked by S.L. Feldman & Associates in Toronto and Vancouver.

"I want the U.S. market," says McDermott. "It's the largest market in the world. When this [traditional] music is heard, it is accepted so readily [in the U.S.]. It's accepted because the [population] is much like Canada."

"We're embarking on a national media campaign for John for St. Patrick's Day," says Pamela McDermott. "We're targeting daily TV talk shows as well as senior citizens and veterans' publications."

HIS FATHER'S VOICE

The ninth of 12 children, McDermott was born in Frieshill, Scotland, a suburb of Glasgow. In 1965, when he was 9, the McDermott family moved to Canada, landing in Quebec City Nov. 8, the night of the widespread North American blackout.

"We had a spectacular arrival," recalls McDermott. "I hated moving. I remember the last few days in Glasgow. The last morning (there) I looked out the window and saw my pal Brian Brooks walking up the street going to school on his own. We always went together."

First, the McDermotts lived in a crowded two-bedroom apartment in downtown Toronto. They later moved to a house in the Toronto suburb of Willowdale.

According to McDermott, the seventh boy in his family, he is the only one of his siblings to inherit his father's rich tenor voice. His father, Peter McDermott, passed away on Jan. 16, 1995, at the age of 77. At the time, John was recording "Love Is A Voyage." To honor his father, John did not only dedicated the album to him, but also ended it with his father singing "The Last Rose Of Summer" in the Caven Bar in Glasgow in 1987. The performance had been taped by a McDermott family friend, Bill O'Connor.

"Dad could have been a professional singer," says McDermott. "He was given the opportunity in Scotland, but he had 12 kids to feed. Everybody knew he had a good voice."

Despite being blessed with his father's vocal talent, and despite his father's death, McDermott considered a music career. Instead, after high school he worked as a shipper and salesman at Specialty Chemical. In 1989, at the age of 25, he began working in the circulation department of The Toronto Sun. He occasionally performed at weddings, family gatherings, and friends' parties.

The Toronto Sun's publisher, Doug Creighton, heard McDermott performing at an employees party and invited him to perform at several of his parties. It was at these parties that McDermott was heard by Conrad Black, CEO of Hollinger Inc., which owns Saturday Night magazine in Canada and The Times of London. Black was impressed with his voice, and in 1989 he asked McDermott to sing at a dinner he was hosting. While performing at the party, McDermott was startled to see President Reagan and former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in the audience.

Black and several other Toronto businessmen later agreed to finance an album. This was "Danny Boy," a collection of traditional music from the British Isles, originally intended as a 50th-anniversary surprise gift for McDermott's parents. "They had no idea I'd done it when I played it to them," says McDermott.

With an album under his arm, McDermott then sought a label to release it. He had no luck. "The album sat around on the shelf for almost eight months," he says. "I sent it to everybody. They all turned it down."

(Continued on page 62)
EXHIBIT, RELEASES, EVENTS CELEBRATE EMI'S 100TH

(Continued from page 51)

the charity's formation and the activities planned to celebrate the company's anniversary. They include new albums and catalog releases, world premiere concerts, books—and even a flower show.

Southgate was joined at the launch by Jean-Francois Cecillon, president of EMI Records Group U.K. and Eire. "In my mind," said Cecillon, "British culture is mainly music." He pledged that the celebrations would reflect the depth and diversity of EMI's heritage.

The Music Sound Foundation will receive proceeds from the various centenary activities, which are to be directed to the benefit of schools and other centers of music learning. Southgate set $10 million as its fund-raising target for the first year and said that initial disbursements from the fund will be made early in 1998.

Trustees of the foundation, an independent charity, include artist managers Steve O'Rourke (Pink Floyd) and Jim Beach (Queen), EMI Music Europe president Rupert Ferry, former EMI Studios Group chairman Ken Townsend, former EMI Records managing director Leslie Hill (currently chairman of the U.K. Independent Television Assn.), and Southgate. Its patrons are Sir Paul McCartney, Sir George Martin, and Sir Simon Rattle.

SONY PUSHES MINIDISC IN EUROPE

(Continued from page 51)

for example, there will be a two-page ad for albums in the Brit Awards publication. Phillips says that because the market remains very much a niche one, the format will be promoted via mail-order operations across Europe. Last year, MD would have been carried by the Music Store service in the U.K., and this year it will be offered via operations in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

Phillips was unable to give details on how many Sony Music albums will be available on MD this year, but the first quarter will see new releases from Reef, Silverchair, Jean-Michel Jarre, Cyndi Lauper, Aerosmith, and Prefab Sprout.

The major new format set for launch in 1997 is DVD, but Phillips does not believe that will have any impact on Sony's plans to raise the profile of the MD.

"The main thrust on DVD—and of which I doubt you will see much until autumn of this year—is obviously going to be movies and ROMs," he says.

Retailers, however, may need more convincing about the viability of MD. DC Gordon, related products buyer at HMV U.K., says, "I am yet to be convinced that it is the future of this country [the U.K.]. I know it is doing very well in Japan, and we are selling a little more of the black MDs, but it is still a small market."

He welcomes the relaunch of the disc and says HMV will continue to support the format in stores. However, he adds, "I hope another recordable format comes up, but personally I think it is going to be recordable CD which is going to crack it."

Nevertheless, Phillips says that more and more companies are starting to get behind the format, and as the price continues to fall on the hardware, sales will continue to grow. "I have no doubt that it is going to happen; it is only a question of when," he says.

Highlights of the centenary program include "From The Vaults Of Abbey Road," a planned set of CDs of hits and rarities from EMI's renowned recording studios in London; "EMI Sings EMI," a package (currently using that working title) of new recordings by EMI-signed artists of songs associated with other EMI performers, and "The Wembley Concert," a memento of a planned "major rock" event in September. It is presumed these releases will be available in most world markets in due course.

Also, Food Records—the EMI label home of Blur, Shampoo, Dubstep, Jesus Jones, and others—will be represented with "Food Box 100," a five-CD set to celebrate the independent-spirited label's release of its 100th single in 1997.

Another project is the release of 20 "classic" albums on vinyl, including "Never Mind The Bollwicks Here's The Sex Pistols"—the band dropped by EMI 20 years ago this month after controversy surrounding its first single, "Anarchy In The U.K." The Pistols were later signed by Virgin. Records, now an EMI company. Titles by the Beach Boys ("Pet Sounds"), Pink Floyd ("Dark Side Of The Moon"), and Freddie Mercury ("The Album") will be among those featured. The discs will offer direct metal mastering and thick vinyl virgin.

The commercial exploitation of the centenary will extend to a "Sale of the Century" marketing campaign centered on EMI's full-price catalog. The albums will be wholesaled to allow a retail price of 9.99 pounds close to $16, with an extra 10-track CD given with a double purchase. An "Added Value Series" campaign will focus on other catalog titles, with extra tracks, repackaging, remastering, and a centenary book. These will include "Private Dancer" (Tina Turner), "The Best Of The Waterboys," "A Night At The Opera" (Queen), and "1987." (Whitesnake).

Also planned is a three-CD set of the best of British recorded comedy—"The Laughter 100"—the renewed availability of titles long deleted or only available in the U.K. on import. In June, EMI will yet again promote the Beatles' "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," on the occasion of the landmark LP's 40th anniversary.

The Music 100 exhibition, meanwhile, will offer a 45-60 minute walk-through experience featuring sound and interactive sites. The "script" was written by Tim Garland, who was responsible for "The Dinosaurs" gallery at London's Natural History Museum. There will be an attached retail outlet selling merchandise (CDs, gifts, books, and clothing). The exhibition moves from Edinburgh to London's Canary Wharf in July and to York, England, in February 1998.

Other centenary events will include a concert July 5 in Birmingham, featuring vocalist Nigel Kennedy's return to the classical stage and the premiere (under Rattle) of a new work by Mark Anthony Turnage, and the world premiere of the first full symphonic work by McCartney, "Standing Stone," Oct. 14 at the Royal Albert Hall in London. The release of a studio recording of the McCartney opus will follow.

On April 27, EMI will sponsor a gala evening at the Glyndebourne (Sussex) Opera House, with performances by Roberto Alagna, Natalie Dessay, Angela Gheorghiu, Thomas Hampson, Danielle Ramberg, and Amanda Roocroft, and Peter Seiffert, among others. On May 19, the Chelsea Flower Show in London will be the site of an EMI-sponsored gala preview evening, from which 50 of the proceeds will go to the Music Sound Foundation. In addition, the company is underwriting the launch of a new ground cover rose ("Nipper") and sponsoring a garden.

Memorials in print will be four books with EMI connections: "Since Records Began," tracing the company's history: "The End Of Innocence," a photography display drawn from the label's 150s library; "Abbey Road," a history of the recording studios; and "A Collector's Guide To Nipper Memorabilia," an expanded version of a previously published title.

EMI Music Archives manager Ruth Elgee has played a key role in the books and other aspects of the yearlong celebrations. The company has created a centenary committee, chaired by Cecillon. Its members are EMI executive James Brock (from classical marketing), Richard Cottrell and Steve Davis (both in commercial marketing), Cathy Crenore (artist relations), Connie van der Does (centenary producer), Ian Hanson (business affairs), Mike Heatley (international), and David Hughes, Jane Orr, and Sally O'Grady (corporate affairs).

EMI's origins can be traced to August 1897, when an American businessman, William Barry Owen, arrived in London to sell a new device, the flat recorded disc. Owen, an employee of disc inventor Emile Berliner, realized he would be better served by forming his own business, and the Gramophone Co. (as EMI was originally known) was established.

"It is," says Cecillon, "the only 100-year-old record company in the world still recording, releasing, gigging, clubbing, paparazzi, scoring, promoting."
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*New* indicates first entry or re-entry into chart.  
'Space' indicates first entry into chart.  
'Say Space' indicates re-entry into chart.
THE MOST ACCLAIMED SINGER SONGWRITER FROM CHINA IS NOW CATCHING THE EYES OF THE WORLD

Long Awaited Debut Album

"The Third Eye"

Initial Sales of China Over 500,000

Including 1st Single

"There Is An End To Everything"

and 2nd Single

"The Door"

Music video out now this week on all Asia TV channels. Album coming soon in Asia.
French, U.K. Awards Nominees Announced

Victoires Look To Re-Establish Reputation

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

PARIS—The troubled French music awards, the Victoires de la Musique, are continuing a process of re-establishing their reputation with the publication of this year's nominees. The winners will be unveiled in Paris during a revamped live TV show Feb. 10 on France 2 in front of a live audience and a telecast to 14 million Color PAL homes in 15 countries, including the Benelux.

Epic artist Pascal Obispo is the most prominent name in the nominations for solo artists, with a presence in four categories (male act, album, single, and video). PolyGram's artist roster has the largest number of nominations with 12, followed by Sony Music (eight) and MCA Benelux (four).

Two veterans have made it into the male and female act of the year categories: Chico & the Gipsy Kings are up in the last (their third) and Shania Twain is up in the first (her second).

Another category that has attracted attention is band of the year. One of the three nominees is rap band Supreme NTM, who won the first two Victoires. Another is U.K.'s Red Rum, who will be a favorite for the third. A third candidate is French band Nord, with the usual suspects of male, female, and band—into one, with five contenders instead of the usual three. All five will perform during the ceremony as a way of promoting emerging artists.

The Victoires organization and the show went through a year of upheaval in 1996. The winners are now decided by an academy of voters, following the lead set by the U.K.'s Brit Awards and Germany's Echo Awards. A new GM of the organizing association, Enrico Della Rosa, was appointed as well as a new TV producer, Jacques Clermont.

Former event organizer Claude Flouret was ousted by the board of the Victoires at the end of 1996. Flocuer sought the organization for breach of contract, but his claim was turned down in court (Billboard, Dec. 21, 1996).

Top Britpop Acts Vie For Brits Honors

BY PAUL SEXTON

LONDON—The spotlight among nominations for the 1997 Brit Award falls on some of the big names in the Britpop boom, with one notable exception. With no material eligible in the qualifying period by Oasis, which dominated the charts last year, Brit Award co-hosts Sony Music and BMG, and declares the lack of competition for the prize with the very British film Star Wars: Episode 2.

The short lists for this year's Brit Awards are noticeably rock-oriented, a reflection of a guitar-filled year of British music. Sony nabbed three of the five best British group nominations, with Manic Street Preachers and Kula Shaker joined by Epic's Lightning Seeds. The year's British pop-phenomenon, Verve's Spice Girls, complete that list. In the album category, Manic Street Preachers' "Everything Must Go," Ocean Colour Scene's "Moseley Shoals," and in Verve's "Ride," are all expected to do well.

The major categories are likely to be contested by "One Man" (Polydor) and George Michael's "Older" (Virgin). This is Michael's first Brit Award nomination. His Virgin label, along with the Lighthouse Family's "Ocean Drive" (Polydor) and George Michael's "Older" (Virgin). Michael is also nominated as best British male solo artist, for which WEA scores two nominations with Polydor and EMG's Simply Red. Sting (A&M) and Tricky (Island) give Polydor a brace of entries. Polydor did equally well in the best British female solo artist category, in which Sony's singer, Lisa Stansfield, declines to contest the Brits. Two WEA-affiliated chanteuses, Donna Lewis (Atlantic) and Eddi Reader ( Blanco y Negro), are also in the running in this category. In the same category, Louise gains EMi's only nomination in the awards.

Best British producer will be contested by Paul Jones, Mike Hedges, John Leckie; Trick; and Absolute, Richard Stannard, and Mat Row. The last three are the producers of Spice Girls' "Spice." The best dance act category features two rare indie nominations, for XL Recordings' "The Prodigy" and Junior's Day (Continued on page 62)

Labels Adjust To Realities Of Doing Business in Slovakia

BY MICHELE LEGGE

PRAGUE—As the divide between the two countries known 5½ years ago as Czechoslovakia continues to widen, the Czech offices of major record companies are restructuring their former operations.

Although Prague is less than 350 kilometers (217 miles) west of Slovakia's main city, Bratislava, Czech recording industry leaders say they face an increasing number of cross-border obstacles, rendering them unable to fully service the Slovak market from one Czech office. Slovakia has a population of 5.5 million, 35% of whom are unemployed and the surviving on a monthly wage of approximately 7,105 koruna (SK) or $231, according to the Slovak Statistical Office.

The economic conditions in the Slovak music market have acted as a magnet for the illicit music trade. Nonetheless, as has been pointed out by the GM of BMG Ariola Czech and Slovak Republics, Janek Jaro, "Slovakia is an important market in development. It's a music-loving nation." If the general economic development of eastern Europe continues, Slovakia will receive a higher disposable income and is held, say more records. So it may become a very strong, viable market. "We'll see how it goes," says Jaro.

Parallel imports were one of the initial problems faced by Czech recording industry leaders. Several Slovak wholesale distributors were found to be importing cassettes from Hungary, Poland, and Austria, where the format can be bought for less than on the Czech market. According to Vladimir Bandrle, joint managing director of Monitor-EMI, the flow of these imports has now been clamped.

"It was in the interest of the Slovakian market. If we allow parallel imports to Czech prices, they would never make their market," says Bandrle.

The joint managing director of PolyGram Czech and Slovak Republics, says his company won the battle against parallel imports by reducing retail prices. This strategy, he says, contributed to PolyGram's capturing 26.6% of the Slovak market in 1996—the highest of any music company. "Some other majors are selling at Czech prices," he says. "When import tax and exchange rate are added, the price in Slovakia is about 25% higher in the Czech Republic...but Slovak salaries are lower. Our profit is a little lower, but our sales are increasing."

Other majors, too, are adjusting prices in accordance with the weaker purchasing power of Slovaks. "At the moment, the people are really poor. So we are selling at maybe one-tenth less than what we sell it for here," says Suzanne Starnata, managing director of Sony Music Czech Republic.

Piracy continues to be a problem for the Slovakian music industry: Miroslav Lindtner, director of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) in Slovakia, estimates that piracy takes as much as 30% of sales. Lindtner calls the situation "stable" and adds that most of the pirate products are cassettes from Poland and CDs from Bulgaria. Piracy is especially rampant in remote northeastern and eastern areas of Slovakia. Bandrle describes this regions as being "like a jungle. No one here knows what the competition is here."

The majors don't have a finger on what is happening outside the large population centers because, in almost every case, their offices in Prague are serviced by independent wholesale distributors. Bandrle explains that it's not economical for the majors to direct their service all the country's retailers. "You would spend too much of your budget on fuel driving to all the territories in the center and the east," he says.

Despite the economic hurdles, the majors realize the potential for growth in Slovakia. They have plans to set up independent marketing offices in the Slovakian capital. In May of '96, Sony Music Entertainment opened an office in Bratislava. BMG also has opened a promotional team, the new branch puts Sony in line with BMG Ariola, WEA, and Polydor, all of which are running a promotional office there. Warner Music, the last major to set up in Prague, still fully services the Slovakian region from its Prague office; Warner has plans to establish a separate promotional team in Slovakia by early '97.

All of these companies use an indie wholesaler to distribute their product. Monitor-EMI and PolyGram, however, use a different approach. Both are members of IFPI Slovakia and have had full-service subsidiaries operating in the Slovakian capital for the past two years. Both subsidiaries handle their respective labels' promotion and utilize an independent wholesaler in combination with their own sales network.

According to Bandrle, the current systems of administering Slovak operations from Prague is still the most effective way to control the development of the Slovakian music market. "If we open the market without control from here, it will be destroyed. It would get completely taken over by pirates or taken over by the Polish and Hungarians," he says.

The annual sales in the Slovakian music industry in 1996 were SK 211.9 million (78.02 million), representing a 46.3% drop from the previous year, according to IFPI's office in Slovakia. This gain is expected to drop to 10%–15% in 1997, however, IFPI predicts that the growth rate will stabilize in 1997.

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Sony Pushes MiniDisc In Europe
Campaign Stresses Recording Function

BY JOHN FERGUSON

LONDON—Sony is starting a multi-million-dollar campaign to re-launch the MiniDisc (MD) in Europe—and this time the emphasis will be on the format's recording functions.

The overhauled push, which follows massive pre-Christmas campaigns in individual territories across Europe, is designed to increase the hardware base in Europe. Alan Phillips, European VP at Sony Software, says the bulk of the marketing will come from Sony's hardware divisions, and although he was unable to put an exact figure on the spending, he says it will be "several million dollars."

Pre-recorded albums on MD are not being forgotten, and Sony Software has struck deals with mail-order companies in key European territories to carry the format. Despite its success in territories such as Japan, the MD format has never taken off in the European market, and the hardware base remains relatively low. Phillips says, "The whole idea is that we have got to increase our hardware base. The pre-recorded cassette market developed from a big hardware base, and I think that is what is going to happen with MD."

The MD format was launched in Europe at the end of 1992, at roughly the same time Philips Electronics unveiled an alternative format, the digital compact cassette. Neither format captured the preferences of the mainstream music-buying public, and Phillips concedes that initially there may have been some customer confusion about the dual functions of the MD.

The aim with the relaunch is to stress the MD's ability to record onto a disc, because, as Phillips points out, "that is what happened with cassettes. Why did people buy cassette players in the first place? To record."

According to Phillips, in Japan there is a very strong hardware base and software sales are starting to switch from blank MDs to pre-recorded discs.

"With pre-recorded MiniDisc in Europe, what we are in is a holding situation this year," he says. "What we have to do is get the hardware base up there. We are certainly expecting to hit the half-a-million base in Europe by about April this year. The intention is that we will more than double that by 1996."

Sony Software will be carrying out some advertising in 1997. In the U.K., (Continued on page 56)

Exhibit, Releases, Events
Celebrate EMI’s 100th

BY ADAM WHITE

LONDON—Starting on Valentine's Day, Britons will have the chance to fall in love with EMI Records for another century.

An ambitious Music 100 Exhibition will be launched Feb. 14 in Edinburgh, Scotland, kicking off EMI's high-spirited, extensive program to mark what it calls the "first centenary."

The interactive event will chronicle the history of recorded sound in the 20th century and help raise money for a new charity established by EMI, the Music Sound Foundation. Sir Colin Southgate, chairman of the EMI Group, announced Jan. 8 in London (Continued on page 56)

French Indie Licenses Jean-Michel Jarre To Sony
Global Deal Involves Past And Future Recordings

BY J. STELLA HARRIS

PARIS—French independent label Disques Dreyfus has signed a long-term global licensing deal with Sony Music Entertainment Europe for recordings by Jean-Michel Jarre.

The deal includes Jarre's new material as well as the artist's back catalog and covers all territories, except for France, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. Dreyfus has a separate distribution deal in France with Sony Music. Formerly, Jarre's material was available globally through a number of companies on a territory-by-territory basis.

"When the opportunity arose to sign a worldwide deal with [Disques Dreyfus president] Francis Dreyfus for the future and past recordings of Jean-Michel, we seized it with both hands," says Richard Ogden, senior VP of marketing for Sony Music Entertainment Europe.

The first album to be released under this new deal will be "Oxygen 7-18" Feb. 17, preceded by the single "Oxygene Part 5" Jan. 27, featuring remixes from DJ Dado and Takkyu Ishino.
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K-tel 35TH ANNIVERSARY

Issue Date: March 8
Ad Close: Feb. 11
Billboard's March 8th issue celebrates the 35th anniversary of K-tel. A pioneer in marketing music, this Minneapolis firm's retail music compilations have become pop-cultural icons. Our commemorative issue features a complete history of the company, an overview of its present-day operations, and an exclusive Q&A with president David Weiner and founder Philip Kives. We'll also take a look at those artists whose careers have been given a significant boost by aligning themselves with the K-tel organization.

Contact:
Ken Karp
212-536-5017

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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212-536-5225

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Billboard's Feb. 22 issue contains our annual update on the UK market. With the continuing resurgence of British 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 major nominees for the Brit Awards and talent to keep a watch on in '97.

Contact: Catherine Flintoff 44-171-323-6686

Billboard's February 22 issue looks at veteran artists' new releases (Cathy & Marcy, Joannie Bartels...), mainstream artists recording children's music, 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

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

Continuing its editorial commitment to Asia Pacific's mega-market, Billboard's March 1st issue will contain our first "magazine within 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

Reach Billboard's 200,000
Quantegy Keeps Itself Flexible For Pro Audio Future

By DAN DALEY

In 1958, magnetic tape was just a glimmer in the entrepreneurial eye of Ampex, then a manufacturer of record machines. Today, that same company is the world's largest manufacturer of professional analog magnetic tape and recorders. In 1987, following the exit of 3M from tape manufacture and the more recent sale of BASF to Korean conglomerate KORAH, Ampex is the only company of its size and one name change later, the company is one of the world's largest suppliers of professional magnetic media. Though Ampex, now Quantegy, is a smaller company than Sony, its name is synonymous with high-quality analog tape. In fact, quantities of the company's products are found in every major studio in the world. And, as the company's latest initiative, it is looking to carve out a niche in the digital recording market.

Despite the consolidation in the upper ranks of the industry, the market for analog tape remains large, estimated at $120 million worldwide. According to Steve Smith, director of audio marketing for Quantegy Inc., the company that inherited the Ampex mantle after Ampex Record-New Media Corp. was spun off from the parent company earlier this year, Ampex was able to purchase the assets of 3M's audio division, giving it a dominant market position in the analog recording market.

Quantegy shares a lexical similarity with Ampex. The new name, devised by the same market research company that named Apple Computers, is derived from a combination of "quality" and "technology." Ampex was named for the initials of its founder, Alexander M. Poniatoff, and the first syllable of the word "excellence." Other than that, though, Quantegy (which is able to use the Ampex name and logo as part of a trademark agreement between the two firms) faces a very different business landscape than its predecessor did.

"There's strong growth in the tape market, especially from small-format tapes like S-VHS and 8 mm, and very strong growth in the modular digital multitrack (MDM) market," Smith explains, "as well as fairly consistent growth in the total audio business of between 2% and 3% a year for the last 10 years. And our analog sales have been as high as they've ever been. Admittedly, some of that is due to taking over 3M's product line. But analog is still very strong and we're by far the leading tape supplier in that market.

"On the other hand, we are aware that conaptiness cannot be tolerated. The recording market is becoming filled quickly with all sorts of new formats. It's not a small world out there anymore."

He adds that DAT is the fastest-growing of the newer media; at $25 million in global sales annually, it's second only to the $45 million analog market. Open-reel digital recording for 15% of a worldwide market that has only three major manufacturers: Quantegy, Sony, and BASF. But as one more digital format (DAT) and the number of suppliers grows significantly, with the sales of project studios, mini-studios, and compactlux formats—SAYV, 8 mm, and R—accounting for as much as $30 million in sales globally in the pro audio market.

"We're seeing new formats that are the contested areas of market share," Smith says. "You have a lot of suppliers of those formats out there." Because of the boom in non-tape formats, industry leaders began to suspect that tape would no all but die out. Among the major executive executives was Quantegy's president/CEO Jack Kenney, a former computer industry executive tapped by the Equitable Life Assurance Co.—Quantegy's primary shareholder—to guide the company into the next century.

When he first looked at the situation, it was clear that tape had the chance of continuing as a product, whether disc or server technology. Technology made it," recalls Kenney, adding, "that another competitor, Quantegy VP of worldwide professional Mike Garmell, shared this first impression.

"But as I investigated further," continues Kenney, "I brought my own expectations to the table. I didn't remember thinking 20 years ago that tape would be displaced as a storage medium, yet tape is still performing that function for computer archiving. Combined with the knowledgeable, service-oriented people I found at Quantegy, I came to believe that tape is going to coexist with other technologies in pro audio for some time to come. What I've learned is that things will change, but they never change as fast as you think they're going to at first.

"Quantegy has established its own identity as a part of the professional audio business, starting with the audio post-production market, through professional high-end studios—both of which are the primary users of the large-format audio and video tapes that Quantegy manufactures—to the project studios and home-based studios that are driving the continued growth of tape. Quantegy's self-imposed mandate has been to maintain itself as the leading provider of all formats to all markets, which it pursues via the $120,000 square feet of manufacturing capacity of its 97-acre Opelika, Ala., campus which has seven production coating lines and two more pilot production lines for product testing and special order runs—and via its practice of using outside suppliers for certain formats, such as DAT.

That use of suppliers will likely grow in coming years as formats proliferate and Quantegy follows a long-held philosophy of waiting until a format has become established in the market before adding it to its product line. For instance, Quantegy waited until several major hardware manufacturers—using Sony, Yamaha, and Tascam—entered the MD market before adding it to its line. Now, 8 mm is a choice, a mixes decision that will be announced at the Audio Engineering Society Convention in March in Munich, along with news of its intention to purchase Quantegy's first magnetically (MD) product.

"The technology is changing so quickly, and new formats are coming on so fast that we are outsourcing of a few of the newer formats as the best way to make them themselves as a full-service provider," explains Smith. "As the formats move out toward new markets like MDMs, the rules of marketing change. For instance, I am visiting a major tape distributor in L.A., and Quantegy was far away the leading seller of large-format models that pressure, and we're buying a wide assortment of brands. In branding some questions, I learned that when it comes to small markets, people seem to believe that the same criteria of quality that you find on the high end doesn't necessarily apply perceptually on the lower end.

That is a critical observation in the tape industry. The sales of MDMs and BASF's tape manufacturing divisions were prompted by losses in the mass-market ends of the business, particularly consumer audio cassette and duplication service sales. Mass markets impose commodity-type economic models that pressure profitability to razor-thin margins.

"The lower-end and duplication tape market is shifting," says Smith, who adds that Quantegy is reintroducing its own professional analog cassette. "But manufacturers are selling more high-end, open-reel analog machines than ever, and we can't forget that."

Our market is more like that of high-end and consumer market."

The Opelika plant reflects Quantegy's aim to remain customized for the pro audio market. The highly automated plant is able to do specialized running for the Library of Congress, which requested red reels for its tapes. "That's what the customer wanted, and we did it," says Smith.

Research and development will continue across the full line of audio products, according to Smith, and Quantegy's 456 and 499 lines will continue to be improved and augmented by the technology enhancements from the 3M 996 high-output product that was acquired as part of the 3M purchase.

But even as small-format tapes proliferate, Smith says that the open-reel formats will continue to be Quantegy's audio focus. "You have niche markets all over the place," he says. "We're instance, we're going to see how the MD market shakes out in post-production. We can move fast once a market makes up its mind. But we'd rather wait and enter a market prepared than jump in too quickly. But the one thing that seems to be constant is the strength of analog tape. Its robustness is remarkable. In 1986 I might have said that by 1996 there would be no analog tape left. Those days, I've stopped making predictions."

**PRODUCTION CREDITS**

**BILBOARDS NO. 1 SINGLES (JANUARY 25, 1997)**

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www.americanradiohistory.com
LaRonda Sutton, a veteran music publishing executive who most recently worked for Chrysalis Music in Los Angeles. She has relocated to LaFace headquarters in Atlanta, where Hitco will be based. According to Medow, the infusion of $12 million into the co-venture is to be used for operational expenses, deals for new writers, catalog acquisitions, and “whatever is necessary to provide the company to help LaRonda succeed.”

Hitco comes on the scene with an already persuasive lineup of gold and platinum writers or artists/writers, including writer/producers Organized Noize, Tony Rich, En Vogue, Joe Richard’s, and Gordon Chambers. In addition, say Reid and Medow, Hitco also owns a catalog of unrecorded songs they plan to “aggressively exploit.”

Reid and hit writer/producer Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds have a co-venture with Twenty Records in LaFace Records, of which Edmonds is co-president. Edmonds is not part of the Reid-Windswept Pacific arrangement. Hitco is a publishing deal with Sony/ATV.

Besides its Hitco co-venture, Windswept Pacific owns rock-classics like Novus Music, and it recently completed an administration arrangement. (Continued on page 97)

Happy Lovers. At a recent party, Brett W. Perkins, left, executive director of the National Academy of Songwriters, and board member Jeff Barry flank Joni Mitchell, one of four recipients of the academy’s Lifetime Achievement Award. The other recipients were the songwriting team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller and Smokey Robinson. Proceeds from the event will fund the academy’s educational programs for songwriters.
by Jim Macnie

**DR. BILLY TAYLOR IS KNOWN** for his pianistic skills and talents as a tireless music educator. But with the release of the soundtrack to Robert Redford’s film “Gosford Park,” another side of the 15-year-old jazz vet is revealed.

The film reissues “I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free,” a civil-rights anthem penned by Taylor and Dick Dallas in the early ’60s. Diane Dorrin’s statuette, soulful, and brand-new version of the tune opens the Columbia disc; Nina Simone’s original take closes it. Initially screened exclusively in New York and Los Angeles, the film opened nationwide Jan. 3.

Taylor’s spiritual is also being reinvented by his composer. “I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free” is scheduled to be part of the pianist’s forthcoming jazz disc for the new Arista Jazz label, set for fall.

One of the key players in the film is Al Hicks, who was done with the composer, singer, and pianist in early January, having completed the first of his two albums. The price of $29.98, with 38 more pieces at a discount, is $20 a piece, with the composer’s live performances due out in late April.

On his album, “Yardbird Suite,” the film’s theme song, the artist is backed byhup band as well as on other tracks. On the first disc, “I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free,” Al Hicks is accompanied by a string quartet and a combo.

There is a scene in the film where Hicks, who is an award-winning actor, is playing a scene with a string quartet and a jazz combo. On the second disc, “Yardbird Suite,” Hicks is accompanied by a string quartet and a jazz combo.

**RHYDOL TELICLE HOPES TO BUILD ON BILL HICKS’ CULT BASE**

Kevin Booth, the albums’ producer, and his wife, Diane Dorrin, have been working on the disc for several months. A CD-joe, “Clean Edits For Radio & Raw Tracks Ribbed For Your Enjoyment,” is put together with the same production quality as the original album. The disc is available for $29.98, which is the price of the original album.

For two years now, Rydol has been releasing commercial CDs along with “The Friends Of Bill” Web site for such acts as Radford and Two, and the corresponding sales of original discs have averaged $29.98.

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THIS ONE’S FOR Frank!

SAXOPHONIST SUPREME JOE LOVANO
TIPS HIS HAT TO THE GREATEST SINGER OF OUR TIME ON CELEBRATING SINATRA.

LOVANO, JAZZ ARTIST OF THE YEAR IN THE 1996 DOWN BEAT CRITICS AND READERS POLLS, PUTS HIS UNIQUE SPIN ON THIRTEEN TUNES MADE FAMOUS BY FRANK SINATRA, IN ARRANGEMENTS FROM DUO TO SMALL ORCHESTRA. WITH AL FOSTER, JUDI SILVANO, KENNY WERNER, GEORGE MRáz. ARRANGEMENTS BY MANNY ALBAM.
## Grammy Nominations Stick to Business
### As Usual: McGeegan Signs With Conifer

**TOP CLASSICAL ALBUMS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
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<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>No. 1</strong></td>
<td>Bill desserts and sagas foks 1996</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>BOSTON POPS (SMIA)</td>
<td>FIEDLER-GREAT-</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>CECILIA BARTOLI</td>
<td>EMI CLASSICS</td>
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<td>LONDON PHILHARMONIC (JENKINS)</td>
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<td>TALLINN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA (KALLE)</td>
<td>ARTE PARK</td>
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<td>CECILIA BARTOLI</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>VARIOUS ARTISTS</td>
<td>SANTO DOMINGO</td>
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<td>8</td>
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**TOP CLASSICAL CROSSOVER**

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<td>THE BOSTON PORTLAND ORCHESTRA (LOCKHART)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>THE VIOLIN PLAYER</td>
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SONY IN TRIPlicate: The U.S. Latino market has long been considered a Balkanized record region, containing an assortment of music—pop, salsa, regional Mexican, dance, rap—that segment the business.

Because of this market stratification, Sony Discos—recently appointed VP/GM Oscar Llord—has decided to divide the label's activities according to genre. Three self-contained labels have been created along musical lines: Sony Discos, which will handle regional Mexican and Tejano product; Sony Latin for pop and ballad artists; and Sony Tropical, dedicated to tropical/salsa acts.

Llord says the partition of Sony was launched "with the objective of being able to give each one of the major segments of Latin music a level of concentration that is required in today's competitive market."

Frank Welzer, president of Sony Music International Latin America, who hired Llord, agrees with him, saying, "You cannot have the same promoter handling three different product lines. Now in each one of the divisions, you have people specializing in that genre of music."

Adds Llord, "We have set up sales in each one of these divisions with the objective of development of A&R and all marketing and promotion activities related to the roster. They will be able to develop new acts and market to their potential the established artists in these sectors."

Three VP/GMs have been named to head up the trio of new labels: Ray Martínez (Sony Discos), Jorge Pino (Sony Latin), and Rafael Cuevas (Sony Tropical). Llord says that Martínez will be responsible for Tejano product, but that he still is looking for someone to helm Sony's regional Mexican roster.

Llord notes that longtime staffer Harry Fox, VP of marketing and sales, will oversee the three labels' sales divisions, as well as provide sales support to distributed labels, such as Orfeon, Globo, Copa, Sonolux, and Union Square, the latter of which was recently picked up for distribution. Union Square is owned by industry veteran David Maldonado. "Sales and distribution will operate as a separate profit center," says Llord.

Llord expects the division of Sony Discos will improve A&R and marketing. Llord says he and Pino will handle A&R for pop acts, with Martínez looking after A&R for Tejano artists. Eddie Fernández has been tapped an A&R director for Sony Tropical.

Other new appointees include Eduardo Cortez, regional Mexican product and promotion director; María del Carmen Martínez, Tejano product and promotion manager; Diana Álvarez, national marketing director, Sony Latin; and Edgardo Barrera, national promotion director, Sony Tropical.

Llord says Sony will continue to be the only U.S. Latino division of an Anglo major to distribute its product outside of the parent company's distribution network.

(Continued on next page)
**Billboard® Top Country Catalog Albums™**

**January 25, 1997**

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<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
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**Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports compiled, and provided by SoundScan®.**
**DEAD RECKONING ALIGHT ON DISC**

(Continued from page 37)

where the record is taking off and support that will not just run but sustain a schedule.

Europe is a strong market for the Dead Reckoning rooster, and Kane says the label's major goal was to get the product to work in Europe. Mike Henderson & the Blueblods recently performed on a major British TV show with nothing more than a telephone call to say "We've always been unbelievably fruitful." Kane says of the European market, noting that his Dead Reckoning debut album is sold out in Europe.

Kane and his compatriots are performing individually and together as the music starts to reach critical mass as it travels across the country as well as Europe, and the show has been receiving great response. The tour has been described by some as "Stax meets the Opry."

Kane says he feels that the album remains true to the spirit of the live shows. "I'm extremely pleased with how it's been. I was really looking for a performance-oriented record because that's what we are. It's not [a record full of] demos. It's a live's-for-the-most-part record [with live lead vocals.]

"We did incorporate two pieces that are actually in the live show 'Here's to the Road' and 'When We're Gone Long Gone' which we were able to record in about five minutes because they were numbers that we had played many times... If there are any fans out there, there will be a couple of pieces on that they will be familiar with. Everything else is brand-new."

Among the cuts on the album are Kane's "I Desire Fire," Welch's "Cry For Nothing," Henderson and Walt Wilson's "You Tell Me," and Rogers and John Hadley's "Pearl Earrings.

Jon Kerlikowske, GM of Tower Records in Nashville says he's looking forward to the release of "Night Of Reckoning." "I think it's great," he says. "I'm probably going to approach them to see if they'd do something here at the store the day it is released. I think that would be fun." Kerlikowske also sees the set selling well. "We've been very successful with all of them—from Kieran Kane, Kevin Welch, and Walt Wilson."

"But says, "but the one we've probably sold most is Kieran's record. We've been successful with them because the music's right, and it's a singer/songwriter community."

As the folks at Dead Reckoning gear up for the release of "Night Of Reckoning," the label is also celebrating its second anniversary. Owned by Kane, Welch, Henderson, Stinson, and Rogers, the label has released albums by Kane, Welch, and Rogers; a Rogers/Don Heffington instrumental collaboration; and most recently a Mike Henderson & the Blueblods set.

"I'm pleased," says Kane of how the label has developed. "We've tried to go slow by it. It certainly would be nice to come out of the box and sell a million records, but that wasn't our main point. It's been about supporting artists who have always been the music. We've been trying to toe the line as far as the music is concerned and it's been a slow building process, but I couldn't be more pleased with the results."

One key avenue for exposure that has benefited the label's music is video. Kane's clip for "Cool Me Down" and Welch's "I Feel Fine Today" both garnered a fair amount of play on CMT. "CMT was extremely helpful to us," Kane acknowledges. "We did a video on Welch, and we were able to see an increase in sales when the video was played and the same thing with 'Cool Me Down.' When the video came out, that album was year and sales had leveled off, but when the video came to air, sales kicked in again. Video has done extremely well in Europe also. We have several No. 1 videos in Europe, and BMI in Europe has been incredibly helpful to us. Kevin has hosted VH1 for a month of programming, and they've been really into it." Kane says he doesn't know yet whether a video from the "Night Of Reckoning" album will be produced. The Dead Reckoning partners will be carefully considering whether there's potential for enough airplay to justify the expense. He adds that the Nashville video community has been very supportive of Dead Reckoning.

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**COUNTRY ARTISTS & MUSIC**

**DEAD RECKONING ALIGHT ON DISC**

(Continued from page 37)

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<td>10541</td>
<td>1/18/97</td>
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A Giant Moment. Giant Nashville artist Danyel Singletary is congratulated at an album-release party by Songwriter Hall of Fame member Hank Cochran. Shown, from left, are engineer Kevin Benit, Singletary, Cochran, and Giant Nashville president James Stroud.

Holly Dunn Goes Behind Radio Mike; PGD, Mercury Pick Up A Little Dog

O F F AND ON THE ROW: Rather than touring to support her forthcoming River North album and single of the same name, "Leave One Bridge Standing," Holly Dunn is taking a definite swerve in her career.

Beginning Feb. 3, she is going to radio in a big way. Dunn will be co-host of the morning show on WFXC-FM (Wet County) in Detroit. She'll join co-host Jim Bosh on the 6-10 a.m. "Country Club" on 106.7

Dunn, who began her career as a songwriter in Nashville, says that a spot in a one place will allow her to devote more time to her songwriting. She was named BMI songwriter of the year in 1988. Dunn says she was called by the station in December and decided the change would be good for her.

Los Angeles-based Little Dog Records is taking a step toward Nashville with the signing of an agreement with Mercury Nashville and PolyGram Group Distribution (PGD). Under the agreement, PGD will handle all of Little Dog's distribution and Mercury Nashville will work closely with the label on specific projects. Little Dog president Pete Anderson says he had been talking with Mercury Nashville president Luke Lewis for quite some time and was impressed that Lewis was the only major label head who had met with him and understood the need to be able to market product that doesn't fit the country radio format.

Anderson, who produces Dwight Yoakam, has a roster of singer/songwriters that include himself, the Lone Mountain Strangers, Joy Lynn White, Jim Matt, Jeff Finlin, and Scott Josse. Pending Little Dog projects include Anderson's second CD, "Dogs In Heaven," and releases from the Lone Mountain Strangers and White. Anderson founded Little Dog in 1998 with partners Barbara Hein and Michael Dumas.

O N THE ROAD: Mindy McCready makes her touring debut (although she did perform at last summer's Fan Fair) opening for George Strait on Valentine's Day in St. Louis. She will also open for Strait on Feb. 19 dates in Birmingham, Ala., and Cleveland and March dates in Cincinnati, Fargo, N.D., and Minneapolis. Fruit of the Lovin will continue its country music affiliation in 1997.

The company will release a 60-date Fruit of the Loom Country Comfort Concert Tour with Travis Tritt, Hank Williams Jr., Charlie Daniels, and Joe Diffie as featured performers. The tour will play dates from Feb. 19 through December and will include mobile exhibits extolling the country lifestyle and a high-tech pavilion called the Electric Cowboy. Those same performers will be joined by Vince Gill, Wynonna, Randy Travis, and Bryan White for a June 14 Country Fest at the Texas International Raceway outside Dallas. With tickets being given away through purchase promotions at local radio stations, the company hopes the event will be the largest single-day ticketed music festival ever. Last year, the company staged a similar festival outside Atlanta, with performances by Dwight Yoakam and Montgomery. Several of the nine stages will include large tents to form covered dancehall spaces. A Capitol campaign will be continued this year, with Eddy Raven and Jo-El Sonnier of Louisiana... Due to the demand for office space, the city has rezoned the lower end of Music Row from residential to office use. The rezoned area includes homes and apartments on 16th and 17th avenues between Music Row's business district and Belmont University.

The Country Music Assn. is staging a high-tech conference here March 20 at the Cumberland Science Museum. The all-day "Music Industry & New Technologies" conference will include sessions on the Internet, selling music on the Net, creating World Wide Web sites and webcasts, digital music video editing, intellectual property rights, and labels, and online transaction technology. Registration is limited to 200 participants... MCA artist Jerry Clower will be honored Feb. 17 by the National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame with the organization's Distinguished American Award. Clower played defensive tackle at Mississippi State.

Gaylord Entertainment public relations manager Mike Hyland is exiting his post to form Full Court Press, a full-service entertainment PR firm here. Hyland was a co-founder of Network Ink here and headed PR departments at Music World Records... CMT has announced Brooks & Dunn's "My Maria" as No. 1 video of the year for 1996. Bryan White and Shania Twain were named male and female video artist of the year, and Cedric "The Entertainer" has been awarded the independent video award for "If Shania Was Mine."... As bad as a movie as "Mars Attackers!" is, it's almost worth seeing just for the movie's revelation that Slim Whitman's music is the only deadly force on earth that the invading Martians are powerless against.

Welcome To Nipper. During the Academy of Country Music golf tournament awards banquet, members of the RCA Nashville family welcomed new signings Sara Evans to the label. Shown, from left, are Kenny Chesney, Evans, Aaron Tippin, and RCA Nashville VP of promotion Mike Wilson. Pete Anderson is producing her debut album.  

NASHVILLE—For artist-owned and -run Dead Reckoning Records, live performance has been a key component in fueling the 2-year-old label's success. So it seems only natural that they would release the Dead Reckoners' "Night Of Reckoning," a concept album that is patterned after the roster's live shows.

For release March 11, the album was produced by co-owner/artist Harry Stinson and features Kieran Kane, Kevin Welch, Tammy Rogers, Mike Henderson, and Stinson as well as additional performances by bassist Alison Prestwood and accordionist/fiddler/steel guitarist Pats Kaplan.

"On the road we are always getting requests, and people are often asking, 'Is there a CD that has all of you on it?"' Kane says. "It was a project that all of us thought about doing at some point, and I'm glad to see it come to fruition. We played a lot of shows over the years as the 'Night Of Reckoning' and have developed a band sound.

"It's always a difficult situation when you are looking at five lead singers in order to keep some continuity, but 'Night Of Reckoning' shows itself but recently signed with Nashville-based Keith Case and Associates for bookings. "We are extremely excited," he says. "Keith and his company do great work, and they are lining us up with certain places we feel we should be going, like certain festivals.

Dead Reckoning is distributed through DNA. Kane says the label plans to push the record to retail by securing listening posts, among other tactics. "One of the difficult things for us is racking a record because we don't want to rack it because country because 'that's not really the market we are going after," Kane says. "On the other hand, with Kevin and myself, we would probably get in the country section. But since it's called the Dead Reckoners, I don't know who will know who is anyway. We will sit down with DNA and Bounder and come up with a plan for it. We will definitely do national advertising buys and start watching..."(Continued on page 29)
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**In the Mix.** Up-and-coming production/turntablist team Andrew Wedeen, left, and Frank Lamboy take a break in their New York recording studio between sessions for several forthcoming projects. The duo is gathering deserved acclaim from DJs for its first Maxi Records single, "Dancin’," which combines elements of pop/disco and deep-house. The first quarter of ’97 will see the pair issuing tracks and remixes on Aures, Popular, Manifesto, and RAM Records, as well as a brand-new version of "Feel What You Want" by Kristine W on Champion/ROCA.

GETTIN’ WITH IT: Candelis is an enigma. Despite a prolific Douloumenis ancestry and a childhood on the streets of the Bronx, N.Y., he carries the soul of a pure Jamaican toaster. For proof, investigate his upcoming Strictly Rhythm debut, "Rum Getting Open," with its spicy island flavors and hip-hop foundation, which combines the old-school vocal flair of Rob Marley and the clarity and primal sensuality of LL Cool J.

"Just comes out of me," he says. "The best way to explain it is that I've never been able to be anyone else. I'm always working on developing different sounds and different ways to approach a song." Eagle-eyed regulars on the freestyle club circuit may recognize Candelis from a short stint as a dancer for Latin vixen Giggles. "He had something unique that made him stand out from the background," says dance music impresario Charlie Rock, who discovered Candelis and produced "Rum Getting Open." "Anyone could tell from just looking at him that he has all that it takes to be an artist in his own right."

Onstage, Candelis fully comes into his own. He has cultivated a suitably striking visual image to complement physical movements that are deceptive-­­ly simple yet utterly compelling. He has the gift of total communication with his audience.

"He's going to surprise a lot of people," says Rock. "There are few comparable artists in the pop arena right now. His music is fresh. I truly believe that people are going to be copying his sound and vibe in the months to come."
**Power Pick**

- Don't You (Forget About Me) - Simple Minds

**New**

1. Step By Step - A-Ha
2. Hot Shot Debut

- Whitney Houston

**Maxi-Singles Sales**

- **No. 1**
  - Un-Break My Heart (Hit) - J. Lo

**New**

1. OnoB (Hit) - Iyanya

**Hot Shot Debut**

- Whitney Houston

**Top 5**

1. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
2. Birthday - 50 Cent
3. Don't Let Go (Love) - Nelly
4. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
5. Marry You - Bruno Mars

**Top 10**

1. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
2. Don't Let Go (Love) - Nelly
3. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
4. Marry You - Bruno Mars
5. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
6. Birthday - 50 Cent
7. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
8. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
9. Birthday - 50 Cent
10. Ain't No Other Man - Usher

**Top 15**

1. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
2. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
3. Birthday - 50 Cent
4. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
5. Marry You - Bruno Mars
6. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
7. Birthday - 50 Cent
8. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
9. Marry You - Bruno Mars
10. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
11. Birthday - 50 Cent
12. Ain't No Other Man - Usher
13. Marry You - Bruno Mars
14. Don't Stop the Music - Black Eyed Peas
15. Birthday - 50 Cent

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**Billboard January 25, 1997**

**HOT DANCE MUSIC**

**Club Play**

- No. 1: Blue Skies - Purchase/White Noise/Imperial

**Maxi-Singles Sales**

- No. 1: Un-Break My Heart - J. Lo

**New**

1. OnoB - Iyanya

**Hot Shot Debut**

- Whitney Houston

**Power Pick**

- Don't You (Forget About Me) - Simple Minds
U2 Gets Down With Dance-Land In ‘Discotheque’

Look Who's Dancing: When the members of U2 said they were going to embrace the club underground on their new studio collection, “Pop,” they weren't kidding. First hints of the Island project's rhythm depth can be found on the first single, “Discotheque”—and we're not only referring to its requisite set of remixes.

In its original incarnation, the track is an intriguing study in the results of fusing trippy drum’n’bass flavors with a wry pop melody. The keyboards have the dark, mind-numbing quality of a Portishead jam, while the prominence of snippets from “Fane” by Freeform is a gnawing gesture of respect and inspiration for the renegades of the art form the band is embracing. Yeah, purists may balk at the occasional injection of the Edge's guitar-hero riffs and Larry Mullen’s firmly anchoring backbeat. But the earnest intentions of the band and producer Flood are undeniable. In fact, we appreciate the band's hunger to test new waters, and their willingness to shine a positive, image-elevating light on the music.

The questioning eye will come once the bandwagon of copycats gets rolling.

“Discotheque” pairs a genre-spanning treatment in a massive three-record set that is designed to slam this sucker home on nearly every possible dancefloor. Househeads will delight in.

David Morales and Satoshi Tomie’s post-production collaboration, which tidies up part of the original track's busy nature and reshapes the percussion with the steady and stomping vigor of a peak-hour anthem.

David Holmes immerses the track in moody electronic tones, distorting and stretching the vocals so that there's a lot of breathing room between the melody and groove. Perfect for chill-out sessions. More forceful in their jungle-esque beats are the versions by Howie B. and Steve Osborne, which are an appetizing feast for fans of odd keyboard loops and manipulated vocals.

Will the pop masses bond with “Discotheque”?: It's hard to say definitively, though the hook sure is irresistible. Fans of the band who can't let go of the past (not to mention those who found the band's docile last two albums, "Achtung Baby" and "Zooropa," too quirky) may struggle with it at first. But the rest of us who are always starved for more than another serving of the same ol' thing have a reason to smile for a change.

Shakin' Baker: With the music coming from his rising U.K. indie, Minimal Records, rhythm pioneer Arthur Baker is out to prove that ya gotta respect the traditions and hard-won battles of the past in order to successfully pave new ground. Nearly every record on the label’s first-quarter agenda brilliantly proves this point.

For example, the beat on "I Wanna Thank You" by budding New Jersey production crew Soul Creation and veteran diva Dee Holloway has the deep-house thrust needed to move the body, while also providing an ample dose of live instrumentation and a sleek classic soul melody for the ear. Holloway’s voice is as limber and assertive as ever. She’s been away from the spotlight for far too long. Now that she and Soul Creation are demining tunes for an album, we expect her to be viable for a long time to come.

By the by, Johnny Vicious and Benji Candelario have been commissioned to tweak “I Wanna Thank You” with appropriate tribal attitude.

Baker's own pending releases on Minimal straddle the line between retro reverence and experimentation. Now working under the name Blow Out Express with former Cameo musician Merv De Peyer, he's shaping a sound that he playfully describes as "coffee table house," bringing the soothing textures of jazz, progressive rock, and funk to dark and aggressive but remarkably insinuating house beats. The track "Blow Out," due in early March, offers a 10-minute journey with so many subtle shifts and changes that it seems to whip by in mere seconds. Future Blow Out Express mixes for Morcheeba and new Minimal signing Secret Knowledge are equally intense and pleasing. Baker hints that a six-piece live version of Blow Out Express may be before the summer. If that happens, he could easily spearhead a movement with the potency and power on par with the Giant Steps acid-jazz phenomenon.

Also of note on Minimal is "The Philly Groove Mixes" by First Choice, which features a number of the act's (Continued on page 30)
Rap: It's A Profession, Not A Logo

by Havelock Nelson

Clark Kent are some of the producers currently involved in...
BMG ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL

TEN YEARS YOUNG

A BILLBOARD ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: EROS RAMAZZOTTI, SCATMAN JOHN, REPUBLICA, LOS DEL RIO, MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS, ANDY LAU, THE CHIEFTAINS, VESSELINA KASAROVA
Congratulations on the 10th anniversary of BMG-Entertainment INTERNATIONAL...
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Rudi Gassner, President/CEO of BMG Entertainment International, recalls the day 10 years ago when he succinctly described the road ahead for his company. “I was making a presentation to the Bertelsmann board, so I was forced to put my thoughts into one of those famous overhead slides,” says Gassner. “My vision was very clearly to say, ‘If we want to succeed in the business, we need to be a global player.’ Then I had the details of how we would go about it,” he says, outlining two issues faced by the nascent international division of BMG Entertainment. “One was that we had to analyze the companies we had, including the executives. And the other was domestic repertoire. That was—and I'm not cheating here—already on my first presentation.”

This year marks the 10th anniversary of BMG Entertainment International, the worldwide arm of BMG Entertainment, which, in turn, is part of Bertelsmann AG, one of the world's largest media companies. The focus on developing domestic or local artists into regional and global stars, which Gassner emphasized in those meetings in 1987, has been key to BMG Entertainment International tripling its revenues over the past decade. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1996, revenues totaled $2.5 billion, including both owned repertoire and product from distributed or licensed labels, most notably those of the Universal Music Group (formerly MCA Music Entertainment), Telstar in the U.K., and For Life Records in Japan. The New York–based company is home to a world of diverse artists—David Bowie (signed for territories outside the U.S.), the Chieftains, Masaharu Fukuyama, Juan Gabriel, La Bouche, Annie Lennox, Eros Ramazzotti, to cite but a few. The company has 45 affiliates. Aside from its pop-music business, it has a strong presence in classical and jazz repertoire and recently has boosted its activity in the video and interactive market. Gassner says BMG today ranks No. 4 among the world's multinational music companies, with 14% of the global market—and he has declared his intention to become No. 2 in the world market in the foreseeable future. During a recent visit to London, Gassner reflected on the growth of BMG Entertainment International over the past 10 years and, once more, described the road ahead.
INTERVIEW
Continued from page BMG-6

ment for Richard, Clive agreed that Richard should
now become an A&R contact [with the U.S. labels] for
the rest of the world, and he cannot just give the reperto-
ire to Arista but also to other labels within BMG.
Which is a great sign of our culture of cooperation. He
deals mostly with English-language repertoire and will
then go back to the A&R source to do something about
it, or find one of our [American] labels who are very
interested. [Senior VP of A&R and marketing] Heinz
Henn, on the other hand, is helping set up non-English
repertoire, such as Eros Ramazzotti.

Has that A&R structure helped bring more inter-
national repertoire into the U.S.?
I know from my friends [at other international labels]
how frustrated they are sometimes with their American
colleagues. I must say that, from Day One, I have not
seen that. We may be lucky in that our chemistry just
works. Or we may just not be such a political company
as other companies. I don’t care. The result is more
important for me.

An important new avenue for repertoire develop-
ment is in interactive and video opportuni-
ties. Broadly speaking, what is BMG’s strategy in
this area?
We will see retail outlets in the next 10 years which
will not just carry music, but interactive and video, and
video may turn into DVD and probably PC-based inter-
active games, again on a CD format. So, in fact, we’re
now supplying consumer goods to a retail structure,
which we know how to deal with. We would like to be
the ones within the Bertelsmann organization who are
able to use that knowledge [for video and interactive
products].

Gary Dale has been with you since 1994 as
president of BMG Interactive International and
last year added responsibility for BMG Video
International. What is his role?
Gary’s job is to make sure that, in a given country, there
is a unit, as small as it may be, which knows exactly how
and why and when to deal with interactive and other
products. What we don’t have yet in these fields, to the
extent that we do in music, is the ownership of con-
tent. And in video, we’re far away from ownership of
content. However, I think very long term. Bertels-
mann—especially with the recent UFA/LTV merger,
which is now the biggest European free-TV organiza-
tion—will be forced to think about the supply of soft-
ware in the film-production area. So, to have an organi-
zation worldwide which is able to deal with video and
DVD is absolutely right.

What is the greatest strength of the worldwide
music industry today? What gets you most excited
about being part of this business?
Nothing has really changed. It’s the music. I’m sorry, it’s
a very boring answer [smiles]. But it got me excited
when I was 18 years old, and it hasn’t changed.

But are the challenges facing the music indus-
try more difficult today?
What has changed is the size of the business. It has to
make us much more responsible managers, to take care
of many more people around the world, many more
artists around the world. So there are obviously many
more professional demands on us than 20 years ago. But
as far as what matters is concerned, nothing is new—it’s
always the music, it is always the artist.

At BMG’s worldwide meeting in 1996, you out-
lined goals of moving from No. 4 to No. 2 in world
market-share in the foreseeable future. That’s an
ambitious growth plan.
That is correct. How do we get there? Very clearly, with
the artists and repertoire and the executives who can
make that work. Surely, our next 10 years will become

bmg with haddaway

much more challenging and difficult than the last 10
years. During the last 10 years, we wanted to become a
global player. We found the marketplace. We opened all
these companies. We are now on stream. We’re making
money. Here we are with 14% market share. To go from
14% to 18% is much more difficult than building 14
companies into 45. That’s where the challenge is. But
that’s also where the fun is.
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BMG ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL INDEX

Active music labels ▼ 200
Sales revenue in 1996 ▼ $2.5 billion
Global Market Share ▼ 14%
Affiliated companies ▼ 45
Feature films to which BMG has international video rights ▼ 300
Interactive titles ▼ 50
Interactive development labels ▼ 20
Average frequency of new-artist signings ▼ Every 24 hours
Average frequency, since 1987, of new territories entered ▼ Every 90 days
Average number of CDs sold every 15 minutes ▼ 18,000
Number of CDs sold since 1987 ▼ 803 million
Height of stack of 803 million CDs, in jewel cases, sold by BMG since 1987 ▼ 599 miles

[Source BMG Entertainment International]
DORNEemann on the Decade

Michael Dornemann is the chairman and CEO of BMG Entertainment, the
$5.8 billion entertainment division of Bertelsmann AG. BMG Entertainment,
headquartered in New York, includes the operations of four separate divi-
sions—BMG Entertainment North America, BMG Entertainment Internation-
al, BMG Entertainment TV/Film Europe and BMG Entertainment Storage Media.

In recent comments prepared for this special issue, Dornemann reviewed the
strength of BMG Entertainment International under president and CEO Rudi
Gassner and the growth of BMG Entertainment around the world.

"Rudi Gassner has done an outstanding job of growing our operations in music
internationally," says Michael Dornemann. "And his philosophy of focusing on
local A&R with an eye toward expanding artists to regional audiences—and, where
appropriate, worldwide audiences—has been emulated by other companies
because of its success.

"When I asked Rudi to join me in building BMG around the world 10 years ago, we had very specific goals
to meet during the decade, and I am happy to say that we have met those goals for the most part. I am looking for-
ward to growing our businesses to even more territories as new markets open up around the globe, and I want to
thank Rudi for his incredible efforts to make BMG Entertainment International the success it has become.

"When we formed BMG 10 years ago, following the acquisition of RCA Records, we had operations in 14
countries, all concentrated in music. Today, BMG Entertainment is among the largest entertainment compa-
nies in the world, with operations in more than 50 countries.

"In addition to the expansion of our music operations, we now jointly own CLF-UFA, which is the largest televi-
sion broadcaster in Europe, and have operations in radio, film, video, interactive entertainment, direct mar-
keting, licensing and merchandising, and compact-disc and cassette manufacturing.

"In the process of growing our business over the last decade, our philosophy has been to nurture the best cre-
ative talent and executives while growing our core busi-
nesses, and then to occasionally make a major acqui-
sition at the appropriate time. Bertelsmann's 30-year inter-
est in music through the Ariola label in Europe and Latin
America served as the foundation for the formation of
BMG. Since then, our investment in RCA Records has
paid huge dividends in enabling us to have the critical
mass to become the world's fourth-largest music com-
pany. Likewise, after building a substantial business in
German television over the past two years, we made the
decision last year to merge our UFA operations with
[Belgium-based Audifina's] CLT to create a compa-
ny with combined revenues of $2.3 billion, making it the
dominant broadcaster in the [European] continent.

"I think it's safe to say that, over the next few years, we will be concentrating most of our efforts on solidifying
our positions in music and television, focusing on grow-
ing those businesses by utilizing the exceptional
assets we already own. In

"In music, we have our highest market share ever in
the United States—at 13.4%, and we are the No. 2 distri-
butor of current product, which is a good indication of
the success we have had in developing and breaking
new artists. Clive Davis continues to do remarkable
work in managing all of the Arista Records operations, and
our joint ventures with Laface, Bad Boy and Rowdy, already
phenomenally successful, will only continue to improve.

"At RCA, under the talented leadership of Bob
Jamieson, we look forward to the label continuing to
increase its market share with the success of the Dave
Matthews Band, SWV and others, and our joint venture
with Loud Records has established it as a real force
in urban music.

"Our Nashville operations at Arista Nashville and RCA
Label Group stand as the third-largest distributor of
country music, and we're very pleased with our perfor-
ance there.

"Windham Hill and Private Music are labels which
have recently undergone periods of transition, with
Windham Hill moving from the Bay Area to our offices in
Los Angeles, and Private Music evolving to more adult
contemporary music and away from New Age artists.

"Our record club [BMG Direct], which has more than 8
million members, is the second-largest record club, and
we expect that it will continue its success, even in the
face of a more difficult direct-marketing environment.

"Also, our music-publishing business, which owns the
rights to more than 700,000 songs worldwide, is a very
profitable business for us and looks to remain solid into
the future.

"In television, which is where I have concentrated a lot
of my time during the past year, we have grown from hav-
ing no presence in television 10 years ago, to a point
where we have the dominant position in over-the-air
broadcasting in Europe. We believe—and recent sur-
veys have supported our view—that over-the-air broad-
casting will continue to be the most significant form of

"With our merger of UFA and CLT, we are well-posi-
tioned to take advantage of this situation and expect to
have a very profitable business for many years to come.
With our production facilities and businesses in rights
trading, we have significant activities in all forms of tele-
vision production and distribution, and expect to be the
leading force in Europe.

"Because BMG Entertainment is the entertainment
division of Bertelsmann AG, which is the third-largest
media company in the world, it is easy to overlook our
scope," concludes Dornemann. "Using last year's num-
bers, we would be the seventh-largest entertainment
corporation in the world, in terms of revenues, and that is
without counting the $3 billion-plus in revenues which
we will see from the CLF-UFA operations.

"Looking back over the last 10 years, it's pretty over-
whelming to realize just how much we've grown dur-
ing that time, and I want to take this opportunity to
thank everyone who has contributed to our success.
I'm very excited about our prospects for the next 10
years, and I think we have a very prosperous decade
ahead."
WHETHER IT BE THEIR FORMIDABLE SUCCESS
WITH OUR ARTISTS, OR OUR TREMENDOUS
SUCCESS WITH THEIR ARTISTS, OURS IS THE BEST
PARTNERSHIP HEARD 'ROUND THE WORLD.

OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO
BMG INTERNATIONAL ON
THEIR 10TH ANNIVERSARY.

ARISTA

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THE EARS OF HENN: A&R At Work

Henn has acquired a strong reputation within the international music industry for his critical taste as well as his A&R and marketing skills—working with such acclaimed artists as Al Green, David Bowie, Joan Armatrading and Eros Ramazzotti.

WHAT DO ARTISTS ranging from Al Green to Joan Armatrading, from David Bowie to Eros Ramazzotti, all have in common, aside from their affiliation with BMG Entertainment International?

They are among the BMG artists whose activity outside North America has benefited from the expertise of Heinz Henn, senior VP of A&R and marketing.

Through his years with BMG, Henn has acquired a strong reputation within the international music industry for his critical taste as well as his A&R and marketing skills—working with American artists who enjoy a strong following outside their homeland, such as Green; with critically acclaimed performers whose careers are sustained by wider international exposure, such as Armatrading; with superstars who are signed to BMG Entertainment International outside the U.S., as in the case with Bowie; and with major artists from non-English-speaking markets as Italy's Ramazzotti, who has broken through across Europe and Latin America.

Two years ago, Henn reorganized BMG's international marketing department in recognition of the increasing number of artists signed directly to BMG around the world, compared to the number signed to licensed or distributed labels.

"We've always prided ourselves on creating local repertoire and then breaking it internationally," Henn said at that time. The strategy has not changed. But notably, as the efforts by BMG and other companies to develop local repertoire succeed, it is no easier to cross artists across borders, into individual local markets.

"No, as a matter of fact, it is becoming increasingly difficult due to the fact that domestic repertoire is getting stronger and stronger; thus increasing the competition [in individual markets], especially for Anglo-American repertoire," says Henn.

Despite the challenges, Henn says he has a straightforward goal for BMG artists around the world: "To break more!"

—THOM DUFFY
CONGRATULATE
BMG ON THEIR
10TH ANNIVERSARY
“ONE OF THE KEY ISSUES for us is to establish a strong presence in domestic repertoire in each of the key markets” in Asia, says Michael Smellie, who has been senior VP of BMG Entertainment International, Asia Pacific, since 1995.

“That’s something that, certainly, historically, we have lacked, other than in one or two markets—the Philippines and Malaysia—where we have been very strong domestically.”

BMG has not yet reached its potential in Japan, Smellie acknowledges. “Clearly not, because we’re not as big as Sony,” he quips. “We have done OK. We’ve had one or two very large acts [such as Sharan Q and Masaharu Fukuyama], but we really haven’t had a roster of acts. Whilst the total numbers look good, it’s really driven by one act, or two acts at the most.

“One should put this in perspective. We have only been in business for 10 years, and even in Japan, we’re competing against companies that have been in business 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years. So you shouldn’t interpret what I’m saying in too negative a fashion,” says Smellie.

“The first decade [for BMG Entertainment International] was getting companies established, getting organizations set up, having marketing and sales teams in place,” Smellie continues. “One of the key things for the second decade is to really try and improve our domestic-repertoire presence across the region.”

During 1996, BMG strengthened its presence through deals with three leading independent companies in the region. It acquired a majority stake in Music Impact Entertainment in Hong Kong, a majority stake in the instrumental and pop Elite Music label in Taiwan, and 100% of Fun House in Japan.

“They were certainly kick-starts in key markets,” says Smellie. “We made some strategic acquisitions in strategic markets at a strategic time in our development. But that neither means we will or we won’t continue to do that.”

As Japan remains a key focus for BMG in the Asia Pacific region, the company is looking at its organizational structure in the market, in the wake of the Fun House acquisition.

The type of domestic repertoire BMG will pursue throughout the region will vary from market to market, says Smellie. “I don’t think I can say there’s a sort of an Asia-Pacific ‘trend.’ The markets are in varying stages in that respect. Obviously, the dance-music phenomenon applies in various countries to varying degrees, but again, different types of dance music. Some is very pop, and some is very acid-jazz.”

Meanwhile, as a source of international repertoire, Smellie says. “Our market shares throughout the region are, generally speaking, above our world averages. And that’s obviously something we focused on in the first 10 years. One of the key issues for us will be to preserve that very strong position we have for international repertoire. Even in Japan, which is a very tough, competitive market, our share of the international market is around 14%, which is higher than our worldwide average.”

—Michael Smellie, senior VP

BMG Entertainment International
Asia Pacific

“The first decade [for BMG Entertainment International] was getting companies established, getting organizations set up, having marketing and sales teams in place. One of the key things for the second decade is to really try and improve our domestic-repertoire presence across the region.”

—Michael Smellie, senior VP
BMG Entertainment International, Asia Pacific
BMG International

Congratulations for your 10th Anniversary.

BMG ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL, ASIA PACIFIC

HEADQUARTERS ▼ Hong Kong

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT ▼ Michael Smellie

BACKGROUND ▼ Smellie became senior VP of BMG Entertainment International, Asia Pacific in 1995 with responsibility for the operations of BMG affiliates and licensees in this rapidly growing area. Previously, Smellie was managing director of BMG Australia since 1993. He came to BMG from the MMA Group, where he was CEO, responsible for rooArt Records, MMA Music Publishing and the APA Booking Agency. Earlier, Smellie was managing director of PolyGram Group's Australasia operations from 1988 to 1993.

OFFICES ▼ Australia, India, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand.

KEY ARTISTS ▼ Andy Lau, E-Kin Cheng, Masaharu Fukuyama, Sharan Q, Winnie Lau, Roman Tam, John Parnham, Merril Bainbridge, Supergroove.

COMPANY PROFILES ▼ BMG Australia Limited—based in Sydney with offices in Brisbane and Melbourne, has been one of the leaders in the Australian market since it was established in 1987. The company has had a longtime relationship with Australian superstar John Parnham, one of the top-selling veteran artists in the market. It has also enjoyed domestic and international success with artists including Merril Bainbridge, Boom Crash Opera, the Divinyls and Southern Sons. The company acquired Gotham Records (Bainbridge’s label) to strengthen its local A&R activity; has formed Vent Records with similar goals, and last year acquired the rooArt Records label, home to emerging artists such as You Am I. Its distribution agreements with Walt Disney, Universal, Geffen and Transistor labels have increased its regional market share. Its acquisition of Castle/Startel in 1996 has boosted its presence in the television-compilation market.

▼ BMG Hong Kong—saw its market share nearly double in 1996 through its partnership with Music Impact, which the company subsequently acquired. Music Impact specializes in traditional and emerging Mandarin and Cantonese music. BMG Hong Kong’s key artists include superstar Andy Lau, E-Kin Cheng, Winnie Lau, Hacken Lee, Anita Mui and Roman Tam.

▼ BMG Crescendo (India) Pvt. Ltd.—was formed in June 1996 as part of a joint venture with Crescendo Music & Marketing, one of India’s most successful independent labels. The company is based in Bombay with offices in Bangalore, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras. It is now one of India’s leading companies in international music and a major force in domestic pop, classical and Hindi soundtrack music. Its catalog includes more than 100 recordings, featuring repertoire from BMG-owned and licensed labels and Indian companies such as Alka Music, N.A. Classicals, Pan Music, Rhythm House Classics and Silver Beats. It has entered the video market through an exclusive distribution and manufacturing licensing agreement with 20th Century Fox. It also has enjoyed success marketing “Channel [V] Hits: The Ultimate Dance Collection.” Key artists on BMG Crescendo include Anaida, Lucky Ali and Mehnaz.

▼ BMG Japan—has seen a 600% increase in net revenue since it was founded in 1987. Originally established as BMG Victor as a joint venture with Victor/EMI Japan, the company was rechristened BMG Japan in 1996 when BMG bought JVC’s interest in the partnership. Early in 1996, the company acquired Fun House Co. Ltd., home to new and emerging artists such as Kazumasa Oda and Yo Yamada. Among the company’s top-sellers are Sharan Q and Masaharu Fukuyama, whose sales exceed 1 million units. In October 1996, BMG Japan began distributing BMG Japan Records, whose roster includes Anri, Miki Imai, Yuko Itoh and others.

▼ BMG Malaysia—was established in 1989 with...
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Asia Pacific

Continued from page BMG-18

BMG's acquisition of Pacific Music Corporation Sdn Bhd. With headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, the company has 50% of the domestic music market. Its owned labels include Matahair and RCA Domestic. BMG Malaysia's artist roster includes one of the country's top-selling acts, the U.K.'s, as well as Avie, Exist, M. Nasir, Slam and Ziana Zan.

▼ BMG New Zealand—has been in business in Auckland since 1975. The company represents the New Zealand-wide labels Chronic, Felix, Lunacy, Southside, Tangata and Wildside. It has achieved international success with Supergroove, whose album "Traction" has gone quadruple platinum (60,000 units) in its home market. BMG New Zealand's roster also includes Max Lines, Sir Howard Morrison, Prince Tai Teka, and the Starlight String Quartet.

▼ BMG Records Philippines—was incorporated in 1996, based in Quezon City. It has brought domestic alternative-rock to the market with the success of the Eraserheads and is also home to such artists as Francis, Ariel Rivera and Rivermaya. It has broken BMG artists from other regions in the market, including Los Del Rio from Spain and Southern Sons from Australia.

▼ BMG Singapore—was set up with BMG's acquisition of Pacific Music in 1989 and has enjoyed steady growth since, ranking among the top five record companies in the market. The company will benefit from BMG's acquisition of Hong Kong's Music Impact label, due to the importance of Chinese repertoire in the market.

▼ BMG Records Africa—signaled BMG's entry into the South African market in 1992, two years after Nelson Mandela was released from prison. The company is based in Johannesburg with branches in Cape Town andDurban and covers the entire subcontinent and the Indian Ocean Islands including: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Reunion, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Its repertoire has been released in 13 languages, ranging from English to Afrikaans to Zulu, Tsonga and Malagash. BMG Africa has seen steady growth from the sales of international repertoire but also has nurtured domestic stars, including Vusi Mahlasela and the Soweto String Quartet.

▼ BMG (HanKook) Music (South Korea)—opened in 1991 in Seoul as a wholly owned subsidiary of BMG. It has a significant roster of domestic artists, including Ahn, GeumSung, Jun Hee and HyungUn.

▼ BMG Music Taiwan—has been a leader in the market since it was established in 1990. Based in Taipei, the company boosted its presence in the Mandarin market through a collaboration with Elite Music in Taiwan, one of the company's leading producers of instrumental music. BMG's roster in Taiwan includes Chiu Hai Ching, Ellie Lai, Ro Lo, Kenny Wen, Tang Na and teenage superstar Wallace Chung.

▼ BMG Entertainment Thailand—has its genesis in the formation by BMG in June 1989 of BMG Pacific Music as a joint venture. When BMG acquired 75% of the partnership in December 1995, it was renamed BMG Entertainment Thailand. From its headquarters in Bangkok, the company has developed such domestic artists as Andy, the Breif, Netima and Viassana.

Sharan Q, one of BMG Japan's top acts, had sold more than 4 million albums prior to the December release of its latest effort, "Golden Q," on the Zig label. The act is on a national tour through May.

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Cantopop king Andy Lau has starred in more than 80 movies and released dozens of albums, the most recent issued last August with a title that translates as “Andy Caring For You.” Lau joined BMG with the company’s acquisition of the Music Impact label in Hong Kong. He plans more film roles and concert performances this year, including dates in North America, the U.K. and Australia.

Australia’s Merrill Bainbridge hit the Top 5 in the U.S. in 1996 with her single “Mouth” from her album “The Garden,” both released on Universal Records in America. Back home, “Mouth” topped the Australian singles chart for six weeks and also reached No. 1 in the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore. “The Garden” was released this month in the U.K.
Happy 10th Anniversary

BMG Entertainment International

We are proud to be associated with you and look forward to being a part of your continued success.

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"OVER THE PAST 10 years, BMG in Central Europe has experienced constant growth and success throughout the whole region," says Arnold Bahlmann, senior VP of BMG Entertainment International, Central Europe. "We opened offices in more than 20 countries throughout Europe following a strategy of internationalization and local-repertoire investment," says Bahlmann, who offers a market-by-market overview of his region.

"The growing rate of CD-player penetration of the past several years had a very positive impact on the sales of BMG Benelux," he says. "But with player penetration [now at] 113%, the market is now stagnating, leading to the challenge of finding new ways of marketing and alternative distribution."

At BMG France, after a difficult period, a reorganization and turnaround has taken place. "Organic growth has been realized through repertoire development—Marla Glen, Khadja Nin, Carrapicho, Patrick Bruel, Enzo Enzo, Marc Lavoine, Roch Voisine, Pierre Bachelet, Native, Indochine and many more," says Bahlmann. Local repertoire also has fueled growth at BMG Greece, which has plans to open a new office in Cyprus.

With BMG's acquisition of Ricordi in Italy in 1994, says Bahlmann, "We became the No. 1 company, with a market share of over 25%, hosting the most popular Italian artists. BMG Ricordi is also the No. 1 publishing company.

"Since its foundation in 1988, the Nordic region

Arnold Bahlmann has experienced constant growth," continues Bahlmann. "BMG Denmark is as successful as ever. BMG Sweden continues to be one of our major A&R sources for Europe, with young talent development such as Robyn. Finland and Norway are continuously successful."

Continued on page BMG-28
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Throughout Eastern Europe, “BMG companies are rapidly growing,” Bahlmann explains. “Plans include the set-up of a company in Russia. Eastern Europe will be approached aggressively, with regard to both the development of local and international repertoire.”

A wide range of challenges faces BMG in Central Europe, says Bahlmann, including: further growth through artist development with a European approach; development of relationships with local record labels in Eastern Europe; the need to solve problems created by parallel imports; the ongoing difficulty of record piracy, particularly in Eastern Europe; preparation for a unified European monetary system; development of new distribution channels; the development of interactive and other new media; and the growth of pan-European businesses from a Central Europe base. —WOLFGANG SPAHR

BMG ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL, CENTRAL EUROPE
HEADQUARTERS ▼ Munich
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT ▼ Arnold Bahlmann

BACKGROUND ▼ Bahlmann has worked for Bertelsmann since 1982 and has had responsibility for Central and Eastern European for the past seven years.

OFFICES ▼ Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Also operating in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Turkey. Developing offices in the Baltics, Bulgaria, Croatia, Iceland, Israel, Malta and Russia.

KEY ARTISTS ▼ Eros Ramazzotti, Marla Glen, Robyn, Thomas Helmig, Candy Dulfer, Patrick Bruel, Caroline Henderson, Gilbert Bécaud, Jennifer Brown, Khadjia Nin, Helmut Lotti.

COMPANY PROFILES
▼ Benelux Region—includes BMG offices in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg and has experienced consistently strong growth since its formation in 1987. The region was consolidated in 1996 under Dorus Sturm, who was named managing director of the Benelux region. The Benelux companies have joint-venture relationships with Dino Records and EVA, a television music-merchandising company.

▼ BMG Belgium—has a 49% stake in the leading European dance label News Records and has a roster that includes Helmut Lotti, Vaya Con Dios, Sanne, Cherry Moon, and X-treme.

Continued on page BMG-30

Congratulations to BMG Entertainment International and Rudi Gassner on ten great years and best wishes for many more to come.

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BMG Entertainment International

Central Europe

Continued from page BMG-28

- BMG Greece — has a number of leading domestic artists signed to the company, including Stefanos Kotsilis, Dante, Alexia, Stamatis Gonidis and Costas Bigalis.

- BMG Ricordi — was formed through the acquisition by BMG in August 1994 of a majority interest in G. Ricordi and its businesses, including the record company Dischi Ricordi, the classical and pop-music publishing arm Casa Ricordi and the printing concern Arti Grafiche. BMG Ricordi’s operations include the BMG label in Rome and the Ricordi label and BMG Video and Interactive offices in Milan. Top domestic artists signed to BMG in Italy include Eros Ramazzotti, Giorgia, Luca Carboni, Marco Masini, Gianna Nannini and Antonello Venditti. BMG Ricordi, in Bologna, controls the pressing label for artists such as Lucio Dalla and Samuele Bersani.

- BMG Ariola Czech Republic And Slovakia — from its base in Prague, oversees BMG activities in both markets since its launch in 1992. Domestic artists signed to the company include Ivan Dral, Buty & Madvar.

- BMG Hungary — was the first office of BMG Entertainment International to be opened in Eastern Europe, after starting operations in 1991. The company is the exclusive licensee and distributor of Walt Disney music product in the market. It is home to such local artists as Gabor Presser, Rauluk, Akos and others.

- BMG Nordic Region — includes offices in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Its operation was consolidated in 1996 with the appointment of Haase Breithola, VF Nordic Region.

- BMG Denmark — emerged from the record company Genlyd which, in 1990, became a fully owned BMG label. The company currently is part of EVA, the television merchandising company that is a joint venture between Virgin, EMI-Medley, Warner and PolyGram Records. Thomas Helming and Caroline Henderson are among the company’s leading artists.

- BMG Finland — was established in 1990. From its base in Helsinki, the company has a joint venture with the Finnish label Zoo Music and maintains a distribution agreement with Poko Records, the largest independent label in Finland. Local artists signed to the company include XL5, Samuli Edelmann, Kirka and Alakone.

- BMG Norway — during 1996 acquired the remaining 10% of Norsk Plateproduksjon, a leading independent label in the market. It is also part of the EVA partnership. Local stars signed to the company include Steinar Albrigtsen, Hellbillies, Anja Garbarek, Velvet Belly, Deepika, Pogo Pops, CC Cowboys, Grete Svensen, DumDum Boys, Bjorn Eidsvag, Bjelleklang, Oslo Gospel Choir and Green Cortinas.

- BMG Sweden — has distribution agreements for Gammation, LCM, Diesel, Milan and EVA repertoire as well as for Universal (formerly MCA) releases. It has a strong lineup of local artists, including Robyn, Jennifer Brown, Louise Hoffsten, Stefan Anderson, Uno Svenningsson, Lisa Nilsson and Carola.

- BMG Poland — opened in 1993, one of the first affiliate of a multinational to enter the newly opened market in recent years. Along with other BMG-distributed repertoire, the company has distribution agreements with Visa Film International and Skorpion Films. Its local roster of artists includes the rap artist Licyr, Linar, K.A.S.A., Dogs, Dorota and YokaShin.

- BMG Turkey — was established in Istanbul in 1995 and has a distribution agreement with local label Raka. Domestic performers signed to BMG in the market include Galay, Mutaf, Banu, Uzay, Teyyildiz, Yamac and the popular Yeni Türkü.

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**Central Europe**

"BMG companies are rapidly growing. Plans include the set-up of a company in Russia. Eastern Europe will be approached aggressively, with regard to both the development of local and international repertoire."

—Arnold Bahlmann, senior VP, BMG Entertainment International, Central Europe

Eros Ramazzotti marked two milestones in 1996: worldwide sales of 4 million units—including 1.3 million in his native Italy—and the birth of his daughter Aurora. Following the success of last year's album, "Dove C'e Musica," the new dad is due back on the road this year—with a schedule including U.S. dates tentatively set for this summer.

The Netherlands' saxophone-playing pop star Candy Dulfer can claim 2.5 million in worldwide sales for her three albums, "Saxuality," "Sax-A-Go-Go" and "Big Girl." Dulfer is working on material for a new album to be released later this year.

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WHAT ARE THE TERRITORIES of Germany, Switzerland and Austria known for? The answers range from excellent cars to beer and Wiener schnitzel, from soccer stars to Formula One racing, from literature to opera. But pop music? The dominant cliché of the post-War era is that music from the GSA markets is uninspired and light years away from international standards.

"However, the reality of the mid-'90s documents the dynamic and significant developments which have dramatically changed the musical landscape in the GSA region," says Thomas M. Stein, president of BMG Entertainment International, who has presided over the region since 1991. "Germany is not only the third-largest market in the world, we are also one of the world's major repertoire sources. Our product has a permanent place in the top 10 in pop charts all over the world. We have established global acts in all genres of modern music: dance, pop, ethno, techno, rock and hard-rock. 'Krautrock'—believe me—is a relic of the past.

"The increasing success of our product in international markets coincides with renewed awareness..."

Continued on page BMG-36
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“Our product has a permanent place in the top 10 in pop charts all over the world. We have established global acts in all genres of modern music: dance, pop, ethno, techno, rock and hard-rock.

‘Krautrock’—believe me—is a relic of the past.”

—Thomas Stein, president, BMG Entertainment International Germany/Switzerland/Austria

has brought us to the threshold of a new era.

“The story of BMG GSA over the last 10 years is similarly remarkable. BMG Ariola in 1987 was a company with a rich history—but also with a limited repertoire portfolio. Ariola was well-known for German ‘schlager’ and ‘volksmusik’ and became famous for its compilation series, ‘Super 20.’ However, Ariola at that time had not yet developed its experience and know-how in other segments of music.

“The present BMG Entertainment International GSA group is a modern entertainment company with competence and success in all genres. With its network of small, highly motivated, creative A&R units located all over Germany, Switzerland and Austria, BMG is assured of credibility and a high profile in all areas: house music, techno, pop, R&B, soul, rock, German-language rock, comedy, cross-over, metal and more. BMG is the market leader in domestic repertoire in GSA, and we have established 19 different acts internationally in the last decade.

“Starting with Milli Vanilli and Blue System, we went on to develop Snap, Dr. Alban, Haddaway and Bonnie Tyler, and continue our track record with the Real McCoy, Scatman John, La Bouche, H-Blockx and No Mercy. There are more to come.

“With the success of these and countless other artists, we have more than doubled our net revenue performance over the past 10 years,” says Stein.

“Today, we generate 55% of our net revenue with national product, and in several months the figure...
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Viva BMG!

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Continued from page BMG-36

may climb to as high as 80%. We are proud of this result and wish to thank all of our colleagues who have made this tremendous growth possible. We are proud that BMG has played a major role in the historic process of propelling German music onto the global landscape."

Although Stein sees challenges ahead—including the economic stagnation of the GSA market and the need to protect copyrights in the digital age—he predicts that BMG GSA will continue to “discover, develop and establish more acts on a global level.” He is determined “to sharpen the awareness of people all over the world that the GSA countries—in addition to their expertise in automobiles, chocolate, beer and Wiener schnitzel—are leading suppliers of excellent pop and rock music.”

—WOLFGANG SPAHR

BMG ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL, GERMANY/SWITZERLAND/AUSTRIA (GSA)
HEADQUARTERS ▼ Munich
PRESIDENT ▼ Thomas M. Stein

BACKGROUND ▼ Stein has had responsibility for the GSA region since 1991. Prior to that, he was manager of BMG Ariola Munich for three years. From his early days as the branch- and sales director of a media retail chain to his later position as the managing director of Teldec Records, Stein has had a special interest in the development of national repertoire. He has served since 1991 as chairman of the German Phonographic Industry Association and also is chairman of the Robert Stolz Foundation, dedicated to the memory of the famous Ariola opera and operetta composer. Since 1992, he has been an advisory member of Popkomm, and is also a member of the board of the Country Music Association.

OFFICES ▼ Germany, Switzerland and Austria

Continued on page BMG-40
To

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Congratulations on a
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KEY ARTISTS ▼ La Bouche, Die Doofer, Die Prinzessin, Dr. Alban, Haddaway, Patent Ochsner, Peter Maffay, the Real McCoy, Seatman John and Snap.

COMPANY PROFILES ▼ BMG Ariola Munich — was formed in 1958 as the flagship of the Bertelsmann music operation worldwide. Under founder Monti Lof'tner, it has become one of Germany’s leading record labels, representing its popular culture with veteran artists such as Udo-Jürgens and Mirvelle Mathieu (both signed to Ariola for some 30 years), German rock star Peter Maffay, female rock vocalist Julie Neigel and The Seer. During the past 10 years, BMG Ariola Munich has developed a roster of internationally successful dance acts, such as Snap, Dr. Alban and Sparks. The company also is known for its German “schlager” and “volksmusik” repertoire, including Die Flippers, Roger Whitaker, Brunner and Brunner, and for developing Alpine-rock with The Schürzenjäger. BMG Ariola Munich has expanded its roster through partnerships with producers—such as Ralph Siegel and Jack White, who work with artists such as Nicole, Angelika Milter and Haddaway. The company has successfully marketed a range of international artists into Germany from the Arista label, such as TLC, Toni Braxton and the Crash Test Dummies and from BMG affiliates elsewhere in Europe, such as Eros Ramazzotti and Maria Glen.

A wide-reaching network of joint-venture labels has allowed BMG Ariola Munich to achieve success in mainstream and niche markets alike. GUN/Drakkar is home to heavy-metal and hard-rock artists, such as Kreator and Blackeyed Blonde. Chilowig in Cologne, the company’s first joint venture, is known for such artists as comedy star Peter Hofmann. Peter Maffay’s label, Red Rooster, is known for traditional rock, as is Berlin-based K&P Records. MSM Records concentrates on adult-orientated rock and dance.

Goldrush Entertainment develops alternative rock, and the newest joint-venture partner, Bear Music Factory, is active in crossover rock as well as house and dance repertoires. Logic Records, a former joint-venture partner, is now an affiliated company and focuses on dance with the British act Underworld among its best-selling artists.

▼ BMG Ariola Hamburg — was established in 1983 from the former RCA Records. The label now features a growing roster of local artists including Jazzkantast and Seatman John, who has sold more than 6 million units worldwide. The company has marketed RCA’s international repertoire in Germany, achieving success with M People, Annie Lennox, ZZ Top and Take That. It also has issued acclaimed releases from the RCA jazz catalog of recordings by Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Glenn Miller as well as contemporary artists from its own jazz division.

▼ BMG Hansa Musik Produktion — based in Berlin, has established itself as the “House of Pop” through the work of such producers as Frank Draper and Dieter Bohlen, and the international success of such artists as Boney M and Modern Talking. The company’s track record has continued with the more recent international breakthroughs of Real McCoy, Blue System, La Bouche and No Mercy. In the domestic market, Hansa also has achieved success with the German-language band Die Prinzessin. A joint venture formed in 1992 with Sing Sing Records has brought chart-climbing results with H-Blockx, Sin With Sebastian, Luelectric and Die Doofer.

▼ BMG Ariola Austria — is a market leader in Austria thanks to the achievements of its Alpine-rock and pop releases, including best-selling artist Hubert von Goisern and the hit duo Papermoon. The label also recently struck a deal with British singer/songwriter Marianne Faithfull, whose artists primed for international promotion from the company include Count Basie, Trapped Instinct, Alice In The Fields and Paradise Now. The company also has struck joint-venture deals with Spray Records and Reverse Musik Produktion and can claim nearly half of the market’s share of budget releases.

▼ BMG Ariola Switzerland — has enjoyed major domestic sales with artists such as Gotthard and Patent Ochsner, the Bo Katzmann Choir and the Pingüi The Pinguic children’s-audio and video series.

▼ BMG Ariola Classics — has made strides in expanding the traditional classical-music audience. Opera diva Montserrat Caballé had one of the most successful classical albums of 1995 with her release “Hijo De La Luna.” BMG Ariola Classics also promotes and distributes products from BMG Classics’ worldwide labels in Germany, including releases from such artists as Evgeny Kissin, Lorin Maazel, Michael Tilson Thomas and the cast recordings of numerous Broadway productions.

▼ BMG Ariola Media — which was established in 1991, markets special compilations primarily through television advertising. Examples of recent successes include the hit compilations “Just The Best” and “Maxi Dance Sensation,” which each sell more than 250,000 units annually. The company also manages direct-marketing efforts such as Direct Response television activities. For the 25th anniversary of “ZDF Hitparade,” for example, a series of 26 compact discs were created to document the history of the show.

▼ BMG Ariola Miller — was acquired by BMG in 1989 and has specialized in children’s entertainment and budget programming. Its labels, Ariola Express and Ariola Extra, offer compilations in a variety of musical styles. BMG Ariola Miller’s Europa is a well-known brand for quality children’s entertainment. Much of the label’s product is offered to consumers through department stores and trade chains.
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Since the release of La Bouche's debut album, "Sweet Dreams," on Hansa Musikproduktion's MCI label in July 1995, the act has sold more than 4 million units around the world and enjoyed a string of hits in the U.S. A new single, "Bolingo," has set up a new album for release this year.

Peter Maffay's album "96," released by BMG Ariola Munich last March, was the company's most successful German-language album of fiscal 1995-96 with sales of 600,000 units. In the wake of his sold-out tour of theaters and stadiums last year, "Maffay 96 Live" is released this month.
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from your friends at BMG CANADA
IN LATIN AMERICA, there are two priorities for BMG to achieve its maximum potential in the years ahead, says Ramón Segura, senior VP of BMG Entertainment International, Latin Region, and chairman of BMG Entertainment Spain.

"First, we want to increase our participation and investment in contemporary local product in all of the countries in Latin America," he says. "To that end, we are hiring A&R directors for both Ariola and RCA in each of the countries in the region. And the A&R execs will truly be powerhouse [studio] producers, not just administrative executive producers.

"We are doing this to double our percentage of sales of hit product from local artists, which now accounts for 35% to 40% of all BMG sales in Latin America," says Segura.

"Second, we also want to double the sales of international Anglo acts in Latin America, which is now around 25% to 30% of total sales in the region. We have noticed many times that an Anglo act will be successful at radio, but that radio success does not translate into good record sales. Therefore, we are going to establish a sales network dedicated exclusively to work international Anglo product in key Latin American cities, such as Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Buenos Aires.

Continued on page BMG-46
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Continued from page BMG-44

“One of the great long-term objectives of BMG International is to maintain its position as a leader in the dance market,” says Segura. “Los Del Rio’s ‘Macarena,’ which I call a ‘tropic/dance’ song, has sold more than 10 million singles and about 2 to 3 million albums worldwide. There are Latino titles enjoying success in the dance market. The tropic/dance genre has a big future in all international markets as well. It is all part of following the great dance tradition of Ariola.

“And though BMG is the leader in dance, we also have a strong roster of acts, ranging from pop to samba. We have high hopes for Diego Torres, who recently released an album, ‘Luna Nueva,’ which undoubtedly will establish [the Argentina native] as one of the top artists in the region. We have signed Cristian—a pop star from Mexico—as part of a joint venture between BMG U.S. Latin and BMG Ariola Mexico. Ilegales from BMG U.S. Latin is a rap/dance act that is ready to explode.

“Samba group Só Pra Contrariar is our best-selling act in Brazil. And one record that is about to be finished is an album celebrating Juan Gabriel’s 25 years in the business. It’s a double CD of new material, with one CD being a duet disc with Juan Gabriel and [labelmate] Rocío Dúrcal; the other solo disc with only Juan Gabriel. It should come out in February.

“With the exception of Cuba, we have opened offices in all of Latin America, with the latest offices being opened this year in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic and [Costa Rica to cover] Central America,” says Segura. “I hope to open an office in Cuba next year.”

— JOHN LANNERT
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BMG ENTERTAINMENT INTERNATIONAL, SPAIN AND LATIN AMERICA
HEADQUARTERS ▼ Madrid

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT ▼ Ramón Segura

BACKGROUND ▼ Segura also holds the position of chairman of BMG Entertainment Spain. He joined Bertelsmann in 1979 as managing director of Ariola España. He was appointed senior VP of the Latin region in 1991 and chairman of BMG Spain in 1995.

OFFICES ▼ Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, the U.S., Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay.

KEY ARTISTS ▼ Juan Manuel Serrat, Ana Belén, Mecano, Los Del Rio, Juan Gabriel, Roceo Díazal, José José, Bronceo, Jagüernes, Malitita Vecindad, Raúl Di Blasio, Marisela, Ilegal, Guardianes Del Amor, Gali Galliano, Diego Torres, Soda Stereo, Chico Buarque, Gal Costa, Fagoter, Lulú Santors, Só Pra Contrariar and Pablo Jr.

COMPANY PROFILES ▼

▼ BMG Ariola Argentina—has a share of the market that is equally divided among local, Latin and English-language repertoire. The company has its roster such as Diego Torres, Soda Stereo and Auténticos Decadentes, establishing BMG's base in local repertoire. A joint venture with Rave On has given BMG a key position in the dance genre with acts such as Machito Force and Twiggx. BMG Argentina also distributes the MA and M&M labels. The company has offices in Paraguay and Uruguay.

▼ BMG Ariola Discos Brazil—began its operations in 1981. Since 1994, the company has had a joint-venture agreement with Fieldzz Discos. A year earlier, the company launched Code Distribuidora De Entretenimento through a joint-venture distribution agreement. The company also maintains distribution agreements with Gravadora Escola De Samba, GPA, Jazzmania, Universal (formerly MCA), Milan, Natasha Records and Spotlight. It has a strong roster of local talent, including Amado Batista, Chico Buarque, Chicle Con Batana, Gal Costa, Elian, Pablo Jr., Fagner, Pato Fu, Elba Ramalho, Lulu Santors and Só Pra Contrariar.

▼ BMG Ariola De Colmbia—was founded in 1982 and today has offices in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. It is home to such top-selling local artists as Moises Angulo and Galy Galliano.

▼ BMG Bertelsmann De Mexico—traces its origins to the launch of Ariola in Mexico in 1976 and the earlier founding of RCA in the market in 1935. BMG Entertainment International has operated in the market since 1987. Among the company's local artists are Bronceo, Caifanes, Rocéo Díazal, Fobías, Juan Gabriel, Guardianes Del Amor, Alejandro Guzman, José José, Gloria Trevi and Malitita Vecindad.

▼ BMG Ariola Portugal—opened for business in 1989. The company's owned label is Dianamo. It maintains...
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Continued from page BMG-48

a sales and distribution deal with the independent label Farol. It features a local roster that includes Santos E Pecadores, Despe E Sigma and the Delfina.

▼ BMG Entertainment Spain—in the successor to BMG Ariola Spain, which was established in Barcelona in 1970 and subsequently re-established its headquarters in Madrid as part of BMG Entertainment International. A consistent leader in local repertoire, the company boasts an artist lineup that includes performers such as Ana Belén, Los Del Río, Mecano, Joan Manuel Serrat and Joaquín Sabina. Its owned labels include Ariola, RCA and Zaffiro, and the company has distribution agreements with Juan Luis Guerra’s label, Karen Records, as well as Universal (formerly MCA) Records.

▼ BMG U.S. Latin—was launched in 1987 as the successor to the RCA Latin organization to develop, manage and market Spanish-language artists in the U.S. and Puerto Rico from its headquarters in Miami. To develop the Tejano market, BMG Latin also opened a sales and marketing office in San Antonio, Texas in 1994. The roster of BMG U.S. Latin features DiBlasio, El General, Hugas, Mariela and Giselle.

▼ BMG Ariola de Venezuela—opened for business in January 1990, based in Caracas, and in addition to establishing sales, marketing and promotion staffs, the company has begun to build a roster of local artists.

▼ BMG Central America—based in Costa Rica, began operations in October 1996 to oversee the Central American region. It has offices in Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Mexico’s Juan Gabriel, an enormously popular singer, songwriter, producer and performer, has sold some 20 million units since his career began in 1970. Next month, BMG will release an as-yet-unitled double-CD duet album by Juan Gabriel and Spanish vocal star and labelmate Rocío Dúrcal. Naturally, Gabriel wrote and produced the record.

Joaquin Sabina, signed to BMG Spain’s Ariola label, enjoyed global sales of a half-million for his most recent album, “Yo, Mi, Me, Contigo (I, Me, To Me, With Me)”, and has extensive touring plans for 1997, including his first dates in the U.S.
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BMG-56
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Continued from page BMG-52

rounded out by the success of its distribution arm, which Preston says is the U.K.'s largest third-party distributor, along with its Global TV television-merchandising company, its Nice Man Merchandising arm and, of course, BMG Music Publishing, which this fall secured the worldwide rights to administer the extensive and prestigious catalog of BBC Television.

The company's newest arm—video and interactive—has already made its mark. The video division is now breaking out of pure music products and into movie rental and sell-through and has U.K. rights to the recent Robert Altman film "Kansas City," while the interactive division has securd major hits with the games "Pandemonium" and Alan Snow's "Duck City."

Of BMG's standing in the U.K. & Ireland, Preston says, "We are flexible and diverse in an environment where flexibility and diversity have a direct impact on our success in the market." —JEFF CLARK-MEADS

BMG ENTERTAINMENT
INTERNATIONAL, THE UNITED
KINGDOM & IRELAND

HEADQUARTERS ▼ London

CHAIRMAN ▼ John Preston

BACKGROUND ▼ Preston was appointed chairman of BMG Entertainment International U.K. & Ireland in 1998, bringing to the position more than 18 years of industry experience. Prior to heading the U.K. & Ireland company, Preston had worked in various positions at EMI, Decca, London Records and Polydor Records. He is also chairman of the British Phonographic Industry (BPI). In 1990, Preston appointed Jeremy Marsh, previously managing director of RCA Records U.K., to the position of president of BMG U.K. & Ireland's music division. Preston has initiated a policy of founding and acquiring subsidiary labels to bolster the repertoire of BMG in the U.K. Approximately 15 such labels are currently overseen by BMG Entertainment U.K. & Ireland.

OFFICES ▼ Britain, Ireland.

KEY ARTISTS ▼ Annie Lennox, M People, Lisa Stansfield, Gary Barlow, Robbie & Jerome.

COMPANY PROFILES
▼ Arista Records U.K.—was established in 1975 and is home to a variety of U.K.-based acts, including: Tina Braxton, Whitney Houston, Kenny G, Tony Rich and TLC. European acts who have experienced similar success through the U.K. company are Snap and Haddaway. Rhythm King Records was brought into the Arista family in 1996.

▼ BMG/Conifer—was formed in 1996 with the acquisition by BMG of the leading U.K. independent classical producer and distributor, Conifer Records. The new company, BMG/Conifer combines the strength of BMG's existing classical repertoire from the RCA Victor label, among others, with that of Conifer. The company has more than 150 current titles on the Conifer Classic and Royal Opera House imprints.

▼ RCA Records U.K.—has emerged as a significant label in the U.K. through artist development. In 1996, it had the distinction of holding the top three spots on the U.K. singles chart via hits by Robbie & Jerome with "Unchained Melody," Perez Prado with "Guaguancito" and Scatman John with "Scatman." No other single label has accomplished the chart hat-trick since 1965. Among RCA U.K. artists who have achieved worldwide success in recent years are Take That (whose lead singer Gary Barlow makes his solo album debut on the label this year) and Annie Lennox, who enjoyed top-10 status throughout the world with her most
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After scoring Britain’s best-selling album, “Medusa,” other artists on the RCA roster include Black Box, Michele Gayle, Robson & Jerome, Sleeper, the Wannadies, and 60 Ft Dolls.

Global TV—was launched in 1994 to market compilation albums to television advertising. To date, the company has released a line of very successful titles, ranging from “The Dance Tip” to “Vybin” to “Soft Reggae.”

BMG Distribution—based in West Bromwich, handles not only BMG’s owned labels but also repertoire licensed from Universal (formerly MCA) and the independent U.K. labels Telstar, Castle and Mushroom Records, as well as the video labels Astrion and Pearson.

BMG Ireland—based in Dublin and founded in 1987, is the musical home to a number of internationally successful artists marketed through BMG Classics, including the Chieftains and James Galway, as well as Irish artists Clannad and Brian Kennedy.

deconstruction—is the cutting-edge label that joined the BMG family in a joint-venture agreement in 1994 after previously working with the company on the development of the internationally successful M People. The label has been a leader in the dance genre since it was founded in 1983. Its roster also includes Kylie Minogue, The Grid, Republica and Robert Miles. The company last year completed a deal with promising independent label, Heavenly, which has brought Beth Orton to the pop marketplace.

After scoring Britain’s best-selling album, Robson & Jerome saw their new release, “Take Two,” ship double platinum (600,000 units) and sell 190,000 units in the first week after its Nov. 11 release. This year will see the duo starring in a nostalgic musical TV-drama series titled “Ain’t Misbehaving.”
"From an overall business perspective, to maximize our potential, we really want to target the 30 or 35-plus consumer who might know something about classical music, but might also be interested in Broadway and other kinds of music," says Cor Dubois, president of BMG Classics, outlining his strategy in the marketplace.

"The pure classical-music consumer is a very small percentage of the total music market," notes Dubois, "and that piece of the pie is too small to build a business on. So in the last year, we've diversified into different areas, including Broadway, soundtracks, jazz and crossover. Our name is BMG Classics—not Classical—so we play around a little bit with that word. Pure classical music now represents 45% of our business. I think we have enough quality recordings to satisfy the pure classical-music consumer. 70% of our releases are now classical, a percentage that I think will evolve to 50%.

"It boils down to looking for a quality approach rather than a quantity approach," says Dubois. "It is better to do a few things very, very well than a lot of things in a very average way. We have significantly reduced our number of recordings of pure classical repertoire. We focus with stronger marketing and sales execution on a very few artists, on a global basis. We do a lot of training, here in the U.S., in Munich and in other parts of the world, in order to get our people closer to repertoire issues and more involved with marketing, merchandising, sales, advertising and communication techniques.

"And we have to sell, within our own group of people, ideas and projects and concepts based on their own merits, not because they are part of the group. The project has to be strong by itself in order to get the company enthusiastic about it. Lorin Maazel's 'New Year's Concert' is a good example of that. So was the launch of Michael Tilson Thomas on our label, and the way we handle Cirque Du Soleil, working with its management and getting all the partners—the circus, our company, the PR—tied together wherever they are touring.

"We've just finalized a strategy for jazz on a pan-European basis. And in the next couple of years, you will see more attention to musicals—of which we often have exclusive recordings—in parts of the world other than the U.S.," says Dubois.

"We're looking continuously to explore different sales channels. Retail is important, but there are other ways to get to consumers. There are still markets that need a lot of attention, like Latin America, Asia and the Pacific, both from a sales and repertoire point-of-view. We try to implement the right amount of regional artists and repertoire.

"The marketplace is highly competitive, and everyone is fighting for shelf space and retail position. With all that fighting, people forget the big picture, which is that classical music is a severely declining market. The problems are much broader than shelf space. I don't think there's enough excitement. I support the creation of more media events supporting classical music. There can be associations with cultural events, with sporting events and concerts, but there have to be ways to promote classical music in a much more efficient way than has been done in the past, to get it out of its own shell, beyond its very traditional audience and buying public. This is something that is very difficult to achieve on our own, it is an industry issue."

—HEIDI WALESON
BMG CLASSICS

HEADQUARTERS ▼ New York

PRESIDENT ▼ Cor Dubois.

BACKGROUND ▼ Dubois joined BMG in September 1996 as Senior VP of worldwide marketing. From 1991 to 1996, he led the North, Central and South America operations of Baron Philippe de Rothschild Inc., the premium wine producer. Previously, Dubois spent more than eight years with Sopexa, an international marketing firm, where he concentrated on campaigns for the French agricultural industry. From 1980 to 1983, he was product manager for Chiquita at United Brands in Rotterdam. Dubois began his career in sales and marketing at Royal Dutch Shell Oil.

OFFICES ▼ Branch office in Munich and regional offices in more than 30 countries.

KEY ARTISTS ▼ Classical, jazz, adult contemporary and new-age artists include the Chieftains, James Galway, Evelyn Glennie, Marilyn Horne, Vesselina Kasarova, Evgeny Kissin, Cleo Laine, Lorin Maazel and Michael Tilson Thomas.

LABEL PROFILES ▼ RCA Red Seal—has a roster of leading classical artists, including Van Cliburn, James Galway, Leontyne Price, Michael Tilson Thomas, Evgeny Kissin, Richard Stoltzman, Leonard Slatkin, Yuri Temirkanov, Ofra Harnoy, Sir Colin Davis and the Canadian Brass. Recent additions to its artist lineup include emerging names on the classical scene such as cellist Steven Isserlis, percussionist Evelyn Glennie and composer James MacMillan.

▼ RCA Gold Seal—features the legacy of such classical masters as Arturo Toscanini, Jaap van Zweden, Enrico Caruso, Artur Rubinstein and Vladimir Horowitz on reissued recordings.

▼ Living Stereo—is BMG Classics' specialty label, that markets original stereo recordings from the 1950s and 1960s by artists such as Fritz Reiner, Arthur Fiedler, Mario Lanza, Charles Munch and Morton Gould.

▼ deutsche harmonia mundi—was acquired by BMG Classics in 1993 and offers period-instrument recordings by artists such as Sequenzia, Andrew Lawrence-King and The Harp Consort.

▼ Catalyst—which was launched in 1994, is the latest addition to the BMG Classics family of labels, offering a variety of contemporary music by innovative composers and artists. Among the composers who have released recordings on the label are John Corigliano, Philip Glass and Arvo Pärt. Described as a label “dedicated to expanding the popular perception of contemporary music,” Catalyst has showcased artists from around the globe, including composer Steve Martland, Paul Bowles and Orlando Gough, and the a cappella vocal quartet Tony Twining Music.

▼ ECM—is licensed and distributed by BMG Classics in North and South America and is one of the world’s most intriguing classical and jazz labels. Since its founding in 1970, ECM has produced landmark recordings by such musicians as Keith Jarrett and Chick Corea. The label has since recorded contemporary classical music on its New Series imprint, featuring composers Steve Reich, John Adams and Arvo Pärt.

▼ Melodija—the Russian state recording company, signed an exclusive, international long-term licensing and distribution agreement in May 1995 with BMG Classics. The deal has allowed the international release of recordings by renowned Russian artists including Yevgeny Mravinsky, Sviatoslav Richter, Tatiana Nikolai and Mikhail Pletnev, on compact discs mastered with state-of-the-art technology. Many of these recordings are available outside Russia for the first time.

▼ RCA Victor—releases a wide range of repertoire, including jazz, pop, Broadway scores and movie soundtracks. The “Greatest Hits Series” and the “Basic 100 Series” tap the wealth of classic material in the RCA catalog. Through eye-catching thematic packaging, these series are marketed to non-core music audiences with the aim of expanding the classical music market. Also catering to the novice classical buyer is the unique “Idiot’s Guide To Classical Music,” which has topped Billboard’s Top Classical Budget chart for several months. RCA Victor also is a pioneer in the realm of crossover recordings, with a roster of international talent, including James Galway, the King’s Singers, Angel Romero, the Canadian Brass and the Grammy Award–winning Chieftains.

As one of Broadway’s leading labels, RCA Victor’s extensive catalog includes 20 of Stephen Sondheim’s original cast recordings, as well as Broadway hits such as “Fiddler on the Roof,” “Hair,” “Guys & Dolls,” “Grand Hotel” and “The Who’s Tommy.” Recent Broadway recordings include “Grease,” “How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying!” and a live recording of the Tony Award–winning “Bringing In Da Noise, Bringing In Da Funk.”
In the past year, RCA Victor expanded its offerings in jazz by licensing the legendary Bluebird and Novus catalogs. These catalogs contribute repertoire to the "Jazz Greatest Hits" series, which emulates the success of the "Classical Greatest Hits" series and is aimed at the novice jazz buyer. Reissues from the RCA Victor jazz vaults include classic 1960s recordings by Sonny Rollins and Gerry Mulligan and reissues by Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie. Contemporary jazz artists signed by RCA Victor include Tom Harrell, Cleo Laine and Joe Taylor. Increasingly, RCA Victor is also moving into the pop music arena. Releases during the past year include Joan Armatrading's "What's Inside," Midge Ure's "Breath" and "Songs Of Westside Story," featuring an all-star recording cast that includes All-4-One, Phil Collins and Selena.

The release by RCA Victor of the David Arnold score to the 1996 summer blockbuster film "Independence Day" highlighted the label's aggressive move into the world of soundtrack recordings. Past releases include "Die Hard III: Die Hard With A Vengeance" and the soundtrack to the television film "Bye Bye Birdie." New relationships with composers Michael Kamen and George Fenton will bring their forthcoming film scores to RCA Victor.

The Chieftains' acclaimed album "The Long Black Veil" on RCA Victor has sold more than 1.2 million units worldwide and this year will see the veteran Irish ensemble recording a sequel to that collection.

**INTERACTIVE & VIDEO**

The future of entertainment retailing, in the view of BMG, will be an environment in which all entertainment media are sold under one roof. "As a major music company, it makes sense for us to offer our customers not only music but also interactive products and video products," says Gary Dale, who is president of both BMG Interactive International and BMG Video International in London, with responsibility for BMG's involvement in those businesses outside North America. In less than three years, BMG Interactive International has become a significant presence in the interactive marketplace, using the existing global infrastructure of BMG Entertainment International. It follows the success of BMG Video International, which, since its formation in 1989, also has presented new opportunities for BMG beyond music product.

The increasing sophistication of technology for interactive games—with companies such as Sega and Sony moving from 16-bit to 32-bit players—was recognized by BMG in the early '90s as an opening in the marketplace.

"Where there is a complement to BMG's music business, particularly in the games business, is that it's very youth-oriented," says Dale. "As a new media, the..."
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games business was of interest to a music company to understand more about how the youth audience is spending its entertainment money. From a competitive point of view, it made sense for us to be in that business.”

BMG Interactive International has developed much more than games alone. For example, “Le Louvre” CD-ROM, developed by software partner Montparnasse Multimedia, is an international hit with worldwide sales of more than 300,000. Investment in games and other interactive titles is made on a global basis. “Then we work with our local territories on exploiting the products in each country,” says Dale.

“What we’ve been able to do is use the efficiency of the music company in running the interactive business,” Dale continues, “in terms of financial support systems, warehousing and distribution systems. But where there is a big difference in how you market the product, you need specialists who are dedicated to interactive. And in terms of product development and acquisition, that’s very different than the A&R process in music, so we have dedicated specialists in interactive.”

In contrast to the interactive business, BMG Video International began as a direct offshoot of the record business, with an emphasis on longform music video, based on music products from the BMG labels.

“That has evolved into its own business where, to develop the business, we’ve looked at special-interest videos, children’s properties and then, ultimately, the independent film market—where we’re acquiring film rights in certain territories,” says Dale. “That’s very much a locally driven strategy, so the idea of acquiring rights to a movie depends on market conditions in territories such as Germany, the U.K., Italy, Spain or Latin America.”

The recent merger of Bertelsmann’s UFA Film And Television with Audioworx’s CLT has created Europe’s biggest television company—and new possibilities for future film-rights acquisitions for BMG Video International, says Dale.

Dale says BMG is also looking at the opportunities created by the growth of multimedia PCs and the development of online services. (Parent company Bertelsmann has a joint-venture stake in America Online for the European market.)

“We believe this is the future of the business,” says Dale of the new technologies. “When you look at the generation of children who are growing up today, they will be as familiar with the computer as we are with the telephone today. BMG is positioned to understand this business and make the most of it as it develops over the next five or 10 years.” —THOM DUFFY
BMG INTERACTIVE INTERNATIONAL
HEADQUARTERS ▼ London
PRESIDENT ▼ Gary Dale

BACKGROUND ▼ Dale joined BMG in 1994 with responsibility for building an interactive company within the existing international network of music-company subsidiaries, covering more than 50 countries worldwide. He added responsibility for BMG Video International in 1996. Prior to joining BMG, Dale spent five years at Buena Vista Home Video, a division of the Walt Disney Company.

OFFICES ▼ Sales and marketing presence in 20 countries, with a focus on

Australia, the Benelux markets, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Scandinavian markets, Spain and the U.K. The division's strategy calls for providing local companies with a combination of local and international product flow and distributing directly to key retailers involved with new-media titles.

KEY PRODUCT AREAS ▼ Games, infotainment, children's titles and music videos.

COMPANY PROFILE ▼ BMG Interactive International—since its creation in 1994 has established relationships with more than 20 leading interactive developers, including: Berkeley Systems, Boss Games, Crystal Dynamics, DMA, Interactive Studios, Lobotomy, Montparnasse, New Level, Virtual Music, Z-Axis, Zombie and others. Among the division’s most successful interactive titles are “Le Louvre,” which has sold more than 300,000 copies; “Exhumed,” a European best-seller; “Off World Interceptor” and “Total Eclipse,” which have sold 60,000 and 50,000 units respectively. New product titles include “Musee D’Orsay,” “Spider,” “Legacy Of Cain,” “Pandemonium” and “Alan Snow’s Duck City.” Along with establishing key titles in games and multimedia, BMG Interactive International is seeking to build brand lines in other media including radio, television and merchandising.

BMG VIDEO INTERNATIONAL
HEADQUARTERS ▼ London
PRESIDENT ▼ Gary Dale

BACKGROUND ▼ (See BMG Interactive International).

OFFICES ▼ Distributed home-video product in more than 40 countries worldwide with a focus on Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, Latin America, Spain, Switzerland and the U.K.

KEY PRODUCTS ▼ Music videos, feature films, children’s and special-interest titles.

COMPANY PROFILE ▼ BMG Video International—created in 1989, was formed primarily as a distributor of music-based video product and has since diversified into the children’s special-interest and feature-film genres. BMG Video International has built a network of strong local video companies driven by indigenous video product, primarily in the film, special-interest, television-product and children’s categories. The division has coordinated its acquisition activity to maximize efficiency worldwide while maintaining its territory-based focus.

The company has created one of the world’s leading distribution networks for music videos released on VHS and Laser Disc, featuring product from such labels as Mute, Universal (formerly MCA), GRP and Geffen, among others, as well as from BMG’s owned labels, including Arista, Ariola and RCA. Among the acts whose video titles have been released on the BMG Video International roster are Aerosmith, Annie Lennox, U2, Whitney Houston, Depeche Mode, the Rolling Stones and Guns N’ Roses. In the U.K., recent video releases from hot BMG acts Robson and Jerome and Take That have each sold more than 400,000 units.

From its headquarters in London, BMG Video International has undertaken an aggressive expansion into non-music product. The company’s strategy is to acquire select video-distribution rights to major films, primarily English-language, and ship this product through BMG’s existing music-distribution channels. Theatrical and television partnerships in Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain and the U.K. have enabled BMG Video International to expand its feature-film acquisitions significantly. The division has acquired video rights in certain territories to more than 300 feature films, including “Pulp Fiction” and “Star Trek,” which has sold more than 300,000 units in Germany.

Among the company’s children’s titles are the Emmy Award–winning “Peter And The Wolf,” which has sold more than 300,000 units worldwide, the Academy Award–winning Walla and Gromit series, which has sold more than 60,000 units in France, the “Wind In The Willows” series, “Pingu The Penguin,” which has sold some 300,000 units worldwide, and “Felix The Cat,” which has sold more than 60,000 units worldwide.
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Two To Tango
Joint ventures enable BMG Entertainment International to achieve global reach and keep a keen eye out for local talent

By Thom Duffy

It is a reality of the modern entertainment business that a company must have the marketing and distribution muscle to reach around the world, while nurturing the entrepreneurial creative spirit to spot promising talent down the street.

BMG Entertainment International has achieved this balance, in part, through a wide network of joint-venture partnerships with smaller, creatively driven record companies. The joint-venture relationship, in the view of Rudi Gassner, president and CEO of BMG Entertainment International, is a way to keep a company's A&R source for new repertoire—and spark that entrepreneurial drive.

The financial structures of joint-venture deals are not always made public. Typically, the agreements allow a smaller record company to maintain its independent identity and creative status while gaining the support of sales, distribution, business affairs and other strengths from its BMG partnership. It has the added benefit of allowing a BMG company to quickly tap into a segment of the music market where it has not yet developed its own artist roster.

BMG has numerous joint-venture arrangements. In the regional market of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, BMG’s partnership with Berlin-based Sing Sing has led to the development of hit acts as Lucelectric, H-Blockx and Die Doofen. In the Latin market, BMG Ariola Argentina was able to become a leader in the dance market with artists Machito Ponce and Tiggx through its joint venture with Rave On.

And at BMG Entertainment International U.K. & Ireland, one of the company’s most successful joint partnerships is with the deconstruction label, headed by Keith Blackhurst and Pete Hadfield. Initiated as a licensing deal through RCA in the U.K. in 1988, the relationship became a 50:50 joint venture in 1994 and, most recently, deconstruction has established its own marketing and promotion departments as a stand-alone label, while sales, distribution and international exploitation continue to flow through BMG.

What the joint-venture partnership gives deconstruction, says Blackhurst, is “the muscle and organizational power of a major with the freedom to act totally independent.”

Hadfield credits John Preston, chairman of BMG Entertainment International U.K. & Ireland, for initiating the relationship in the late '80s. “The first thing we started to do with BMG is develop M People,” says Blackhurst of the critically acclaimed dance-pop act, which has sold more than 2 million albums in the U.K. alone.

“Then the relationship solidified as we had success,” says Blackhurst. “We always had the idea of trying to remain independent but realized that in the world of the '90s, you need the muscle of a major behind you.”

But why BMG? “We had a history with them,” replies Blackhurst. “We knew the top management—Rudi Gassner and Michael Dornemann and John Preston. BMG has a very strong tradition of encouraging entrepreneurs.

“They’ve never interfered with anything creative, at all; they’ve just been very supportive,” says Blackhurst. “One of the nicest things about BMG is that they’re very open for international expansion. They don’t think in just domestic terms.”

With the success that deconstruction has seen with M People in the U.S. and, more recently, with Republica, the label is looking at expanding its presence in America. “When Pete [Hadfield] and I go to them with a quantum-leap idea,” says Blackhurst, “they’ll go, ‘OK, you haven’t let us down in the past.’”

It is notable that deconstruction is now developing its roster through creative partnerships of its own, such as a deal with Jeff Barrett’s Heavenly label, which has released Beth Orton’s acclaimed debut album, “Trailer Park.”

“I’m a great believer that if you’re going to get involved with A&R people, you’ve got to leave them to their own devices,” says Blackhurst. “We’ve done that with Jeff, and he’s proven absolutely bang on it. We’ve backed Jeff up—like BMG did with us in the early days.”

CREDITS

BMG executives interviewed by Billboard staff and correspondents. Regional and divisional profile information provided by BMG Entertainment International. Artist Closeup information compiled by Geoff Burpee in Hong Kong, Christie Eliezer in Melbourne, Howell Lewellyn in Madrid, Steve McClure in Tokyo, Paul Sexton in London, Wolfgang Spahr in Hamburg, Ken Stewart in Dublin, Robert Tilli in Amsterdam, and Billboard Latin American bureau chief John Lannert. Photo research by Porter Hall in Los Angeles and Terri Horak in New York.

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BMG-66
BILLYBOARD JANUARY 25, 1997
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and
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Atlanta, Georgia
WACO BROTHERS
Cowboy In Flames
Editor: Josie Done
Bleedsheet 015

Half-accurately described in the press as "half Cash, half Clash," the Waco Brothers are actually half Clash and half Stones, with a dash of Cash and a helping of Hanks tucked in. Having said all this, the Waco Brothers are an extremely talented band whose sound is possibly defined most by the work of Bob "Truckin" Dylan, haunted by the ghosts of old country music, and soaked soul-deep in the blues. To make matters worse, the group's originals are so consistently inspired they come across as instant classics (witness "See Willy Fly By," "Waco Express," "Out There A Ways," "Concho Country Music," the Bob Dill-eyesque "Out In The Light," and the title track). And to make matters bet- ter, the Waco Brothers are mostly British musicians who made their mark with such bands as the Mekons, Jesus Jones, and E.M.F. and currently reside outside of Chicago. To figure it out: 237-248-8709.

YOLK
Individually Twisted
PRODUCER: David Santeri
Lauritelle
Tracker Fries 336

Seemingly update New York alter- nation rock band Yolk energizes that rapidly ossifying subgenre with funky horns, electric guitars, and an eclectic outlook. Sidestepping their generally unimpressive compositions, more promising albums are being crafted upon building punky funk grooves, with dashes here and there of punk-rock and even ska. In short, Yolk is marked by unfashionable notions of strong musicianship, highlights include the group's Continue Mr. and horns on "Infinity," the '70s funk guitarists paired with doom-rants on "Catacata," the irresistibly sultry soul of "Blotter," and the metalloids and lively horn charts of "Into The Unknowns."

DANIELLE'S MOUTH
PRODUCER: Joe Martin
Honeymoon 5556-5542

Late-90's title is the debut by New York rock band Danielle's Mouth, whose front woman, Danielle Gerrie, has a potent voice and passionate delivery variously reminiscent of Pat Benatar, Kate Bush, and Courtney Love. Highlights of an artfully produced debut by Joe Martin (industry veteran Armin van Helden's artist and co-producer) "You've Been Gone," the dramatic "Forgive Me This" (featuring Maria McKee), "Lady Jones," and "Crush." Contact: 212-Non-Contact.

JAZZ

JOE LOVANO
Celebrating Sinatra
PRODUCER: Joe Lovano
Blue Note 7718

Joe Lovano's latest wispy trend is a mixture of hot tunes and cool tunes with interpretations of O'Blue Eyes standards. Lovano's expressive and at times conversational vocal is a familiar trait with themes like "My Way," "My Funny Valentine," and the title track, "The Thrill Is Gone." This is a quiet and tender affair with low-key tuneful instrumentals, creating a mood above a musical whisper. It's a quietly enjoyable counterpoint to the comparably raucous sounds.

LATIN

JOSE LUIS AYALA
Entre Pecho Y Espada
PRODUCER: Pedro Alvaro
Ponencia 9517

Backed by sweet instrumental and vocal support from Marti Aguila De America, underrated Mexican vocalist enriches another beraeous flamenco of mostly anacronistic themes with folkloric sensibilities. Best radio candidates are melancholy, mid-tempo narrative "Quisiera Ser A Ti," the lush "A Quien Me Recomendaras," and the title track.
THE OFFSPRING All I Want (1:44)
PRODUCER: Dave De支线
PUBLISHER: Unقبضحاء/Warn/WACAP
COLUMBIA
The time has come for this rambunctiously punk rock outfit to commandeer pop radio, and they are doing it to the point. Offspring successively squeezes more quality music and clever lyrics in less than two minutes than a lot of bands can accomplish within the average four-minute entry. Something to ponder while you thrash through this catchy, anthemic, which is already a smash at rock radio. From the band's hotly anticipated Columbia album, "Icky Thump.

LE CLICK Call Me (3:44)
PRODUCER: Uli Breaz
WRITERS: Andra Shura
PUBLISHER: not listed
REVIEWER: Jason, Jarvis D. Fireman
DIG: 57266 (c/o BMG cassette single)
The follow-up to "Tonight Is the Night" has an equal amount of pop VRG bouncy. Singer Kayo Shekoni scores the right balance of pop and diva bombast, while still appealing hits by a La Chupe in recent months, there are more muscular and imaginative house mixes by Juno Vassallo and Usher Freeman. A telling preview of the set's imminent full-length debut.

SABELLE One O'Clock (no timing noted)
PRODUCER: not listed
WRITERS: not listed
PUBLISHER: not listed
REVIEWER: Larry 8750 (no timing noted)
Sharp-eared listeners will remember this lovely pop ingenue from her brief tenure at Tony Boy Records a year or so ago. She starts an exciting new entry on the pop charts with this slickly, playfully retro dance anthem. She purrs and vamps with an ordinary pop artist, although she has a nifty horn section and jiggly guitars, and rumbling percussion. With a large number of pop princesses now facing their own retirement, in fact before its release, the future of Sabelle looks mighty promising. She was appearing videoclip directed by the famed Randee St. Nicholas, and you have an artist who will not be ignored.

JOSEE If Tomorrow Never Comes (no timing listed)
PRODUCER: not listed
WRITERS: not listed
PUBLISHER: not listed
REVIEWER: Joe D. Shuka
CIENTO 54344 (cassette single)
This charming, Oklahoma-bred male vocal quartet takes on a song made famous by Garth Brooks and wraps it in lush harmonies a la ABBA-one. The music glittens with a sleek-clean power-pop ballad sound, with a chest-pounding, soulful lead vocals to satisfying dramatic heights. This single has a multi-format smash attack etched all over.

JAMIROQUAI Cosmic Girl (4:35)
PRODUCERS: Jay Kay, Ray Stone
WRITERS: KayQA
PUBLISHER: EAEAMA-Blackwood, BMG
REMIXER: Dave Scott (remix)
WAX: 29678 (no timing noted)
Despite a string of singles that never hit the critical mark, Jamiroquai had this one right in the major top ten success here that it has in its native U.K. That could change with the onset of this first official from the band's new "Traveling Without Moving" set. Mastermind Jay Kay and Co. reunite classic soul nuggets with the disco-soaked house music that has everyone gleeing two-dimentionally. This version sparkles with live instrumentation that breathes considerable depth into the chore, while the background mixes in a more glossy tone that will sound awesome on a crowded club floor.

PHIL J. FEATURING TONY TIGER Got Next Door (3:55)
PRODUCERS: Phil J., Tony J. Compers
PUBLISHER: STEPPED UP/STEPPED UP
UNSTOPPABLE/Track House 011 (ID single)
Nothing special, but a good case for his promise to prominence as a pop/hiphop lothario. Spurred by the track's jazzy R&B texture, he chants words that are riddled with no reason. There's no "freaking" going on here. His production by Tony Tiger, who gives us the track the feel of a couple baddies hangin' out on a street corner. Already playing the interest of a handful of pop programmers on the East Coast, this single is ready to roll out and grab the attention of top contemporaries. Contact: 310-286-6828.

SHARLA Secret Lover (5:24)
PRODUCERS: Lyn D. (lyrics), Tori Gabbard (music)
PUBLISHER: J. Brummet
 وه: 978661 (c/o Sony) (cassette single)
Not much to say about this one, just a lot of chatter. Sharla is already a star in her native Romance, and in her quest for Eurodance hits by a La Chupe in recent months, there are more muscular and imaginative house mixes by Juno Vassallo and Usher Freeman. A telling preview of the set's imminent full-length debut.

TRACY BYRD Don't Take Her, She's All I Got (3:21)
PRODUCER: Tracy Byrd
WRITERS: J. Williams, G. Banks
PUBLISHERS: Sony Mills/Big Dog Entertainment/Exclusiv.
MADE: 01010 (ID single)
This is a sweet single from Rising Tide's new trio, whose members are guitarists, producers, and former Restless Heart drummer John Dittrich. This well-written tune has the production magic that marked Restless Heart's best work, yet it boasts a fresh, different twist and a slightly rarer flavor that works extremely well. Country programmers may like what they hear enough to start a baffalo stampede.

MARTINA MCBRIDE Cry On The Shoulder (no timing noted)
PRODUCERS: Maritina McBride, Paul Worley, Ed Steady
WRITERS: J. Banks, J. Worley
PUBLISHERS: Sony
MADE: 97723 (ID single)
McBride has a powerful way with a torched ballad, and she really lets go on this sour-fried folio tune about a woman leaving a dead-end relationship. She does not sing perfectly at vulnerability, she opens up and pours her heart out during such the song's right turn, especially the line "I can remember the way on the highway with no one to share my load and cry on the shoulder of the road." By Montana Berg and Tim Krekel, this is an affecting ballad, ripe with emotion, and McBride's performance should make it a bona-fide hit.

THE BOUFFALO CLUB If You Don't Love Me (1:33)
PRODUCER: Barry Beckert
WRITERS: T. Key, J. Stead
PUBLISHERS: Vilinx/Elektra/Atlantic
MADE: 94572 (ID single)
Allan follows his debut single, "Her Man," with a fleetly uptempo from his Decca debut, "Used Heart For Sale." Jim Lauderdale and Frank Dysce wrote this lively number about a man who just can't seem to get over his former flame. Allan infuses the tune with both heartbreak and resilience, creating an enjoyable little record.

COUNTRY

TRACY BYRD Don't Take Her, She's All I Got (3:21)
PRODUCER: Tracy Byrd
WRITERS: J. Williams, G. Banks
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MADE: 01010 (ID single)
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WINK Are You There? (1:44)
PRODUCER: J. Tejak
WRITERS: Wink
PUBLISHERS: Wink/Lena TRAHAN/ASCAP
MADE: 20776 (ID single)

"Tonight Is The Night" is a song by The Offspring. It is the lead single from their third studio album, "Smash" (1994). The song was written by guitarist Matt Skiba and drummer and vocalist Tony Tiger. It features prominent horns, jiggly guitars, and rumbling percussion, adding a lively and playful atmosphere to the track. The Offspring's distinctive sound is further enhanced by the catchy guitar riffs and driving bassline, making it a popular choice for rock radio and live performances. The song's success propelled the album to become one of the best-selling rock albums of the 1990s.
PARIS NOIR: AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE CITY OF LIGHT
By Tyler Stewart
Houghton Mifflin, 356 pages, $24.95

By Maryann Yale
Back Bay Books/Little, Brown And Co., 411 pages, $13.95

SAN FRANCISCO: THE MUSICAL HISTORICAL TOUR: A GUIDE TO OVER 200 OF THE BAY AREA’S MOST MEMORABLE MUSIC SITES
By Joel Selin
Chronicle Books, $12.95

THE COMPLETE ANNOTATED GILBERT & SULLIVAN
by Mark C. Glassman and edited by Ian Bradley
Oxford University Press, 1,197 pages, $39.95

Those who recognize the thrust of the past may never perceive the threshold of the future. History has boundaries—often invisible but always enduring—and they help determine what will rise, flourish, or collapse in a heap of history’s assumptions.

"Paris Noir" is a beautifully researched and written chronicle of black American artists, writers, musicians, and political activists who gravitated to that European city during this century of fruitful quest of art and creative liberty often elusive in the States. Given the mystique of the destination for figures as historically far-ranging as jazz singer/songwriter of the 20th century, and urbanist author of Paris Noir," it’s safe to say that the book is a valuable addition to the literary landscape. The book is well written, and the author has a keen eye for detail.

Unlike the movie, this reportorial tour de force by former Rolling Stone writer Maryanne Violette explores the exacting narrative of a life and times. The book is a fascinating read, and it provides an excellent guide for those interested in the history of the city. It is also a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of Paris Noir.

The complete annotated Gilbert & Sullivan is a fascinating read, and it provides an excellent guide for those interested in the history of the city. It is also a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of Paris Noir.

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BILLBOARD JANUARY 25, 1997

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McDermott (Continued from page 57)
down.

McDermott might not have been heard from again had it not been for his friendship with top Canadian concert promoters Bill Ballard and Michael Cohl, then operating BCL Entertainment. The pair now manage McDermott under the company Step Entertainment.

"Friends laughed when I said I was going to manage McDermott," says Ballard. "However, it's been very rewarding to have such success with him."

Ballard and his friend Stewart Ravenhill offered to approach several labels on the singer's behalf. A few days later, Ravenhill played the album for EMI Music Canada president Deane Cameron, who immediately agreed to release it.

"When I heard the story of him playing at the dinner for Ronald Reagan, I went, "Sold. This guy's booked.""

McDermott initially received a national boost with airplay and an appearance on CBC Radio's top-rated program "Peter Gzowski's Morning-side."

"I read the liner notes to see who he was and saw that the CD was put together with the assistance of Conrad Black and Bill Ballard," recalls the show's music producer at the time, Nancy Franklin. "I went, 'Who is this guy!' When I heard the story of him playing at the dinner for Ronald Reagan, I went, 'Sold. This guy's booked.' He has one hell of a voice. Bob Peter and our audience loved it. I had John back another five times."

A 10-minute profile on the CBC-TV national news program "Primetime" a few weeks later gave McDermott's record sales a shot in the arm. "After being featured on 'Morning-side' and 'Primetime,' the album just took off," says McDermott. "We sold 50,000 copies before I'd formally signed the record deal."

McDermott plans to begin recording a new album in May, with a Canadian release slated for September. No U.S. release has been set yet.

BRIT AWARDS
(Continued from page 62)

Own's Underworld, next to Morrison, Sony 52's Jamiroquai, and Virgin's the Chemical Brothers.

Best international group nominees are Boyzone, the Pogues, the Presidents Of The United States Of America, R.E.M., and Smashing Pumpkins; the international male solo category features the artist formerly known as Prince, Babyface, Bryan Adams, Beck, and Robert Miles. The international female award will be between Toni Braxton, Neneh Cherry, Sheryl Crow, Celine Dion, and Joan Osborne.

The Brit Awards take place Feb. 21 at London's Earl's Court and will be televised the following evening by ITV. Sony Music TV will release a 40-track compilation featuring this year's nominees, "Brits '97-The Album Of The Year," in the U.K. Feb. 10.
THE U.S. CONTINGENT
EUROPE'S MUSIC MARKETPLACE
ASIA'S OPPORTUNITIES
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THE LATIN ANGLE
Songwriting Myth #238

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The frenetic atmosphere of France’s MIDEM draws music executives from around the globe, each with a different agenda. Some seek the perfect sub-publishing partner or export partner in a dream territory, others unveil their latest release schedules. The floor of the Palais, MIDEM’s principal site, comes teeming with the trade fair’s own rich history. Many of the world’s most significant record companies and record publishers set up booths in the Palais, with their magical moments enabling one to connect. For Triloka, presently in a joint venture with Mercury, Ever says MIDEM is “strictly a finished-goods export deal.” He will be presenting Triloka’s new Jai Uttal record, as well as the latest from the multi-ethnic group Tuku.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

Many independent labels contacted for this article, who might ordinarily have attended, expressed regret that a MIDEM visit was beyond their means due to the fiscal hardships of the past 12 months. For his part in the proceedings, Tom West, label manager of San Francisco imprint New Albion, says, “There is nothing extraordinary to accomplish (at MIDEM), but you can be sure the topic of conversation this year will be the floundering and sagging of the entire music industry. There’s certainly enough discussion for any project, and I think that it’s happening in Europe too.”

“New Albion has sold relationships around the world,” continues Welsh. “We’re distributed in 25 countries, and, in 22 to 22 of these, we’re confident and enthused about our relations. MIDEM gives us the chance to see our friends from the other side of the planet. For a label of our size, a licensor isn’t looking to get rich from our product, so finding kindred spirits is important.”

MAKING A MAJOR STATEMENT

Major-label players from the U.S. feed on that same high energy. David Renzer, still in his first year as president of MCA Music Publishing, will utilize MIDEM as a forum to showcase his company’s assertive growth policies. He describes his plans for Cannes: “While some might question the tangible value of the deal-making at MIDEM, for us, it’s important to make a statement. We’re going to be at MIDEM in force; we’re going to have all of the MDs of our company attend. We’ve flying in about 30 people in all—a significant contingent. That’s a big investment for a company, but we’re looking to get the maximum bang for the buck. As a publishing company, we’re going to have an evening to which we’ll invite all of the international attorneys that attend MIDEM, as well as some of the international MCA people, from the record companies and the Special Products division.”

“It’s a chance for me to spend some quality time with my international staff,” says Renzer. “We’ll have time to address growth strategies, as MCA is being very aggressive internationally. We’re going to announce some exciting deals that we’ve just closed, such as representing the Eptif catalog for the world outside North America, and MCA-LMs when we can actually meet up with people like Brett Gurewitz of Epitaph and spend one-on-one time with them. “We’ve got a lot of international releases coming up; and there are tentative big-name deals that we’re going after. Some of the international signings that have been made out of our European office are in direct competition with our North American bidding wars. We’ve signed one of the members of Prodigy, Paul Connelly, out of our U.K. office; now they’re over in MTL and we’re going to make some major labels in a fierce bidding war to sign the act.”

“We’re going to keep everyone in the loop as to international signings. What will work in one territory might cross over into another. There’s a culturally fascinating chase that we’re going to be involved in, an act out of our Swedish office to that act selling huge amounts of albums in Japan.”

TOKYO—Despite MIDEM Asia’s having established itself as a must-attend music-business conference in this part of the world, key players in the Japanese industry make a point of attending the annual Cannes convention. Moreover, the potential of the Asian market has led MIDEM to consider the establishment of its own satellite show. In terms of overseas labels or products, Toku Mediaworks, Inc., notes that, while MCA has its own operations in every major territory around the world, there are still some emerging markets—Southeast Asia, for instance—that MIDEM will begin attending. “We see potential in the Japanese market. We’re trying to get into it,” she says.

FORBIDDEN TERRITORIES

The potential to open new markets is a major draw for MIDEM participants. Renzer notes that, while MCA has its own operations in every major territory around the world, there are still some emerging markets—Southeast Asia, for instance—that MIDEM will consider attending. “We see potential in the Japanese market. We’re trying to get into it,” she says.

Given MIDEM Asia’s having established itself as a must-attend music-business conference in this part of the world, key players in the Japanese industry make a point of attending the annual Cannes convention. Moreover, the potential of the Asian market has led MIDEM to consider the establishment of its own satellite show. In terms of overseas labels or products, Toku Mediaworks, Inc., notes that, while MCA has its own operations in every major territory around the world, there are still some emerging markets—Southeast Asia, for instance—that MIDEM will consider attending. “We see potential in the Japanese market. We’re trying to get into it,” she says.
Beauty is in the ear of the beholder.

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MIDEM Asia Takes Opportunities To Promote Product And Branch Out

BY IAN SITTING

HAMBURG—More than 100 German companies will be participating at MIDEM this year, the largest contingent to date from a European country. The joint German-industry stand, financed by the country’s Economics Ministry, will host 67 companies, including the rights society GEMA from their Hong Kong office, along with the Federal Phonographic Association (BPI).

German IFPI chairman Wolf D. Grombke, at whose initiative this participation came about, sees particular opportunities for the Germans now that more domestic productions from the country are finding their way onto the international charts worldwide.

Dr. Hans-Henning Wittgen, managing director of the German Music Publishers Association (DMV), attributes the great success of the joint industry stand to his association’s initiative. After all, he says, the Music Publishers Association managed to persuade the German federal government more than 10 years ago to support its presence at MIDEM.

Wittgen says this stand gives small music publishers their first opportunity to present their titles on an international level. The chart successes over the past few years are the sweetest reward for DMV’s international commitment to its authors and publishers, he says.

Peter Zombik, managing director of the Phonographic Association, says the joint German-industry stand “has increasingly become an important forum for representing German interests. The inclusion this year for the first time of the Phonographic Academy, the Federal Publishing are both sending representa-

tives from their Hong Kong offices to MIDEM, although they see the event fulfilling a rather different role for the majors compared to the independents. EMI Publishing SE Asia regional managing director Susanna Ng sees it as a fine public-relations opportunity.

“I don’t expect to do deals at MIDEM,” she says, “but it’s a great chance to meet our clients, lawyers and other publishers and let them know what EMI Publishing is doing in Asia.”

Sony Music Asian Region director of business administration Andy Grainge agrees with Ng’s analysis. “MIDEM is a great marketplace for independents, but majors are more likely to work via their offices,” he says. He admits it is still “difficult” to sell Asian artists in the West but will be promoting Sony acts like Taiwanese star Coco Lee, Thai singer Nakhra and Filipino rocker Wolfgang at MIDEM.

It seems MIDEM attendance is fast becoming essential for Asia’s major players. Alex Liu, managing director of Hong Kong-based distributor City Sound, certainly wouldn’t argue. City Sound has attended MIDEM for 10 years.

“It’s not just about making deals,” says Liu. “We need to keep up our profile and have our name in the guide book. What on Earth would our important international partners think if we weren’t at MIDEM?”

By WOLFGANG SPAIR

Dr. Hans-Henning Wittgen, DMV

Among The Largest Markets, Germany Aims Higher Than Ever

HERBERT KOLLSCH, Interfood

Among the largest

markets, Germany

aims higher than ever in

the licensing area.

The opening of new branch offices in Indonesia, the Philippines and Australia, as well as to sign new artists and clients, label deals.

“We’ve always come to MIDEM, but this is the first time we’ve exhibited,” says label manager Cheery Chang. “We aim to raise awareness of Rock outside Asia and promote our recent developments in the areas of international repertoire, satellite communications and regional publishing.”

Singapore’s Form Private, like Rock, is a regular MIDEM attendee that’s exhibiting for the first time this year. Form currently holds label deals with Zonia, edel, Telstar and midw and is looking to add to the list.

“MIDEM is always challenging, because you never know what’s going to hit you—be it a great new licensing deal or a partner,” says label manager Alan Tan. “But MIDEM has always been very successful for us, and we hope to secure and sign more suitable labels and artists for the Asian territories.”

GLOBAL IMPORTS

Most Asian companies are looking to license international repertoire for their domestic markets, particularly the ballads and easy-listening melodies soft rock of which Asia is so fond. Yet a few labels, such as Thailand’s Bakery Music, have a more ambitious agenda.

“We want to branch out and sign more different kinds of music into Asia, such as alternative rock,” says Bakery’s Krisada Sukosol Clapp. “But the Asian market is very conservative, so we know we have to introduce these new [styles] gradually. We also want to make deals to license Bakery artists into Europe, so we’ve been trying to develop a one-way street.

“Naturally, we’re looking for Western music to license into Asia, both as a record company and a publisher,” says managing director Anders Nelson. “But we’re also playing companies tapes of our artists, such as Wayjina, who’s a female folk-rock star who can sing in Mandarin and English.”

Kinn Music Publishing of South Korea is typical of many Asian companies which are going to MIDEM wearing both record label and publisher hats. International publishing director Jeeunow Jin signed a raft of label deals at MIDEM ’96 and says that, this year, she wants to license out some of the 170 Korean songwriters she represents. “Some of our dance tunes could do well in the West,” she says.

Yui Wang of Taipei-based publisher Target, international intends to license product from the U.S. into Taiwan and is how well we hit the taste of the world,” he says.

GEMA’s presence at MIDEM “under-
scores its drive for a more intensive European and global dialogue on the role of music and especially the status of copyright holders,” says spokesman Dr. Hans Geyer. Accordingly, the rights society will work closely with its international counterparts, particularly its French affiliate, SACEM/SORIF, to highlight copyright issues, specifically the demand for full protection of all copyrights on the internet and other forms of digital exploitation.

“Music markets can only prosper in the future if technological progress harmonizes with the fundamental principles of copyright law,” says Geyer.

Peer music’s European chief, Michael Kamnstedt, says that years of attending MIDEM “have shown that these numerous meetings pay off. International con-

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MIDEM

Labels And Artists From FRANCE Prepare For An International Audience

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

PARIS—Two of the largest collective stands at MIDEM will be bringing together a number of record companies, under the aegis of the two producers' collecting societies SCPP and SPPR. France is also represented by another stand bringing together the performing rights society SACEM, the artists society ADAMI, FCM-Fund For Musical Creation and an Export France platform. The latter will include the French Export Office from Paris, the FMI from New York and IPR-US for Diffusion.

For Marie-Agnès Beau, executive director of the French Export Office, MIDEM is a key event in the international calendar: “We are doing a lot of field work at MIDEM,” says Beau. “It’s the right place to meet with international media, labels from everywhere and foreign distributors. We are doing a lot of promotion on-site for all the French acts performing in Cannes. Our goal is to get as many international professionals as possible to attend the concerts of French artists.”

MIDEM’s promotional appeal is very strong, and can be very positive for artists, according to Beau, because of the presence of media, tour promoters, festival programmers and labels. But, she warns, “If you don’t prepare your event in advance, just forget it; you’ll get nowhere. To have a successful MIDEM, you have to get in touch with the right people before MIDEM and inform them, do some local promotion, create a buzz for your act.”

MIDEM is above all, a meeting place for music publishers. Nicolas Galibert, managing director of Sony Music Publishing France, says that each year the idea of going to MIDEM seems like a burden but admits that, once there, he enjoys every moment. Galibert values MIDEM mainly for the international perspective it offers.

“During MIDEM, we usually have international meetings with the other Sony Music Publishing affiliates’ representatives,” he says. “It’s an artistic-oriented meeting during which we present our projects. I usually take advantage of MIDEM being held in France to bring along a couple of our artists or composers. Last year, film-score composer Philippe Sarde came to MIDEM. It’s a very efficient and pleasant way to catch the attention of our affiliates.”

MIDEM is also the place to discuss issues concerning the music industry. Jean Davoust, president of Warner Chappell Music France, has been working on a conference to be held in Cannes that will look at the role of publishers in the digital era.

“We want to raise the awareness of the music professionals that the advent of these new technologies can deliver the best (a better flow of musical works) and the worst (the absence of control over this flow),” says Davoust.

Spain Shows Strength in Numbers

HOWELL LLEWELLYN

MADRID—The majority of Spanish activity at MIDEM is centered on the organizational skills of the Spanish authors’ and publishers’ society, SGAE, the world’s fifth-largest such society.

A mix of about 60 majors, indies and publishers will attend MIDEM in a package deal arranged by SGAE, and, by doing so, they pay just 30% of the usual fees and can use SGAE facilities to make contacts and erect deals. Last year, nearly 50 music-industry companies attended.

As it has done at all major international festivals for the last few years, SGAE is presenting a variety of artists in showcases. This year’s lineup includes Carlos Núñez, a 24-year-old Galician bagpipe player dubbed the Jim Hendrix of the bagpipe; the Michel Camilo Trio from Puerto Rico; and five DJs from Barcelona, Spain’s dance capital, for an evening of dance music.

The SGAE stand this year will be impressive, with the fighting bull as the central image. The stand has been designed by the radical punk-flavored Catalan theater group, la Fura Dels Baus, which designed and orchestrated the magnificent opening ceremony of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

Ricardo López, SGAE pop/rock promotion spokesman, says, “Once again, we expect MIDEM to be an excellent showcase for Spanish authors who seek an international profile.”

He cites the case of a small indie label that is joining the SGAE caravan, Siesta Records, which is attending chiefly to expose its main act, La Buena Vida, to Japanese booking agents. Thanks to an appearance last year, the group has a single that has sold well in Japan.

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Solid State Logic

italy consolidates industry presence and raises awareness abroad

by mark dezzani

Milan—A televised night of Italian music live from MIdem and an expanded stand representing all sectors of Italy’s music industry are part of an effort to raise awareness and sales of Italian music abroad at this year’s gathering in Cannes.

Italy’s independent-labels association, AFI, has negotiated an industry-wide presence at their traditional stand representing their traditional stand.

A new project, called “Italia in Music,” combines Italy’s most important record companies with record companies represented by AFI and composers represented by the SIAE, an Italian performing rights organization.

AFI executive Mario Limongelli, who is also managing director of indie label NAR, says that the new consolidated industry presence confirms AFI’s belief in the effectiveness of MIDEM in exporting Italian music. After five consecutive years of independent companies taking a joint stand under the AFI umbrella, the new project, called “Italia in Music,” combines Italy’s most important record companies with record companies represented by AFI and composers represented by the SIAE, an Italian performing rights organization.

An evening billed as “Ciao Italia” will showcase Italian artists already well-known outside the country alongside emerging talent and international stars performing world-famous Italian songs. The show, organized by AFI and the SIAE, will be broadcast live on Italy’s prime channel, RAI UNO, and will be available to international broadcasters.

Francesco Campi, managing director of Rome-based soundtrack specialist CAM, says her company will again have a high profile at MIdem but will not be taking their traditional stand. “We have booked lots of poster advertising for our latest product. However, we will be using MIdem to meet our traditional partners and clients and using the market to restructure our global distribution and activities,” says Campi.

Following the release last November of the soundtrack to Gabrielle Lavia’s epic romance “La Lupa (The She-Wolf),” scored by Ennio Morricone, CAM will release another Morricone score at this year’s MIdem, the soundtrack to one of Italy’s most-anticipated movie releases of 1997, “La Tragedia (The Tragedy).” It is the first film in several years directed by major Italian director Francesco Rosi.
Netherlands

Take A Dutch "Street" To MIDEM

BY ROBERT TILLI

AMSTERDAM—Traditionally, all Dutch representation at MIDEM is organized by Conamus, the foundation to promote pop music from Holland, and Sasja Bruning, the newly appointed director at Conamus, plans to live up to the foundation's goals.

"As always, we'll be responsible for setting up a Dutch 'street' with stands from companies and organizations from our county," she says. "If possible, we'll negotiate for Dutch bands to secure performances at the trade fair. Also, we'll be launching a new edition to our directory called the 'Vital Guide To Dutch Dance.'"

SPN, the Dutch Rock foundation, will be sharing its stand with Conamus, and, for the first time, the two organizations will co-present three compilation CDs containing Dutch music, as opposed to their own separate samplers as in the past. There will be one CD for pop, one for rock and one for dance.

Conamus' sister organization, CNM (Centrum Voor Nederlandse Muziek), which promotes classical music composed by Dutch composers from the past, as well as by such contemporary masters as Peter Schot, Ton De Leeuw and Maarten Atena, will be present with its own stand.

"Our main goal will be trying to find distributors for our NVM Classics label in territories other than the 'Arcade countries' (Irla, Benelux, France and Scandinavia), where our product is already being handled by Vanguard," says CNM adjunct director Gabriele Bogler.

Japan and Latin America are the key target markets for distribution of the label, which is co-owned by Radio Nederland World Service.

The Arcade Music Group, which is based in the Netherlands, will be represented at this MIDEM by some 20 staff members from CNR/Arcade labels, reports Guido Janssens, marketing director of CNR International. Attending will be staff from Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Holland, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Spain, according to Janssens.

The Dutch IFPI body, NVPI, also will be attending MIDEM. Three independent record companies, Dino Music, Red Bullet and Munich Records, which recently celebrated its 50th anniversary, have already confirmed their presence on the Dutch 'street' at MIDEM.

CONAMUS CELEBRATES THE NEW YEAR UNDER AN UMBRELLA STAND

BY DOMINIC PRICE

STOCKHOLM—A record number of Swedish exhibitors will be attending MIDEM in 1997 under the Export Music Sweden banner. This year, 124 people from 47 companies will share the Swedish umbrella stand organized by EMS, including independent labels, distributors and organizations such as authors' rights society SITAR.

Larger Swedish Indies, such as MNW Records, Stockholm Records Group and edelpitch, as well as smaller ones like North Of No South Records and Jimmy Fun Music (Per Gossie of Rosetta's company) will be among those setting up shop at the joint stand.

CNM is just one reason why smaller independents are attracted to the stand, says EMS managing director Stuart Ward. "It's also about being among friends. It's a more efficient way of getting your message across than being on your own."

Video producer Apollon Bild & Film, based in Lund, is among the Swedish companies at MIDEM. Managing director Martin Persson says, "I go because it's a good way of meeting Swedish and foreign people. Besides the people you want to pin down, there are people you bump into who are quite useful." Although A&R executives from larger multinational companies...
Prospects For Australia May Change As Government Refuses To Take A Stand

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

MELBOURNE—There won't be an Australian stand at MIDEM this year. It's been axed after 22 years, due to cuts in government funding. Given Australia's high profile on the world music scene during the past two years, the timing could not be worse for the 30 groups that would have used the stand.

"In the early '70s, Australia became one of the first to have a collective stand at MIDEM," says an irate John McDonald, managing director of the Image Music Group. "Now every country seemingly has one, and we don't. It's a tragedy. Without a stand, Australia will lose business and profile. We'll have to work out of briefcases, hoping to bump into people in aisles."

McDonald, a MIDEM attendee since 1973, says catalog and publishing deals he struck at the convention make 19% of his overseas business. His biggest success, Boney M's "Moscow," licensed in an impromptu meeting with Germany's Segal Music, sold 350,000 units in the wake of the Moscow Olympics.

John Evans, MD of Rajon Entertainment is making his 27th visit and expresses dismay. "MIDEM has been the launchpad of the Australian music industry," he says. "None of the independents—like Shock, Image and Alberts—would've made impact without it. Meeting 5,000 people from 500 different places in four days saves a year on the road, especially when you're from the other end of the world."

For McDonald and Evans, facing long-time associates to fix a time and place to meet was not a problem. McDonald's publishing concerns include a 30-hour CD of library music for film and TV.

Evans plans on acquiring as many catalogs as possible for Rajon's compilation label, Chapter II, and its TV advertising division, as well as for Sony's direct-response label Reelcase Entertainment, for which he is a consultant.

Established contacts saw another MIDEM veteran, publisher Phil Tripp, find "alternative distribution" for his "Australian Music Industry Directory," and he says first-timers to MIDEM from Australia will be hit hard. Tripp, who was part of an unsuccessful attempt to rescue the national stand, blames the inability of companies to think ahead or fend for themselves. "The local music industry has been at the government's teat for too long," he says.

GROUP EFFORTS

Colossus Records will share a stand with a European partner. International manager Gabby Colomb is focused on the export division to be launched this month and is expanding the U.M.A (global house music) and CAR (Aussie dance/techno) imprints.

"The Big Backyard" radio show, which globally broadcasts contemporary Australian music through 750 outlets, will operate out of Shock's stand, says co-director Steven Hindes. Copies of a 35-track "MIDEM Sampler" double CD will be distributed to A&R execs from the U.S. and U.K.

The Mushroom U.K. stand will be crowded. Festival Records will hang its hat there, as A&R director Kenny FitzGerald seeks pop and dance tracks for Australia and New Zealand and licenses repertoire from the label's distributors (Lepink, Profile, Outline) along with direct signings, such as Boys in Black, Mother Hubbard and Baby Sugar Lou.

Also using the stand of its U.K. sister company will be Mushroom Distribution Services, Scott Murphy, managing director of MDS, is bolstering European deals for flagship act Black Eyed Susans (signed in the U.S. to American Records), Ivan Gough and Deluxe from its dance section, and forefront acts Love Me, Pollen and Gaslight Radio.

Some companies, like the Shock Music Group, will run their own stand. The importance of having such a profile was emphasized last year when unforeseen offerings from Imago and ecol provided big winners. The past year has been another strong growth year for Shock, which became a major player in dance, set up a lucrative soundtracks division and pushed further into Asia. The export division is shipped to Slovenia, Croatia and Russia and expanded its South American and Asian bases. Shock GM Charles Cadras adds, "In the past, we've focused on the fact that we could have hits in the home market. This year, we're also actively chasing partners to release acts like Screamin'lee, Big Heavy Stuff, Glode and Frenczal Rhomb. A sampler of dance music has also been prepared.

Also planning its own stand is newcomer TWA Records, seeking to license former Cold Chisel guitarist Ian Moss, Cheekboys, Moondog, Mr. Blonde and Drag Trumpet. "We plan to expand considerably through '97, so we're on the lookout for licensing deals," reports director of A&R Chris Woolen.

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Compared to previous editions of MIDEM, the 1997 installment likely will have a reduced presence from Latin American record companies. Part of the diminished participation from Latin America is deliberate, as MIDEM officials opt to secure higher-profile indie labels, particularly from Brazil. Last year, there were 30 companies from Brazil at MIDEM. This year, Gerald Loewenberg, owner of Brazilian licensing company Axis, estimates there will be approximately 15 Brazilian companies attending MIDEM.

Many of last year’s Brazilian attendees, says Loewenberg, were too small to realize a positive return on their investment in the annual international music bazaar. “It was expensive [for the companies] to develop an international image with the [attendant] costs of lodging, phones, fax and representatives to close contracts,” he says. In December, Loewenberg, who serves as MIDEM’s consultant in Brazil, and MIDEM officials were attempting to drum up business for this year’s event by attracting more-established indie companies that “have good product as well as the ability to buy and sell product.” Moreover, Loewenberg was hoping to qualify which Brazilian indies should attend MIDEM or its Latin counterpart, which is scheduled to take place in September in Miami.

LONGTIMERS

Though Tony Moreno, president of Miami indie MP Records, says he will take part in MIDEM’s Latin happening, he notes that his record label will be trying to secure deals at MIDEM’s flagship event in France. “All of the European companies are going to be there, so MIDEM is for sure one of the events we must attend,” says Moreno, who is attending MIDEM for the 23rd consecutive year.

Moreno already has a cut licensing accord with Italy’s Duck Records and is planning to land a licensing agreement for MP product in Spain or open an office there. In addition, Moreno hopes to eventually scrounge up licensing pacts in Germany and France.

A label whose roster is laden with artists playing tropical Latino sounds, such as salsa and merengue acts, MP would figure to be active this year, says Moreno, because the popularity of tropical music is on the upswing in Europe. “European tourists go to the Dominican Republic and Cuba, and they go back home and look for that [tropical] music,” states Moreno. “They don’t understand it, but they like it and dance to it.”

MP notwithstanding, Moreno points out that representations from Latin record labels from the U.S. have been going to MIDEM in fewer numbers, as more and more stateside indies cut distribution deals with major labels. He adds that other domestic indices in the past several years “have refrained from attending MIDEM due to the high costs involved.”

Despite the expense, however, one prominent U.S. Latino indie—RMM Records—will show up for MIDEM. Label president Ralph Mercado says his Jan. 20 showcase of Tripzal/RMM acts is part of his effort to spark business for his Latin jazz acts. In addition, Mercado points out that he is seeking new European distributors for his tropical/salsa and Latin jazz artists. Bellaphon Records currently distributes RMM product throughout Europe, save Spain, where Fat Records distributes RMM.

“I’m breaking up the distribution in Europe, because each country has different [marketing and promotion] needs,” says Mercado. “So I want to set up distribution deals with companies that really know how to work their respective markets.”

TWO TO TANGO

Another Latin American country sending fewer attendees to MIDEM is Argentina. Nonetheless, at least four prominent Argentine companies are trekking to France to arrange licensing deals with new acts—most of whom are dance-oriented—and budget catalog.

Among MIDEM’s Argentine representatives are execs from dance imprints Rave On (president Bernardo Bergelet, GMA Carlos Gamba) and Old Mortales (president Tuti Gianakos). Jorge Bertolotti, GM of trumpet imprint Leader Music, will be at MIDEM to cut licensing accords, as well as to check out CD replication machines.

Claudio Nadal, president of M&M Discos and American Recording is looking to cut licensing deals for several of his artists, including new rock acts Bersuit Vergarabat and Los Violadores, hot reggae act La Zimbabvwe and folkloric act Mario Alvezas Quinga.

There are a handful of other indie labels expected at MIDEM from Latin America, a region whose record industry is dominated by the multinational record companies in every country, save Colombia.

VIVA MEXICO

There is, however, at least one representative from Mexico City’s radio community who plans to attend MIDEM. Luisa Carrandi, PD of Euro-dance station XERCA-FM (Wife 91.3), says she will go to MIDEM as part of her effort to keep her station’s format as fresh as possible.

“The opportunity to be at MIDEM gives us the chance to attend the conferences and to listen to new music so that we can offer our audience what they need and ask for,” said Carrandi.

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TORONTO—Whether to buy or pitch music, attending MIDEM annually has been a high priority for Canadian music people for decades.

More than 58 Canadian companies have registered as participants at separate MIDEM booths being operated this year by the Canadian Independent Record Production Association (CIRA) and the Quebec-based, mostly French-speaking Association Quebecoise de l’Industrie du Disque, du Spectacle, et de la Video (ADISQ).

“MIDEM is a great place to meet everybody under one roof,” argues Jim West, president of Montreal-based Distribution Fusion II. The 33-year MIDEM veteran adds, “It’s very important for business to continue [having] links with people you’ve dealt with for years. This year, I’ll meet with all of our suppliers and with all of our licensees. I’m looking to license [albums by] Jerri Brown, Matt MacKenzie, David Murray and DD Jackson.”

A NEOPHYTE

“I don’t know what I’ll be doing at MIDEM,” confesses former Guess Who’s Bachman Turner Overdrive guitarist Randy Bachman, representing his two labels, Guiltarchives and Legend. “I’ve never gone, and everybody [has] said I should go. I’ve got my own [solo] albums, as well as the first three Guess Who albums and six albums by [Canadian jazz guitarist] Lenny Breau. I’m going to see what happens.”

Conversely, 13-year MIDEM veteran Hege Petersen, president of Edmonton-based Story Plain Records says his role at the annual event has altered.

“We’re doing more exporting than licensing in recent years,” Petersen says. “We have a warehouse in Holland now, and we deal with about eight European distributors, who all attend MIDEM. Our new releases are from [Canadians] Long John Baldry, Cindy Church, Rita Charral, [American blues acts] Jay McShann with the Duke Robillard Band, Jimmy Witherspoon and Lowell Fulson.”

“My primary thrust this year will be placing masters we are associated with that have not been released in Europe,” says song publisher Frank Davies, president of TMP-The Music Publisher in Toronto. “This includes albums by Murray McLauchlan, John Cody, Robert Priest, the Boomers, Marc Jordan, Ron Hynes and Driving Blinds.”

“I’m a big MIDEM booster,” reports Bernie Finkelstein, president of True North Records and manager of singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn. The 15-year MIDEM veteran is, like most other Canadians attending, seeking strong product that has performed well in foreign territories but has yet to be released in Canada. “I’ve always looked at MIDEM as a source of reportage,” he says.

Additionally, Finkelstein is seeking foreign licensing deals for his domestic masters by Murray McLauchlan, the Hellbillies, Sympathy, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings.

Al Maci, Attic Music Groups

“I’m going to Cannes, for about two weeks, to bring back,” says sidelines executive Ron Hynes of New York’s S.O.M. “I’ll go up to St. Paul de Venice, near Cannes, for a two-day debriefing. This will be the sixth annual one that I’ve done. I started with one other person, and now it’s up to about 75 people. We wind down from the frenzy of the marketplace and refocus on some of the deals. Whoever can get their reservations in first is welcome. We’ve dubbed it ‘Chateau de Rhino.”

U.S. REPRESENTATIVES

Continued from page 65

what will I bring back? I do a lot of domestic business there. Why do I have to go over to Cannes to do business with some guy who’s two miles away from my office? It must simply have to do with being away from the usual office setting, in an atmosphere conducive to making deals and forging alliances.

“IT'S JUST NOBODY

TO COMPARE WITH US

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London—A snap check around the U.K. music industry emphasizes and confirms once again the importance of Midem—but in different ways for different people and organizations.

As a general rule, multinational music companies use the event for strategy meetings and planning sessions for the coming year. Their contractual arrangements around the globe are in place without the need for the deals struck by independent publishers and talent acquisition is usually a matter for the branch offices in the individual territories.

However, a large U.K. independent such as Pinacade has a different agenda. "Our purpose at Midem is triple-headed," says Pinacade managing director Tony Powell, "and reflects our areas of operation—distribution, our own labels and the Windsong export operation.

Pinacade is now part of the Zomba Group but continues to function autonomously as the largest independent record distributor in the U.K. Powell and his colleagues are eager to build upon that status. "We're looking for labels—either from overseas—that are ready for their own set-up in the U.K. and want good, efficient distribution of their product," he says. "We're aiming to place some of our own label product in foreign markets, and we'll be listening to whatever's on offer for the U.K. In export terms, Windsong is outstandingly successful with a Queen's Award for Export to its credit and it is at Midem to consolidate and boost its activities. We're also looking to expand Rough Trade's distribution overseas and built on its successes in Germany and the Benelux countries."

Powell, who first attended Midem in 1973, says the event "has had its ups and downs" but remains invaluable. "It was useful in the early years for the majors and then became more publishing oriented. It's definitely the main event of the winter calendar."

Publishing Deals

Music publishers have participated in strength at Midem since its inception, and this year is no exception. As in the case of the multinational record companies, the international publishing companies use Cannes to stage gatherings of their various branch-offices.

Paul Connolly, MD of MCA Music Publishing U.K., points out that each office in MCA's global organization will also have its own agenda, as well as meeting with their fellow MCA colleagues. David Renier, president of MCA Music Publishing, John Brando, managing director and senior VP of MCA Music Publishing International, and Kees van der Hoven, head of A&R for MCA in Europe, will be joined by managing director from Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

"All the MCA Music MDs are at Midem for group meetings, strategy discussions and promoting plans for writers and artists," says Connolly. "Apart from that, my main focus is on acquiring catalogs. There's always a strong presence at Midem of American attorneys, and I also deal with European independent labels and publishers."

Attorneys are usually the negotiating conduit for catalog deals, and the "cutting edge" indie labels and publishers are the potential source of rock and dance material.

Paul Connolly, MCA Music Publishing U.K.

"We try to have a foot in both," says Connolly. "Where advances are concerned, if you work smoothly you can usually get good deals. It's an astonishingly competitive environment, and obviously there has to be a limit in bidding for something. Publishing margins are not great and require you to be sensible in your dealing. Midem is still a good place for a good publishing deal."

Midem is perhaps the most promising meeting ground available for the independent music publisher. Dennis Collopy formed Menace Music five years ago, after holding corporate publishing jobs, including MD of BMG Music Publishing in the U.K. Menace typifies the smaller type of publishing enterprise, run by Collopy and his wife Marilyn and exploiting several, mostly American, catalogs in the U.K. as well as guiding and developing British writer-artists and bands, some of them in a managerial capacity.

"Midem is always a good forum and marketplace for product," observes Collopy, "and we're placing some dance and rock masters this year. Being in Cannes is a good way of opening up publishing opportunities in other markets. There's some good dance and R&B stuff coming from northern Europe, and the club scene is lively in Belgium and Holland, and R&B and dance are doing best in Europe at present, but it will start happening later in the U.S. marketplace, which is still very important on the rock side."

Innocent Voices

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The Mystery Goes On...
Disney, Warner Remain On Top For '96

BY SETH GOLDSTEIN

NEW YORK—Welcome to the Billionaire's Club. Last year, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment became the third studio, after Disney and Warner Home Video, to register revenues in nine figures.

Fox had sales of just over $1 billion, an increase of 17.6% over 1995, according to Billboard's annual survey of the marketplace (see table). The studio, thought to have the most aggressive marketing team among the majors, thus continued to outperform the industry, which still managed to post a tidy 11% gain to $8.2 billion wholesale over 1995's $7.4 billion.

"They've certainly got the distribution horsepower," says an observer. "Fox is huge." Unlike title-pee poor 1996, Fox last year had sell-through blockbusters such as "Independence Day" and "Waiting To Exhale," in addition to the TV series "The X-Files" and "Goosebumps," cumulatively worth 10 million units, and multimillion-cassette-selling reissues of "The Sound Of Music" and "My Fair Lady.

Not that Disney and Warner were slackers. Repeating a familiar scenario, they finished first and second, respectively, in Billboard's ranking. Disney claims a 22% increase in new-release business and a 12% gain in catalog, based on point-of-sale data. "We drove growth," boasts an executive.

Warner, which did $1.4 billion with its titles and distributed labels, picked up Turner Home Entertainment and New Line Home Video in November. That was too late to have much impact in 1996, but the additions will enhance the studio's position. Crooked, Turner and New Line registered sales of $265 million-$350 million last year, down from 1995, when New Line had a stronger theatrical lineup.

Once again, self-selling was the patron saint of revenue gains, bringing in $5.7 billion. Retail volume showed a modest improvement to $2.2 billion, but the gain was scarcely noticeable to vendors. Video retailers cranked out more turns per copy without significantly boosting purchases.

Suppliers delivered about the same number of high-priced cassettes—50 million-$55 million—as they have in each of the past four or five years. The quantity now represents perhaps 7% of Amperex volume of 700 million-$745 million tapes as estimated by Media-Copy president Herb Fischer at the International Recording Media Assn. (ITMA) seminar in November. A decade earlier, retail was easily triple that share.

Whether DVD damps growth thereafter will depend on consumer demand and studio release schedules that are just beginning to take shape for a rollout expected to start this spring (Billboard, Jan. 18). That's later. It's a lot more enjoyable to contemplate the here and now, such as the burgeoning demand for under-$10 titles.

Vendors, especially the studios, have responded by deepening their $9.98 catalog.

Most executives shrug off the concern of Universal Studios Home Video executive VP Andrew Kainey that budget product, which generally sells for $6-$8, is cheapening more expensive, better-margin titles. "We are concerned about the amount of cannibalization," Kainey says.

David Bishop, executive VP of MGM UA Home Entertainment, suggests taking a "measured approach" in selecting budget releases. "We've done very, very well" with 20-$25 "deep catalog." $9.98 titles a year, he adds.

Universal, which has dallied with (Continued on page 83)

TIME LIFE BOOKS FOUND AUDIOPHILE IMPRINT

BY TERRI HORAK

NEW YORK—Time Warner Audio Books is joining with direct-response publisher Time Life Books to develop and market a new imprint, "Time Life Audio Books." The new product line will feature original productions based on three of "Time Life Books" most popular series: "Voices of the Civil War," "Lost Civilizations," and "Mysteries of the Unknown." Collectively, the series have sold more than 12 million volumes. Additionally, Lost Civilizations was made into a video series for Time Life Video, and its television broadcast received an Emmy Award in 1995 for outstanding informational programming.

The deal provides valuable exposure for audio books to the millions of consumers who are Time Life Books' direct-response customers. "It's an opportunity to reach a huge marketplace of consumers who trust the Time Life logo and hopefully introduce those people to audio books," says Judy McGuinn, VP/director of Time Warner Audio Books. Though the audio titles will be fea (Continued on page 86)
**Poplar Tunes A Piece Of Musical History**

From Elvis To Al Green, Memphis Store Played Major Role

**BILLBOARD RETAIL IS COMING SOON TO A STORE NEAR YOU!**

**EXECUTIVE TURN TABLE**

HOME VIDEO. William J. Polich is appointed senior VP of Baker & Taylor in Morton Grove, Ill. He was senior VP of sales for HBO Home Video.

Mike Evans is named VP of sales for Columbia TriStar Home Video in Culver City, Calif. He was sales and branch manager at Ingram Entertainments in the Los Angeles area.

Alexandra Beeman is promoted to senior director of marketing for SMV and is based in New York. She was director of marketing.

RELATED FIELDS. Rita O'Connor is appointed product manager of professional video products in the magnetic markets division of Fuji Film in Elmsford, N.Y. She was associate product manager for the Southwestern Bell Freedom Phone division of Conair Corp.

Richard S. Buchheim is appointed president/CEO of Integrated Computing Engines in Waltham, Mass. He was an executive VP at Intergraph Corp.

Information for the Merchants & Marketing Executive Turn Table should be sent to Terri Horak, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036.

MUSICLAND reports that sales at stores open at least a year rose 2.9% in the nine-week holiday selling season that ended Jan. 4. For supermarkets (Media Top 100), same-store sales increased 10.8% in the five-week period that ended Jan. 4; for mall outlets (Sam Goody, Suncoast Motion Picture Co.), comp-store sales fell 1.6%. The company attributes the overall comp increase to “better inventory in stock positions, more targeted advertising and the impact of liquidation sales in 18 Media Play stores in late December.”

VIACOM says that it will take a $100 million fourth-quarter charge to pre-tax profit to cover the cost of closing about 50 Blockbuster Music stores—10% of the chain’s store count. The charge will also cover the cost of moving Blockbuster Entertainment’s headquarters from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., to Dallas, which will be completed in the second quarter. Blockbuster chairman/CEO Bill Fields said in a statement, “The elimination of underperforming music stores, most of which were the result of past acquisitions, and the addition of an expanded array of entertainment products and services in all of our stores, will improve our current and long-term operating profit and help us reap benefits as the music retailing environment improves.”

RECEITON says that it has signed a letter of intent to acquire Tamalban Ltd., which markets consumer electronics accessories under the Ross Consumer Products brand. Ross, which is based in Farnworth-Bolton, England, has annual sales of $8 billion. The deal is expected to close in February. Accessories manufacturer and distributor Recoton also reports that it has sold check and deposit services to Fireman Financial to the tune of $120 million in 1995. Recoton was founded in 1946 as the birthplace of rock ‘n’ roll and the home of phenomenal soul music, gospel, and blues. For the last 50 years, Poplar Tunes, founded in 1946 by Joe Cuoghi and John Novarese, has played a key role in the nurturing of the region’s great music.

During the mid-1950s and 1960s, local labels like Sun, Hi, and Stax got immediate results when they pressed a single. Poplar Tunes had record players lined up on the front counter and at the end of every other aisle. Patrons had the opportunity to check out the sounds before they purchased the music. It wasn’t uncommon to see people lined up, money in hand, to hear the latest sounds from a local rising star.

Imagine a shy Presley hanging out and watching his early Sun singles being purchased. It happened here.

“Elvis used to come in here, while he was working at the electric company, and have lunch and see what the people were buying,” recalls Mary Ann Linder, who began working at Poplar Tunes in the ‘50s.

“Somebody came in and played one of his records, and Joe Cuoghi came up and asked the customer if he liked the record. He did, so Joe pointed out Elvis and said, ‘There’s the boy that made that record!’ Elvis was hiding behind the Coke machine. You see, Elvis was a shy person, and he would say, ‘Oh, Mr. Cuoghi, you are embarrassing me. Elvis was very polite. You might say he was old school. His manners were always so good.

“One time, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee, and all of the Sun recording artists came over here one afternoon and had an autograph party,” Linder adds.

Beginning as a single-specialty store, Poplar Tunes was renamed DJ Dewey Phillips, the man credited by many as the first rock ‘n’ roll DJ.

“Dewey was in here all of the time, and I used to listen to him and all the crazy things he used to say,” Linder says, laughing. “He used to advertise for Falstaff Beer. He would say, ‘If you can’t drink it, then freeze it and eat it. Open up some ribs and pour it in.’

Before there was a Poplar Tunes, local stores had to buy recordings from a number of local wholesalers. If they wanted Decca product, they went to one warehouse, and if they wanted RCA, they went to another. Cuoghi and Novarese, in essence, started the first, multilabel one-stop distributorship when they began purchasing recordings from each of the wholesalers that carried different label products and resold them under one roof. Eventually, Poplar Tunes dealt directly with each of the labels. By this time, Frank Berretta had joined the company as the third part-

“People would rather come to us than run all over town or citywide to the different stores that only carried one line,” says Poplar Tunes head buyer Jimmy Burge, who has been with the company since 1966. “Maybe they couldn’t get an open account with all of these people, where they could with us. That is how we evolved into a one-stop business. To our knowledge, we were the first.”

Maybe it was watching the success of local labels, like Sam Phillips’ Sun Records, but in time Cuoghi and Novarese started Hi Records, one of the most important developments in Memphis music history.

The Hi roster included the Bill Black Combo, Ace Cannon, Otis Clay, Syl Johnson, Ann Peebles, and legendary artist/producer Mitchell. It was Green’s lean and earthy yet silky smooth Mitchell-produced soul classics that made Hi a multimillion-dollar concern. Poplar Tunes was here to make sure that the region’s retail outlets were stocked with Hi product. It was a winning arrangement.

“Joe and John had a real dedication to artists, especially Memphis artists,” says J.T. Novarese, grandson of the founder and the president of Poplar Tunes Record Shop Inc. “You see, back (Continued on next page)
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Warner Bros. Records’ Amazing Lou Dennis

So Long, Uncle Lou: If you heard a mild thud rumbling through the music biz at the end of 1996, it was probably the collective dropping of jaws, as Warner Bros. Records senior VP of sales Lou Dennis quietly closed the door on his 29-year tenure with the label.

The exit was Dennis’ decision—in fact, he will be a consultant for Warner Bros. this year—and it was Dennis who decided to make the exit a low-profile one.

The first ones to get word of his decision were Charlie Springer and Dave Stein, the VPs of sales at, respectively, Warner Bros. and Reprise. Dennis pulled them aside during WEAs 25th anniversary convention last summer, but he assured them to secrecy. Most of those at Warner’s Burbank, Calif., headquarters were not aware he was leaving until a week or two before his Dec. 20 farewell party.

Dennis’ music career—which included stops in radio and promotion—spanned five decades. Lewiston, Maine, is where Lou Petrini shed his surname for the more radio-friendly Lou Dennis. He moved that handle, which he wears to this day, to Waterbury, Conn., where he was a DJ and PD from 1965-62.

Soon after leaving radio, he handled promotion and sales for an independent Hartford, Conn.-based wholesaler called Seaport. In 1969, he began working for Smaack in Los Angeles, the label that was home to the Left Banke (remember “Walk Away Renee” and “Pretty Ballerina”) and a handful of James Brown albums.

A year later, beloved mentor Charlie Fisch installed Dennis as GM at Smaack, which entailed a move to Chicago. In 1967, he joined the New York office of Warner Bros. He made the move to the Bunny’s Burbank home office in 1972.

It was during the early part of his tenure at Warner Bros. that Dennis made his contribution to popular culture, which was immortalized on celluloid. His deft handling of a disaster that former Reprise act the Credibility Gap, a comedy group, encountered at a trade show appearance was defused when a comrade Dennis bent over and offered up his derriere, exclaiming, “Guys! It’s my fault! Kick my ass!”

Two members of the Credibility Gap, Harry Shearer and Michael McKean, went on to collaborate on the script and star in “This Is Spinal Tap,” and that movie contained a scene inspired by their encounter with Dennis. In that scene, genus man Artie Farkus (played by Paul Shaffer, musical director of “Late Night With David Letterman”) implores the members of the metal band to boot him in the rear end.

Years later, in 1991, Warner Bros. issued a sampler titled “Kick My Ass,” with the cover a photo of Dennis duplicating his now-infamous antic. The next year, Dennis had yet another identity, as “the Amazing Luigi.” A back cover of Billboard featured a full page ad with Dennis wearing a turban, looking into a crystal ball, and predicting that some of the labels’ artists, including Dinosaur Jr. and the Go Go Dells, would have an impact in years to come.

Over the decades, the often irascible but usually jovial executive managed to charm legions of honorary nieces and nephews. Among the ones who called him “Uncle Lou” were Billboard’s former and current retail editor, both of whom learned quickly not to call on the sales veteran for comment or background during busy deadline days, because Dennis’ banter was long on news, perspective, and priceless, amusing banter. But those retail editors were just two of countless Billboard scribes who learned in Dennis’ school.

(Continued on page 86)

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(Continued on page 86)
Feedback Cuts Work Force In Half
ESD Gets 'Progressive'; Red Meat Roars

FEEDBACK DOWNSIZES: The year has gotten off to a good start for Feedback, Inc. Music Distribution. On Jan. 3, the Glendale Heights, Ill.-based company laid off approximately half of its 50 employees. Among those let go were VP of sales and marketing Rob Signorello and marketing manager Chris Koumandos.

Feedback CEO Richard Godwin says, "We were inundated with returns over the Christmas period. We basically were wiped out with returns the last three months... We were looking for people to pay us, and we got returns again. We ran out of cash."

Godwin says that Feedback's lender, American National Bank in Chicago, "was starting to see there was a problem."

Although rumors were circulating that the distributor had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, Godwin says that no petition has been filed.

Feedback, which shares board members with, and was a principal start-up investor in, the Carol Street, Ill.-based label Griffin Music, has established itself as one of the better-known indie rock distributors in the Midwest. The firm, which was established in 1996 as an importer, now does more than half its business in domestic labels and has a current label list that includes Touch, Bloodshot, Southern, Borgloul, TVI, Del-Fi, K. and Tune, as well as Griffin.

However, some of the company's big-volume labels, like Epitaph, Touch & Go, and singer/songwriter Ani DiFranco's Righteous Babe, have moved on within the last year. A year ago, Feedback underwent a first wave of layoffs.

Godwin says that Feedback has been hurting for new investors for the last 18 months and is "very close to bringing a substantial name in the company."

He had no comment about one source's assertion that former RED Distribution principal Barry Kobrin would be one of the new investors in the company Kobrin, who sold his interest in RED to Sony several years ago, is "now free of noncompete restrictions in the sale contract, according to a source."

EAST SIDE STORY: Rob Simonds, CEO of the REP Co. in Bloomington, Minn., and one of the partners in REP's sister company, Salem, Mass.-based Ryko/disc, says that changes are afoot at REP's in-house label East Side Digital (ESD), which is based in Minneapolis.

Simonds says that ESD will be deleting a number of titles in its catalog, reemphasizing its A&R efforts on "progressive repertoire" and moving out of roots rock, its principal genre thrust in recent years.

ESD will also institute a new imprint, NorthSide Records, a niche label that will release Scandinavian folk and world music. Its first four releases will arrive in March or April.

While some of ESD's roots acts have garnered attention—the best known of them, the Bottle Rockets, is now signed to Atlantic—Simonds says that the genre has not proved popular enough to justify the label's emphasis on such acts.

"One Bottle Rockets out of 10 bands in four years isn't enough to keep ESD going," Simonds says. "In 1996, [roots rock] was the major rock band to return out of the retail stores. It's very depressing to see how few records these bands have been able to sell... I was fooled with shutting East Side down or coming up with a different approach."

Noting the success that REP has had with such distributed world music labels as Green Linnet, Putumayo, and Rykodisc's Himalus imprint, Simonds sees NorthSide's repertoire as a highly viable niche product.

"There's a whole bunch of stuff going on in Sweden, Finland, Norway—young musicians who were trained in the traditional folk of the country and added modern instrumentation to the music," he says. "It's an incredibly wide variety of musical styles... You can consistently sell a few thousand records and build a core audience."

Considering the number of citizens of Scandinavian descent in Minnesota, we'd say that NorthSide's sales will probably start at home.


On "There's A Star Above The Manger Tonight," due Feb. 25 from Sub Pop, the band roars into low free-noise terrain.

Guitarist/vocalist Tim Rutili says that the brutally loud, confrontational style of tracks like the instrumentals "Paul Fadul" and the 10-minute "Just Like An Egg On Stills" is the product of working with guest guitarist Rie Rizzio of Chicago's Eleventh Dream Day.

"When I was first coming to the city to see shows, they were one of my favorite bands," says Rutili. "The last couple of tours [behind] 'Bunny' we did with him. He was great to play with... A lot of these ideas come from playing live. He definitely influenced what would happen when we were taking off."

A variety of influences come into play on "Manger," including the brazen, distorted sound of '70s Miles Davis live albums like "Fanged" and "Agharta."

"It was what some of us were listening to," Rutili confirms. "We were just in awe of that music."

He also acknowledges the influence of the fabled hardcore unit Con: "That's like James Brown if his drummers were German... You know they listened to James Brown and couldn't do it."

"Manger" is crammed with unusual percussion effects—not unlike those heard on Tom Waits' albums of the '80s—courtesy of Ben Massa to go, who works in tandem with trap drummer Brian Deck. "Ben finds things to

play) all the time," Rutili notes. "He walks with his head down."

While the influence of the Stones is definitely on the back burner on the largely raging new album, Rutili says, "Hopefully the feel of it is still there... No idea if they could do it, but hopefully it will always be there."

Explaining the disquieting overall sound of the album, Rutili says, "We took our recording budget and we bought samplers and sequencers and hip-hop tools, and we didn't know how to use 'em, and that's how we made this record... It's the most honest record we ever made, because it's really fucked-up sounding."

(Continued on next page)
tured in a spectrum of direct-mail advertising and promotions, all promotional materials will state retail availability, which is an important component for the new imprint, McGinn says.

"We believe the direct-response and retail customer is two different people. We will promote these as we would any best-selling audio, but we have the added benefit of this well-recognized brand," she says.

Time Life AudioBooks will be distributed to the book, wholesale, and special markets by the company's usual sales arm, Warner Books. Special displays have been created to showcase the familiar Time Life logo.

This marks "Time Life Books" entry into the audiobook market. Executives are enthusiastic about the addition to its offerings and the tapping of new audiences.

"The medium is perfect. The book and audio play off each other in the most terrific way," says Teresa Hartnett, associate publisher/director of rights and licensing for Time Life Books. "Besides serving our loyal readership, we end up reaching people who might not reach Time Life Books.

"The titles are dramatic adaptations of the best-selling books within each series.

"The first three audio titles, "Gettysburg," from Voeices of the Civil War; "Egypt," from Lost Civilizations; and "Powers Of Healing," from Mysteries of the Unknown, are due in July. The productions will include sound effects and music and will be either multivoice or full-cast recordings.

Time Life Books will include the audio in the upcoming television campaigns — intended to reach 9 million viewers — for Voices of the Civil War and Lost Civilizations.

Promotion for the audio titles will feature prominently in "Time Life Books" considerale direct-mail marketing efforts for the respective series, as well as bookshop.

The "Gettysburg" audio, for example, will set separate promotion to more than 3 million Civil War and history enthusiasts, according to Time Warner AudioBooks. Similarly, "Egypt" and "Powers Of Healing" will also feature in assorted direct-mail efforts sent to millions of interested consumers.

RETAIL TRACK

A voracious reader of magazines, newspapers, and books, Dennis was one of those execs who could talk to you about something besides the record industry. He also read Billboard like nobody's business, to the point where he was often able to describe the personalities of writers whom he had not yet met.

To know Dennis is to appreciate lunches and dinners at Far Niente, a restaurant in Glendale, Calif., where the Rigodon Lou Petroni was named for him; to hear his almost childlike cackle of a laugh; and to know his reverence for record pioneers like Camelot Music Foundation creator Paul David and one-time National Record Mart partner, Jason Shapiro.

But to really know this man, you must tour Disneyland with him, where the 60-something Dennis will ride everything from Indiana Jones and Space Mountain to the Tooncups and his favorite, It's A Small World, without ever showing a hint of his age.

THE TROUBLED Strawberries chain, which underwent a leveraged buyout in 1994, will attempt to do an out-of-court restructuring of its balance sheet, according to sources. The approach comes after the chain was shopd by Los Angeles-based Chinn & Co., during the fall. In that gambit, Chinn was looking for a financial player to replace Castle Harlan, the financial firm that put together the Strawberries of the Upcoming Fine Line release "All Over Me."

The film, a coming-of-age tale with decidedly 90's themes, is the directorial debut of Ari Stachel, a music scene stowaway who possesses a keen ear to match the sharpness of her vision.

Oddly enough, the soundtrack for "All Over Me" (which will be screened at the Sundance Film Festival later this month) has yet to find a label home, despite the presence of several artists with dedicated cult followings, among them Ani DiFranco, Patti Smith, Sleater-Kinney, and the Ams. Seems like an all-star cast to us. Bill Coleman is music supervisor.

INDEPENDENTS

(Continued from preceding page)

Real Red Meat, which also includes bassist Tim Hurley, will begin a U.S. tour in late February, billed with Sub Pop labelmate Jeremy Enigk.

Do other surprises lie in store for the band's fans? Hurley: "It's tough to say what we do next," Rutili says.

Real Red Meat has joined with the members of the band's fave, Alkaline Trio, to record an album due from A&M later this year, under the group moniker Lofts. Rutili adds, "We've got almost a whole album written of pop songs in the Carole King/Fleetwood Mac vein—Southern California sweet pop... We're going to have to get piles of coke and go to L.A. to get the right vibe going. It's going to piss off all the militant people who like the noise."

Hartnett says the "major support" Time Life AudioBooks will receive from Time Life Books also includes "up-selling" the audio titles to customers who call to order a book from a particular series.

Each title will run approximately 90 minutes on one cassette and will be priced at $12.95. The same titles in each series are slated for 1998.

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National Geographic Hops To Warner For DVD Debut; More Shell Games

Geo Politics: What's in yellow, has an upscale brand name, and is ready for DVD prime time? The answer: National Geographic.

Reports that the Geo Video should be salivating at the prospect of introducing the distinctive yellow-bordered programs, long a cassette favorite, to the new format. As such, National Geographic would be the first and foremost to have nontheatrical releases in DVD, capable of winning the hearts and minds of parents who hope there's more to the medium than movies. Warner Home Video president Warren Lieberfarb considers it an ideal DVD attraction.

But wait a second: Isn't the National Geographic line exclusive to Columbia Home Video? Indeed, it was, which got away from Live Home Video, which rescued it from the VHS Video bankruptcy? Well, yes, it was—for three years.

Because contract expiration approached, sources say, National Geographic started shopping for another licensee. Bidding was said to be fierce. Warner—twice the size of Columbia in '96 revenue and second only to Disney, which invented family programming—emerged as an obvious candidate. A major stumbling block remained, however: the prospect that National Geographic would be relegated to Warner's Vision's roster of special-interest titles. National Geographic, we're told, wanted to swim in the mainstream.

When Warner guaranteed it theatrical-like exposure, the deal went down. Sources indicate that Columbia didn't slight the line, including the Geo Kids extension it launched. Sales were strong, and the tapes became a presence in a variety of outlets. "Columbia did a good job getting the product to retail," notes a observer. "But it's a classic story. They wanted the tapes everywhere. Under the current arrangement, it just wasn't possible.

This source thinks that the ties that bound the relationship frayed, and ultimately broke, after Columbia's Tristar president Patrick Campbell left for America. Campbell helped structure the arrangement, and he cemented the relationship. National Geographic felt less comfortable with his replacement, Ben Feingold, who has a strong independent video background, sources indicate. Joanne Held, recruited by National Geographic as studio liaison, subsequently was shifted to its multimedia unit.

There was another reason for the change: the pressure from competitors like Band McNeill to shift from not-for-profit to for-profit status. National Geographic's TV division, which produces all the programs in the series, was among the first to change and has become, not surprisingly, "more aggressive" in exploiting a "pipeline that just stays full," an executive notes. The National Geographic name and logo can be seen regularly on NIC and Turner Broadcasting. "That gives them a bunch of product to get to retail," he continues.

Reports that the industry veteran Evan Fisher, who had worked on creating the BBC Video brand, joins Warner as product manager: "There couldn't be a better choice," the source maintains. "He knows his business and has his head in the clouds.

One area in which Warner and Columbia might be on the same page is their commitment to DVD. Alone among the major studios, they have committed to the format and plan to introduce several dozen titles this year.

Blockbuster Broadening Its Image Beyond Video Product

Blockbuster inventory "squeezed" for an extended period of high cover prices, but with the advent of books, music and computer software," says Blockbuster spokesman Jonathan Baskin. And we want consumers to know that our stores are the local source for all kinds of entertainment product.

As part of the process of reinventing itself, the chain has embarked on a $12-million-dollar marketing campaign for its new corporate identity campaign. In a series of television commercials, the chain introduces the slogan "One World, One Card: Blockbuster." A new logo also omits the words "video" and "music.

In the television ads, young people frolic on the beach and bridges, but no one is seen curling up on the couch to watch a video, listening to a CD, or playing a video game. It's simply too small to fit.

Baskin says the point of the ads is to show consumers that Blockbuster means fun and entertainment. "It's not about showing a storefront, but a variety of images that convey the spirit and soul of Blockbuster," he says.

Through March 2, Blockbuster customers will also be given a One World, One Card. With every purchase of $8.99 or more, the card will be punched. When customers accumulate eight punches, they will receive $5 off a rental or purchase.

The television ads end this month, but the single-word logo and encompassing entertainment theme will be carried into the store level for months to come. The 500-600 stores scheduled to open this year will each carry the new logo and a mix of videos, music, computer, and book products that will reflect the demographics of the neighborhood. In addition, 1,500 existing stores will be retrofitted using the new logo.

The conceptualization of the new look and the execution of the new logo is an "evolution of our business," says Baskin. "It tells consumers if you want to know what we're all about in entertainment, come look at Blockbuster."
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MARCH Week of: 24 28 26 23
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Home Video

Merchandise & Marketing

'Cops' Producers Get Real; Tower Video Goes Direct

'COPS' INCORPORATED: Barbour/Langley Programs, the producers of the syndicated show 'Cops,' have a mantra: to become the dominant producer and distributor of reality-based video.

The company is off to a good start with its first three 'Cops' releases, selling more than 1 million units combined. Now Barbour has formed Real Entertainment, a full-service distributor to take it to the next level.

"It has always been our plan to form a distribution company," says CEO John Langley. "But we had to walk before we could run. The initial 'Cops' tapes were distributed by MVP Entertainment, which Langley says will continue to act as a subdistributor to smaller retailers.

Real Entertainment will concentrate on selling direct to about a dozen large national accounts, while supporting them with television campaigns and specialized marketing elements, such as gift packs and licensed merchandise. "Any account that needs heavy television ads and special marketing is the one we'll handle directly," says president Scott Barbour.

The company has added a dozen sales and marketing staffers to work their new accounts, as well as managing Internet activities. Next month Real will set up a center for about 70 direct-response telemarketers.

Real's sales model is really nothing new: Advertise and sell via direct response, release the product to retail, and advertise it some more, logging stores. Many suppliers, such as Time Life, have done the first two steps well, but the retail element is always tricky. Last year, exercise series the firm was one of the few to cross over; besides "Cops.

Starting this month, Real will repeat its winning formula with the Amazing Video Collection, a three-tape series about people surviving airplane crashes, tornados, and fires, among other disasters. The first release, "Cought On Camera," arrives in stores Tuesday (21), priced at $19.99. "Life Against Death" hits Feb. 18, and "Man Against Nature" on March 11.

All three went through their direct-response cycle last fall. Barbour says more than 500,000 units of "Cought On Camera" were sold. Dealer orders have topped 200,000 units. Two gift packs, priced at $39 and $69, will be available in mid-February, including a flashlight and an emergency-preparedness book.

"What we want to do is take four projects a year and go out every quarter with full guns to become a new category for retail," says Barbour.

Next on the agenda is distributing other people's reality-based programming. Langley says Real is developing strategic alliances for sports, kids, health, and beauty programs.

RETAIL JAM: Based on the number of releases set to arrive in stores over the next three months, it might as well be the holiday season again.

March is especially crowded with the addition of Warner Home Video's "Space Jam" March 11. Suggested retail is $22.96. "Space Jam" is the first Warner feature to star its Looney Tunes characters, was initially going to compete directly against Paramount Home Video's "Harriet The Spy.

But feeling the pressure from Bugs, Michael Jordan, and an $85 million box-office gross, Paramount moved "Harriet" to Feb. 25. Released theatrically last summer, "Harriet" has little star power and generated just over $26 million at the box office.

Buena Vista Home Video has "The Hunchback Of Notre Dame" scheduled for March 4 and the direct-to-video title "Honey, We Shrunk Ourselves" for March 19. February looks good with Columbia Home Video's "Fly Away Home" and the rerelease of Buena Vista's "Bambi.

Each spring title will have multi-million-dollar marketing campaigns, including lots of rebates and tie-in partners, such as the trio promoting "Space Jam." When consumers purchase for $10 Dole products, the title, they are eligible for a "Space Jam" ball or minipocketball game. More than 200 million Dole bananas will be carrying a sticker touting the offer.

Ballpark will give consumers $5 back with purchase of the Warner title and three hot dog or (related) products. Ballpark will also ship in $1 million in television advertising and a national flier with a coupon, scheduled to hit homes in April.

Inside each "Space Jam" casette box will be a $4 rebate coupon tied to Rayovac renewal batteries. And Rayovac will conduct a "Meet Mike" essay contest, with the grand-prize winner flown to Chicago for a Bulls game and a meet-and-greet with Jordan.

A pack-in flyer and advertising in USA Today will promote the rebate test. Finally, Warner is offering a $5 rebate with purchase of the title and any one of 50 Family Entertainment titles.

With plenty of titles to choose from, retailers are expected to turn up in Valentine's Day, Easter, and Mother's Day into more than just occasions for greeting cards, candy, and flowers.

January 25, 1997
Fly Away’ Lands On Video

WE CAN FLY: With the March 11 direct-to-theatrical release of “Fly Away Home,” Columbia TriStar Home Video is hoping the title will sell as much as the film—rather than the theatrical showing might indicate. The movie, starring Anna Paquin (“The Piano”), and Jeff Daniels (“101 Dalmatians”), won critical praise when it opened in September, but grossed only $80 million.

“Obviously the film’s box-office doesn’t reflect its quality,” says Nancy Harris, VP of domestic marketing. “It’s a perfect family film—very well acted by real kids and adults enjoy it, and it appeals to a lot of different age groups. It may not have worked theatrically, but it may do gangbusters on video.”

For one thing, says Harris, “Fly Away Home” has a very positive word-of-mouth. More people are aware of the film (because of TV spots and other groups) have given it high marks as well.” We agree. It is one of the finest family films Child’s Play has ever had the pleasure of viewing. Based on the autobiography of Bill Lishman, “Fly Away Home” tells the story of a teen-age girl who befriends with her estranged father, a sculptor/inventor who lives in Canada, after her mother’s death in a car accident. Lonely and unhappy at leaving her New Zealand home, 13-year-old Amy perks up when she discovers a clutch of orphaned goslings.

She tends the eggs till they hatch. The goslings take for their mother, following her everywhere. But when the goslings want to fly, Amy’s father has to convince them to let go of their wings if she wants to keep them, Amy and her father decide to teach the flock to fly. A contraption designed by the father—now without any naiive setbacks.

“Fly Away Home” resonates with themes of love, dedication, trust, parenthood, and respect for nature. It is visually breathtaking, especially in depicting the lyrical beauty of flight—small wonder, as director Carroll Ballard has helmed several stunning nature-themed movies ("The Black Stallion," "Never Cry Wolf").

The underwhelming theatrical showing—ten years later that before two other recent family treasures, “A Little Princess” and “The Secret Garden”—makes you wonder whether quality movies can find a mass audience. Columbia aims to improve “Fly Away Home”’s visibility on video in combination with the Family Channel.

Harris says “Fly Away Home” is wrapped in gold clamshell Family Collection packaging, with box art that emphasizes relationships, as the film is about relationships. The theatrical poster showed a gosling silhouetted against the moon, but the video focuses on Paquin and Daniels. Columbia director of marketing Elaine Perllis, who is handling the title, says point-of-purchase materials include posters, shelf-talkers, and buttons, as well as a 3D product display that “holds a variety of units. Every movie’s distribution is a little different, and we’ve tried to do a little girl flying an ultralight, so we felt it would be eye-catching.” The trade button, available at the point of sale for 3 weeks prior to release date, is a die-cut egg with a gosling peaking out.

Perllis says that on the Family Channel’s “Family Album” program: “The Home, Family And Show,” which airs from 1-3 p.m., “will be a segment in each show where the hosts talk about the movie.” Viewers are encouraged to call in for a chance to win a Sony TV and a VCR.

She’s also evaluating outtakes from the movie “for possible future use.”

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY: Is it trendy? A number of home video lines, concerned family games have come across our desk of late. Two Action Games series titles, “Party Games” and “Indoor Games,” are aimed at parents, teachers, and baby sitters. The 30-minute, $14.95 tapes are available from Action Games of Gloucester, Va.

The How To Game Videos series includes separate tapes on the card game hearts, 500 rummy, and euchre. Each is 25 minutes and sells for $12.99. Discover Images in Fort Wayne, Ind., is the supplier.
The questions have diminished as sales of widescreen sets have soared to dominate TV sales. Once viewers noticed they weren't sacrificing image size, the networks found it easy to begin broadcasting movies in the new format.

"Television has actually gone a long way toward building product acceptance," says Kirkpatrick. "Cable channels like TBS and AMC promote special letterboxed showings of movies. That's educating the public."

The practice, which started with older titles, has spread to new releases. Michael Arkin, senior VP of marketing at Paramount Home Video, which released "Mission: Impossible" in letterboxed and pan-and-scan versions, agrees that cable is a factor in the widening demand for widescreen.

Movies don't get all of the credit. "I think that one force making letterbox more acceptable is MTV," Arkin says. "A lot of music videos are done in letterbox format. And that's gone a long way in educating younger consumers as to what it is."

Paramount built a fourth-quarter promotion around letterboxed titles, including "Mission," "Braveheart," "Forrest Gump," "Clear And Present Danger," "Congo," "The Hunt For Red October," "Patriot Games," and "Romeo And Juliet." Arkin says the decision as to which features will be letterboxed is based on how well they lend themselves to the presentation.

"It's the bigness of the film, the special effects," he notes. "When you look at the films that Paramount has chosen, they are all of a certain ilk."

Craig Belyea, VP of marketing for Universal Studios Home Video, says the studio is "targeting the serious collector," with its letterboxed editions. According to Belyea, "Casino" and "12 Monkeys" will be available in widescreen and pan-and-scan when they are released for sale.

Universal determines its widescreen selections after soliciting comments from key accounts and consumers. Letterboxing, Belyea adds, has become another element of a value-added package that can include original trailers, or, in the case of "Jaws," a filmed segment featuring the cast and crew recalling making the movie.

While the studio will have new letterboxed releases in 1997, titles and marketing strategies have not yet been determined. "Collectibility and attractiveness to the serious collector are factors," Belyea says. "We will release [letterboxed editions] day-and-date with the pan-and-scan, but there may be a different price point for widescreen."

Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment is attempting to establish a line of widescreen editions as a brand, according to spokesman Steve Feldstein. The special editions are packaged in clamshells and feature Fox's letterbox logo. Feldstein says letterboxing is considered to add value, especially for collectors. "With the recent remastered edition of "My Fair Lady," we included a "making of" special and the original trailers on the letterboxed edition," he notes. The splashiest widescreen debut could

(Continued on next page)
Letterboxing (Continued from preceding page)

be "Independence Day" already Fox's bestselling pan-and-scan title. Feldstein says there are plans to make the letterboxed version available this year.

Even if the demand is there, retailers and studios agree that not every movie is a candidate for this treatment. Blockbuster advises caution. The chain has added letterboxed sections to 370 of its stores, but evaluates each widescreen title.

"Just as there are certain types of fans, there are certain types of movies that lend themselves to this," says buyer Mélissa Hall. "Some filmmakers insist on it. Filmmakers have an interest in the way their films are presented—that's one reason why films are shot widescreen in the first place. It seems a shame not to see the film as it was made.

"You probably won't be seeing the widescreen version of 'The Stupids' anytime soon," she comments.

VHS letterboxing accounts for only a small percentage of sales, even when it's available. Estimates range from 3%-10%. But the format is here to stay. Waxworld's Kirkpatrick says that the percentage increases with every VHS release.

Hall agrees. Blockbuster's dedicated letterbox sections are an "endorsement of the type of product," she points out.

"It's not for everyone but the people who like it, really love it."

Blockbuster (Continued from page 87)

Baskin adds that the chain will also close 50 unprofitable music stores. However, signage at existing Blockbuster Music and Blockbuster Video stores will not be affected by the change.

Over the past 18 months, the chain has begun adding music departments to its video stores, and many of the music stores also have sell-through video sections. Many music and video locations have carried computer software titles since 1991, and books are in more than half of the the chain's 500 music stores.

In its quest to become the neighborhood entertainment source, Blockbuster will use its extensive consumer database to select the product mix.

"The goal is neighborhood retailing and to customize product for each store," says Baskin. "The key is to cater to the local market and service the local customer."

Baskin says the chain has the "strategic advantage" of knowing the entertainment buying habits of half of the households in the U.S. But, he says, managers at individual locations will have the most input on which products to stock.

"Having unmatched demographic information is a great guide, but it's not a silver bullet," says Baskin.

The new image campaign may be the first step to unify the chain, which has grown to 4,000 locations in the U.S. through a series of acquisitions and massive expansion within the last five years. The company has also gone through several management changes.

In the latest round of executive shuffles, president/COO Gerry Geddis and executive VP Brian Woods are departing because of the company's relocation to Dallas from Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

However, Baskin says that 76% of Blockbuster's senior management has committed to moving to Dallas.
‘The Internet will not be used in the living room for surfing the Web’

The announced content partners are DirectTV, IBM, Matsushita, NBC, the Sci-Fi Channel, Starsight, Toshiba, and the USA Network. The development is an extension of an existing Microsoft content-development program, known as Simply Interactive Television, that was announced in April 1996.

Microsoft’s embrace of the Internet has been cautious, as the customized Windows interface is an attempt to establish an open-ended entertainment platform that can serve as a one-stop destination for the user’s audio, video, and interactive entertainment. By stripping the Windows 95 interface of its technical appearance, the company is also aiming to redefine the computer as a vital component of the entertainment console.

Microsoft’s strategy to give more users friendly access to the computer desktop follows similar efforts by numerous companies to create a more user-friendly PC.

Sony and IBM are among the companies that showed off new compacted-size computer systems that aesthetically resembled home entertainment consoles, rather than the clunky, tin-shelled computers of the past.

The computer of tomorrow is more likely to be a console, according to Ward.

‘It’s important that whatever the consumer buys, they should have the ability to work together—even if the product has been bought at different times,’ he said.

But, Culver added, the Internet TV of 1997 will be a complement, rather than replace, traditional television viewing.

‘The Internet will not be used in the living room for surfing the Web,’ he said. ‘It will be used in combination with other things, such as getting program information for the TV.

The developing Internet TV platform is not without its skeptics. The first generation of set-top Internet interaction devices have also taken a beating by computer industry analysts, who say consumers will be soured by its limited features and lack of storage device.

‘TV sets imply work to some people,’ said a panelist. ‘People want a glamour entertainment experience...’ and kids already fight over the remote,’ argued Business Week editor Ed Baig, who moderated the panel. ‘People may not want interactivity in their living room.’

Laurie Frick, VP of Compaq’s consumer group, responded, ‘Things are changing. Look at the younger generation... Lying still on a couch is not what 15-year-old kids do.’

Acer’s Culver said during the panel that the TV set may flourish as the computer monitor of the future. ‘We have done lots of work with that,’ he said. ‘People do not like watching TV on a 17-inch monitor because it’s too small.’

Culver said: ‘The existing computer-based TV tuner technologies are just not very good.

However, moderating Baig argued that ‘not every retail outlet or set manufacturer in the world wants to do this.’

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‘People may not want interactivity in their living room.’

The already announced Text to Speech program will be the first step towards full-fledged demos. The Text to Speech program is designed to allow computer users to read aloud the content of written texts.

At this point, a rivalry between demo makers of each of those two computer systems emerged. Each demo aimed to outperform the previous creations with more impressive computer graphics and better programming skills. Many of these computer clips were based on feedback from other programming teams. Computer programmer gangs are still active in today’s demos, which continues to thrive on the PC.

Many demo creators have gone on to careers as programmers for legitimate game companies. For example, ex-Ultraforce (1991’s ‘Vext Demo’) member Arjan Brusse helped create Epic MegaGames’ shareware hit Classic, and members of the Future Crew recently founded the game company Remedy Inc., which made the racing game game from Apogee.

The growth explosion of the Internet’s World Wide Web has also helped the demo scene move from the European computer and club underground community to the mainstream Internet culture. Several Web pages are devoted to the Internet demo scene. Of the most popular sites is the HorNet Archive (http://www.hornet.sohomedia.de/), the Hellenic (http://www.hellenic.net), and the Internet search engine for all indexed demos dating back to the ‘80s.

A few demo programmers are expected to create new Internet specific technologies, such as Macro-media’s Shockwave, to develop clips that can be delivered without the lengthy download to web client-sized previews of work-in-progress demos, known as “downtown,” less time to download than full-fledged demos and are also common on the Internet.

As the demo scene continues to grow, many programmers are organizing social gatherings that celebrate the computer creation and music. Demo programmers and fans periodically gather together to show off their creations and compete for prizes at organized parties. Larger competitive gatherings, known as “compos,” are also common in the demo scene. These competitions bring together hundreds of programmers, who vie for prizes.

Among the bigger annual gatherings are the Party, Assembling, and the Gathering, which each draw more than 3,500 people. Almost all competitions take place in Europe, including the well-established gatherings in Finland, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Sweden, France, Germany, Denmark, and Holland. Through the U.S., does not have its own annual gathering, U.S.-based demo programmers have competed in the three-day North American Demo Con, which is held in Montreal.

Upcoming demo parties include Synergy, the first major demo party at the Game Developers Conference in March in San Francisco. The event will feature a number of international demos.

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Billboard’s NARM/March 15th issue features our annual spotlight on the NARM confab taking place in Orlando, Florida. This special issue provides readers with an up-to-date, comprehensive overview on the general health of the retail market (multimedia, video and mass products). In addition, coverage will preview artists scheduled to perform, provide complete listings of events and explore the retail landscape of Orlando.

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Ask for Jeff Sorratto
in February a lower-priced DVD player (DV-500), selling for $599.

In March, Panasonic plans to roll out two midpriced DVD players at $599 and $749. The high-end model will contain a built-in Dolby Digital decoder.

Also due in the first half of 1997 are Denon’s $599 DVD player and midpriced ($400–$700) units from Pioneer, Sony, Thomson, Zenith, Akai, and Toshiba.

Sony’s sole offering during the full-priced DVD $7000s, due in April for about $1000 and up. Among the bells and whistles offered by the unit are a 32-bit RISC processor, 10-bit digital processing, frame and field scan, and in both forward and reverse, and high-end audio hardware.

In addition, Sony is bundling four free CDs. “In the future, one gets early consumers who are “looking for leading-edge technology,” says Mike Fitzgerald, who heads the DVD marketing team at Sony Consumer Audio/Video Group. Fitzgerald estimates that U.S. player sales will reach $500,000 in 1997.

That number is considerably more conservative than the findings of a study by the San Francisco-based research company BASES Group, which estimates that within three years, wholesale revenue for studies from the sale of DVD movies could equal the $8 billion taken annually by VHS software sales.

The study, which was presented by Woodstock, CO. at CED in San Francisco, indicates that there is the potential to sell 2.5 million units of DVD software per week by the end of the year and 12 million per week by the beginning of its third year in the marketplace.

Most other estimates on the first-year sales for DVD players range from 500,000 to 1 million.

Woodstock, N.Y.-based researcher InfoTech estimates that the price of a DVD player will fall to $250 by 2000, and that the installed base of DVD players will reach about 80 million units by 2005. InfoTech also estimates that although the prices of DVD players will be available worldwide by the end of this year.

Retailers reacting with cautious optimism to the digital promise of DVD.

“Everything is contingent on what comes into the pipeline from the software side,” says Brian Regan, director of corporate communication and special projects for Virgin Megastore. “How willing are the studios going to be to license the software and to license the hardware as a viable alternative? Once we get a real sense of where that commitment is, that is where I think the actual retail numbers will be.

We lost ladderside titles have created a small but loyal base, and DVD has the potential to be much bigger.

—Jim Balsillie

**RETAIL ROLLOUT**

The Virgin Megastore chain is aiming to get a DVD preview display into its stores this month to alert consumers to the format.

But a number of companies with Sony for a cross-promotion campaign and DVD sampling program is due to begin in April. Blockbuster outlets in its top 50 markets will offer demonstrations, special promotions, and疾病的 titles in the store. SanDisk ExpressCard players and Toshiba’s DVD-5000 player will receive coupons offering free DVD rentals at Blockbuster.

“This will make sure consumers can sample and get a taste of what the new technology offers for expanded entertaining experience,” said Fisher. “It will also build awareness and credibility for the accessibility of software through traditional software channels.

Blockbuster’s DVD campaign is an extension of its existing “Maximum TV” promotion with Sony. A company spokesman said that it would also stock DVD titles from other studios.

At the CES panel on DVD, many in the industry voiced their commitment in the rental of the launch format.

Although Blockbuster is among the retailers that plan to introduce DVD in the first quarter of 1997, they are concerned about the consumer response to the new format and the high price of software that will make DVD a sales medium.

“The way the initial pricing has been discussed, this will preclude the majority of consumers,” said Schoonover. “We think that the natural future is to sell this product. We don’t see a role for rental.”

Warner’s Lieberfarb said that he is “optimistic” about the future for DVD rental, but that studios need to secure a parallel packaged media in the digital future.

“The rental business has been, and is, a terrific business for Hollywood,” Lieberfarb said. “We see it as an opportunity for longevity. But this is a bit about writing an insurance policy for the future of the packaged media in this new-look, new-revenue format that gives consumers a real motive to buy the best hits of the past.”

Although it was the financial hit taken by companies that were preparing for a 1996 launch of DVD, prior to copyright protection issues and complaints from the delay of its release until the first quarter of this year.

“The money to initiate the launch of the DVD twin—maybe three times—seems significant,” said Larry Pesce, manager of DVD product management at Thomson Consumer Electronics. “March or April is not an ideal time to release new consumer products. We will put money in to begin consumer awareness then, and we hope the product will not hit retail until this year.

“We probably spent some money that we didn’t have to spend, but I don’t think that any of the money was wasted,” said Steve Nickerson, VP of DVD marketing for Toshiba Consumer Electronics. “We’ve grown in every other business that we have, so we can be a credit to those other businesses.”

But Weidner prepares well for both the early and the late retailing. He will start the campaign in January, and the Reel-Windswept Pacific link avoids a specific production relationship with Reel.

Concerns have been raised that such production titles with music publishers have been too risky to warrant major payoffs for both sides. “I think we’re too far into the past to know what the future will bring with it,” said Medow. “But we are not absolutely against such arrangements. We just have to be careful about it.”

Our whole idea in terms of publishing is to develop things and buy catalogs.

In a prepared statement, Medow says, “Every aspect of music fascinates me, from the creative side to the business side. This endeavor is simply an extension of that fascination. I’ve always had an interest in copyrights, and I was waiting for the right time to...”

Windswep Pacific will give Hitco that helps in the past. Hitco is not that system needs to ensure success. Their involvement with film will give Hitco another creative edge into motion pictures.”

Windswep Pacific has several deals with movie music supervisors, including the team of Los Angeles-based Budd Carr and John Bill, and expects to have them on board with the LAPEJ orbit. “We’ll be encouraging writers of all kinds to seek us out. We believe they’re the best organs in the wood, where we’ll compete with others in getting credits in films and TV.”

Windswep Pacific recently made a worldwide administration deal with Townshend for his Tower and Eel Pie catalogs. They contain all of Townshend’s songs from Who albums starting “Who Do Numbers,” in addition to his songs from his solo recordings and new compositions.

Recently, Windswep Pacific made another co-venture arrangement with another company that is expanding into the music publishing business.

In talking about the company’s financial situation, Medow says that the company grew in consolidated gross income of more than $900,000, with profits that were “substantial.”

Medow expects to be on hand at MIDEM Sunday-Tuesday (19-21) to call attention to the co-venture with Reel. Hitco is administered by Windswep Pacific in the U.S., and through its companies in Japan, England, and Germany, along with subpublishing arrangements with other entities.
**Issues Abound For European Radio**

**They Include New Formats, Deregulation, DAB**

**BY MIKE MCGEEVER**

LONDON—As the new year begins, European radio executives are examining the issues they must tackle if the medium is to take its next step forward in 1997. Foremost on the list is establishing more formats, building advertisers' confidence, further deregulation, and digital audio broadcasting (DAB).

In a discussion about these issues, a number of key European broadcast leaders explained how such matters will affect European radio this year and in the next decade. Regarding the future introduction of new formats to Europe, Peter Waak, PD of two Stockholm stations, modern rock Bandit 105.5 FM and soft AC Luggage 104.7 RTL, says that for the first time in the region's history, markets are becoming fragmented.

"What is making life more interesting for programmers is that the markets will become more competitive, with new licenses and frequencies becoming available," he says.

"Stations are finding their niches," Waak continues. "For example, we see AC splitting up into hot AC and soft AC. Rock is dividing into modern rock and rhythmic rock formats. This enables the stations to supervise their core audiences. Also, in the near future we are going to see alternative music stations in Europe."

Berliner JazzRadio managing director Winifred Staying remarks. "In mature markets, where there are already several commercial broadcasters, the new frequencies will probably mostly go to broadcasters with narrower formats," she says.

Staying predicts that deregulation and additional frequencies will attract niche broadcasters, who in turn will eventually draw new advertising revenue to the industry.

"Because of the narrowcast formats, we will see a whole new group of advertisers coming to radio that, up until now, have not had the chance to reach their targeted markets through radio. At Jazzradio, we are now starting to experience that," Staying says.

While signs point upward for advertiser interest in radio—the U.K.'s Advertising Assn. has recognized commercial radio as the fastest-growing medium for the past three years—a number of challenges remain firmly in place.

"In a short period of time, we have become quite good at programming and promotion. But we have a lot to learn about marketing. Now we have to become more professional," Waak says.

To encourage existing advertisers to increase their spending on radio, as well as to entice new clients to the medium, broadcasters must furnish concrete evidence that radio is a good investment, he adds.

"We have to continue to prove that radio is really efficient," Waak continues. "There are still a lot of clients out there who are suspicious of radio. It has to be proven, not only by sales increases, but with research, including case-by-case studies that must be supplied to the advertisers by the broadcasters themselves."

Paul Brown, chief executive of the U.K.'s commercial radio trade organization, the Commercial Radio Companies Assn., agrees that an important challenge in 1997 is for radio—not only in the U.K., but across Europe—to maintain its recent commercial success. But perhaps more important, he says, is that DAB technology and deregulation will lead to further consolidation in some countries, as well as "corporatism"—which he says represents a favorable shift for the radio industry.

"What fascinates European broadcasters is, Who is going to own them? Regulations vary from country to country, but by and large, whatever digitilization leads to, it will lead to corporatization, which is no bad thing to my mind," says Brown, who is a frequent lecturer at the International Academy of Broadcasting in Geneva, Switzerland.

"Whether DAB is going to work or not, with digital TV coming and the growth of the Internet, radio can’t afford not to be a digital medium," he adds. "Once you start to use digital technology, you start generating a lot of different channels of information on the same spectrum. And once you do that, you are, in effect, creating a corporation that one didn’t exist before."

"However much you try to use regulations to your disposal to ensure that each program service on a commercial [DAB] multiplex is owned by a separate person, the fact is, you only make the most of using digital transmission if you have a single owner," Brown continues. "Public broadcasters [such as the BBC] are in a good position because they are corporations already. That is why they are so keen on DAB?"

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**TOP 20 STATION GROUPS OF 1996**

(Ranked by 1996 estimated revenues and No. of stations owned)

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<th>Rank by Est. Revenues</th>
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**L.A.'s KROQ & Guests Enjoy An Almost Acoustic Christmas Concert**

Spirits were high at the recent seventh annual KROQ Los Angeles Almost Acoustic Christmas concert, featuring the likes of Beck, Garbage, Sarah McLachlan, Fiona Apple, Bush, the Wallflowers, and Natalie Merchant. Here are snapshot highlights of the event.

Clockwise, from top left, Fiona Apple and Winona Ryder get up close and personal backstage at the concert, which was filled to capacity for two consecutive evenings. Shirley Manson of Garbage, right, shares a good-liming giggle with KROQ personality Nicky Worden. Shown rocking the house during the closing number, from left, are Natalie Merchant, Poe, Trace Bonham, and Sarah McLachlan. Courtney Love, center, tries to decide whose cuter: Bush's Gavin Rossdale, left, or KROQ PD Kevin Weatherly.
CAUSING A COMMOTION: From the moment she began production for her new radio hit, in the recently released film version of "Evita," Madonna says that she wanted to record a dance version of "Don't Cry For Me Argentina," the second single from the motion picture soundtrack.

In the five weeks since its release to radio, the 30-second-long, digitally serviced "Miami Mix"—commandeered by masters Pablo Flores and Javier Garza with the diva herself—has proved into a hit for Madonna for the last three or four years," says Barney Kilpatrick, VP for promotion for Warner Bros. Records. "It's a pleasure giving them what they want.

Giving consumers frothing over the song what they want, however, has been more of a Sisyphean task.
The roots of creating this latest Tekle Me Elmo of radio songs was launched by Madonna's producer to put her own stamp on a tune that has been recorded in its traditional form by a multitude of artists, from Olivia Newton-John and Donna Summer to the Carpenters. (Its only Billboard chart appearance to date is a disco version in 1980 by Nation's Group assembled by producer Boris Midney; it made No. 72 on the Hot 100 Singles chart.)

Madonna's publicist Liz Rosenberg says, "Since she didn't write the music and lyrics, she wanted her signature on that song. She can't resist trying to put her personal spin on a project. I think, in her way, the song says 'I'm going to do it my way and go into the studio and work up a remix.'"

In addition, says Madonna, "I know the classic version of 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina' would have a hard time on radio. I thought this was the perfect opportunity to make it new."

So in August 1996, Madonna—still in the studio mixing the movie soundtrack—made a rush decision to rerecord "Evita" to a dance version. "It's so much fun to do it, but his reaction was sort of shocked and surprised. It was like, 'I know it's great, but it's not my bag and I'm used to the original version.' This gave us the freedom of how it was received by Webber.

From the start, "Evita" was intended for Radio. "It was over a year ago," explains "Evita," "following 'You Must Love Me,'" which peaked at No. 18 on the Hot 100 in November. In early December, the label sent out this new version free to promote dance remix to radio, DJs, and press, accompanied by a curiously terse notice advising of the track's exclusive availability: "The Miami Mixes' contained herein are to be found neither in the album nor the film version of 'Evita' currently reissued.

These new versions are being made available by Warner Bros. Records strictly for radio airplay."

But despite the demand, Warner stood by its decision to fuel interest in the album rather than in making a dance version, a distinct interest in the single. "The only reason for this mix being done was to accommodate top 40 radio," Kilpatrick says.

At this point, since we have a two-disc (soundtrack), we're interested in selling albums, not singles. Warner traditionally doesn't play singles genres. We're not interested in putting out a single and losing money just to get a chart position," he adds.

With the new year beginning and interest in the dance remix burgeoning, the producers were looking for a new version, a distinct interest in the dance remix. "I wanted to do a new version of the song," says producer Alan Parker, and "Evita" score composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, who had approved its release to radio. Flores says, "I wanted something that would be dance, but faithful to the movie and to Argentina with a Latin feel. She was talking about generic remixes and how she doesn't like them, the ones that take the vocal and just put it on a bed of dance tracks. "I really wanted it to have a Latin flavor and to have an element of tango music," Madonna adds. "It represents a combination of time periods—those of the movie, of disco's peak, and of the present with the Latin feel.

"I arranged it in Miami, then went to L.A., where a guitarist and piano player came in, and Madonna redid the vocals in English and Spanish." In addition, an Argentinian bandonéon (which sounds like an accordion) was sampled and added to the intro. "The whole thing was done in two weeks," he says.

Madonna then had the delicate task of showcasing the new version for the movie. "We arranged it in Miami, then went to New York, to a guitar player and piano player came in, and Madonna redid the vocals in Spanish and English." In addition, an Argentinian bandonéon (which sounds like an accordion) was sampled and added to the intro. "The whole thing was done in two weeks," he says.

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th its moody six-string squall, re"essed vocal, and fustated lyrics, Failure's "Stuck On You" would appear at first h"ning to be a particularly evocative tale of love-is-the-drug. Although it could be the other way around. "From the discussions on the Internet, it seems that a lot of people think 'Stuck On You'—and most of our songs, really—is about drugs," says Ken Andrews, one-third of the L.A. band Failure. "Of course, it can be about drugs if you want it to be. But when I wrote the song, I was thinking about those melodies that stick in your head while you're parking your car, songs that imbue themselves in your consciousness whether you want them to or not. Even for me, though, the meaning of the song changes. When I sing 'Stuck On You' live, I'm thinking about my fiancée and then sometimes I'm thinking about Lionel Richie and his rendition of the song. Whether the narrative thread is melodic, romantic, or pharmacological, Failure—guitarist/bassist/vocalist Andrews, guitarist/bassist Greg Edmonds, and drummer Kelli Scott—has a knack for weaving an artful, addictive web of sound. No. 32 on Modern Rock Tracks this week, "Stuck On You" comes from the band's third album for Slash Warner Bros., "Fantas- 

tic Planet," which is full of grinding, post-grunge essays on the possibilities of guitar rock. Amid such songs as "Sergeant Politeness," "Titful," "Smoking Molasses," "Dirty Blue Balloons," and "Holier Than," Failure forges a unique sonic signature as well as finds common ground between the obsessive pop-ope of early Cure and the modulated mosh-riff of Nirvana.

Such f"-flying touchstones seem apropos since Andrews is that rare item, an artist who's an active radio listener. Andrews flips not only between moder- n and mainstream rock stations but also between classic and college outlets as he drives around Los Angeles, remaining open-minded yet bemoming top 40-style repetition: "The alt-rock format's only good if your drive is a half-hour or less."

### Billboard

**Mainstream Rock Tracks**

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Fashions designer Todd Oldham, known from his appearances on MTV's "House Of Style," has taken his visual expertise to a new medium by direct¬ing "Come On Everybody," a new clip from jazz-hop trio US3. The video marks Oldham's second venture into video, following his work with director Hype Williams on the Maxi Priest featuring Shaggy clip, "That Girl." "I've been working with MTV for the past four years, I've had a lot of behind-the-scenes training, so it was nice to take an easy transition," he has commented. "The budget was huge, but the creativity was there."

"As far as video aesthetic is concerned, I chose not to pursue one," Oldham says. "I think it's more important to change and to cultivate new ideas and con¬cepts. We just had a lot of fun with it." In addition to the US3 members and three back-ground and dancers, the clip features model Stacey McKenzie, who modeled in two of Old¬ham's fashion shows.

"Stacey was a fantastical addition to the video. Also, the stage set (designed by Oldham) was incredible. It was like a spiral maze that everybody walked and danced around," Wilkinson says. "I have an off record deal with the Ashes of Mike Oldham, I suggested that we could cut the dance in the video. At one point, they had me dressed in leather trousers and a rubber jacket, big shades, with my hair stuck up, while dancing with a trumpet in a four-foot square box. That's something I don't normally get to do," the producer says with a laugh.

The video was shot in one day at the Broadway Studios in the Astoria section of Queens, NY.

According to Linda Ingrisano, VP of visual marketing at Capitol, the clip will be serviced to AC, Top-20, BET, and the Box, as well as many regional video shows. "US3 has a unique sound and style that breaks away from traditional musical genres," Ingrisano says. "They appeal to a wide audience and various show formats, including pop, R&B, alternative, and jazz. The video brilliantly captures the essence of US3."

"As far as video aesthetic is concerned, I chose not to pursue one," Oldham says. "I think it's more important to change and to cultivate new ideas and con¬cepts. We just had a lot of fun with it." In addition to the US3 members and three background and dancers, the clip features model Stacey McKenzie, who modeled in two of Oldham's fashion shows.

"Stacey was a fantastical addition to the video. Also, the stage set (designed by Oldham) was incredible. It was like a spiral maze that everybody walked and danced around," Wilkinson says. "I have an off record deal with the Ashes of Mike Oldham, I suggested that we could cut the dance in the video. At one point, they had me dressed in leather trousers and a rubber jacket, big shades, with my hair stuck up, while dancing with a trumpet in a four-foot square box. That's something I don't normally get to do," the producer says with a laugh.

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**BILLBOARD JANUARY 25, 1997**

**WHO SAID DISCO IS DEAD?** “Discotheque” by U2 (Island) was digitally downloaded to radio Jan. 8. Considering U2’s rock roots, it should come as no surprise that 81 mainstream rock stations and 79 modern rock stations devotedly started spinning the track immediately. However, the song is less guitar-driven and more base-heavy than most rock tracks, hence the title. Regardless, the song debuts this week on Modern Rock Tracks and Mainstream Rock Tracks at Nos. 3 and 5, respectively.

“Like It” by the Blackout Allstars (Columbia) soars 13 positions on the Hot 100 to No. 88 because of a 16% increase in audience impressions, which total now 18 million. “Like It” received new airplay at 18 monitored stations, and 67 other monitored stations continued playing the song during the survey period.

“I’m Not Giving You Up” by Gloria Estefan (Epic) strides 54-40 on the Hot 100 Singles and flies 22 positions, to No. 48, on Hot Airplay due to a 62% increase in audience impressions, which now number almost 16 million. Estefan also earns Greatest Gainer/Airplay for her showing on the Hot 100.

The record-breaking effort of “Tell Me Where It’s At” by 4 Non Blondes (Interscope) continues to impress, as the track moves 32-11 on the Hot 100, and 39-17 on Hot Airplay, due to 59% and 87% increases in audience impressions, which now number nearly 15 million.

Muscle in talks for cash infusion
(Continued from page 10)

trade payables, the next critical date facing the chain is March 30, when its waivers on the revolving credit facility expire. After that date, the banking group has the ability to pull the loan if Musicland violates the financial covenants.

Despite the creditors’ fears, Jack Eidtger, chairman/ president/CEO of Musicland, has been steadfast in his resolve not to file for Chapter 11. In addition to consistently sending out the message that the chain will not make a Chapter 11 filing, Eidtger has put out a counter-campaign to the media.

Recently, the retailer closed 15 Media Play stores, apparently agreeing to pay back $25 million in defaulted debt. Musicland planned to file Chapter 11, it would have been cheaper to close the stores after the filing, one Musicland bondholder said.

In addition, Musicland made a $5 million payment due to bondholders in December, a move some also saw as a sign that the company has no intention of making a Chapter 11 filing.

Furthermore, Musicland management is asking major vendors for concessions for payment due in January, February, and March, sources say. That would not only avoid the need for forgiveness of payments, which would suggest that in Musicland’s effort to avoid Chapter 11, it may consider trying to do an out-of-court restructuring.

In September, Musicland hired Smith Barney to explore the chain’s financing options, including a possible sale of its assets, as part of an all-out campaign to avoid Chapter 11. That process has already attracted two suitors for the company, each of which floated prices that Musicland apparently considered to be low. The pros and cons reportedly did not meet all the criteria the Musicland board of directors set when it began the process.

Marcia Apel, senior VP of corporate advertising and communications at Musicland, declined to comment on the latest developments, but says, “Smith Barney was retained by the company to help the company find ways to decrease its debt and increase financial flexibility. That is an ongoing process that has turned up leads [for Musicland] to investigate.”

Billboard was unable to determine the names of the parties that hope to buy Musicland, although one was said to be represented by Bear Stearns. Both suitors are said to have discussed prices in the range of $250 million-$300 million.

They were looking at a company that includes Media Play, which has a history of being referred to as “a book” that Smith Barney prepared to shop Musicland, has a negative cash flow of about $30 million. Musicland’s Suncoast Motion Picture Co. chain and its mall-based Sam Goody music store division, on the other hand, combined for a positive cash flow of about $65 million. Data on Musicland’s On Cue division is not available to Billboard.

The two entities that considered buying Musicland both wanted the company to negotiate a prepackaged Chapter 11 filing, because their offers would not have enough to satisfy the company’s creditors and because neither apparently wanted to assume the company’s liabilities. (In a prepackaged filing, the creditors negotiate a restructuring of the company’s balance sheet. On the day of the filing, the company presents an agreed upon plan, which gets immediate court approval.)

At the end of December, Musicland’s addressable pay TV according to sources, was about $500 million. It also had a revolver, which was believed to be drawn down to close to its total availability of $650 million. The company also owed $110 million to bondholders.

Musicland, however, never approached creditors, and financial advisor, Smith Barney, went back to the suitors and asked them to sweeten the pot by putting an additional $50 million into their bids. Neither suitors came back with a higher offer, and conversations terminated.

It was at that point that negotiations between Musicland and Bear Stearns that chased the company. Apollo is said initially to have also asked Musicland to put together a prepackaged Chapter 11 filing. A spokesperson for Apollo declined to comment.

In the meantime, Musicland continued to see interest from potential buyers. Since Dec. 20, it has closed about 52 stores, according to sources, including 15 Media Play and six Suncoast outlets. According to company documents obtained by Billboard, Musicland plans to close an additional 50 to 60 locations, including four Media Plays, before the end of January. The company has also successfully pursued rent concessions, allowing other potentially weak stores to remain open.

Investors and trade creditors were further heartened when Musicland turned in a relatively strong performance for the holiday selling season. The chain reported a comparable-store increase of 2.9% during a period when album sales were down 6%.

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Universe worked closely with Capitol on a project that was right on the money: a rich-looking, debossed leather wallet.

Rutting with a CD packaging problem? We custom-design all kinds of packages, including polyethylene. And we handle all types of assembly—from disc and graphics insertion to shrink wrapping.

So whatever your CD packaging challenge, take a cue from Capitol and call us. We can help you arrive at a solution—in record time.

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**BUBBLING UNDER HOT 100® SINGLES**

**MUSICALGRAMS**

(Continued from page 47)

Sonny, No. 1 & Z/Sumanne: 5 Stuck Im Volkswagen, 100,000. Simone, B: 114, 15, 8, 6, 5. Unser, B: 115, 13, 11, 9, 6. Sonny & Simone: 116, 12, 10. Delbert McClinton, B: 117, 11, 10, 9, 9. Delbert McClinton, B: 118, 11, 9, 8, 8. Delbert McClinton, B: 119, 11, 8, 7, 7. Delbert McClinton, B: 120, 11, 7, 6, 6. Delbert McClinton, B: 121, 11, 6, 5, 5. Delbert McClinton, B: 122, 11, 5, 4, 4. Delbert McClinton, B: 123, 11, 4, 3, 3. Delbert McClinton, B: 124, 11, 3, 2, 2. Delbert McClinton, B: 125, 11, 2, 1, 1. Delbert McClinton, B: 126, 11, 1, 0, 0. Delbert McClinton, B: 127, 11, 0, 0, 0. Delbert McClinton, B: 128, 11, 0, 0, 0. Delbert McClinton, B: 129, 11, 0, 0, 0. Delbert McClinton, B: 130, 11, 0, 0, 0.

**BEST SMALL ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE (WITH OR WITHOUT CONDUCTOR)**

Boulez... Exposition in F-G-#F, Pierre Boulez, Chicago Symphony Orchestra

**BEST VOCAL PERFORMANCE (WITH OR WITHOUT CONDUCTOR)**

Britten... Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn & 3 Pieces, John Salmon, English Chamber Orchestra; Britten: 50th Anniversary, John Gibson, English Chamber Orchestra

**BEST CLASSICAL PERFORMANCE**

Britten... Britten: Serenade for Tenor, Horn & 3 Pieces, John Salmon, English Chamber Orchestra; Britten: 50th Anniversary, John Gibson, English Chamber Orchestra

**DAVID LAMBERT**

**RENAISSANCE MAN: Sean “Puffy” Combs is a writer, producer, label mogul, and now an artist in his own right. “Can’t Nobody Hold Me Down” by Puff Daddy (Featuring Mase) (Bad Boy/Arista) enters the Hot 100 Singles at No. 32.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
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**Title:** The Billboard 200

**No. 1**

1. **NO DOUBT** - "Tragic Kingdom" (3 weeks on No. 1)

**Artists:**

- **Shania Twain**
- **Bryan Adams**
- **Bon Jovi**
- **Evanescence**
- **The Eagles**
- **Lindsey Buckingham**
- **Garth Brook**
- **Alan Jackson**
- **George Strait**
- **Reba McEntire**

**Albums:**

- **The Beatles** - Singles Anthology 1
- **AC/DC** - Back in Black
- **Elton John** - A Song for Guy
- **Weezer** - Pinkerton
- **Pearl Jam** - Ten
- **Nirvana** - Nevermind
- **Eminem** - The Marshall Mathers LP
- **Metallica** - ...And Justice for All
- **Green Day** - American Idiot
- **Green Day** - Dookie

**Peak Position:**

- **No. 1**
- **No. 2**
- **No. 3**
- **No. 4**
- **No. 5**
- **No. 6**
- **No. 7**
- **No. 8**
- **No. 9**
- **No. 10**

**Note:** This chart reflects the top-selling albums in the United States for the week ending January 25, 1997.
TURKISH MUSIC MARKET

(Continued from page 5)

The economy is also vibrant, despite its chronic problems of high interest rates and government suppression of consumer spending power.

Commenting on the "Generations 1" compilation, Healey says, "It's a punk rock compilation of old and new-school punk artists. We want to talk to people through the voices of today, and not go back automatically to the past. An artist who has helped me before, I want the new voices; I want to give an opportunity to the young bands that I know to get a chance.

"Generations 1" was compiled and executive-produced by Los Angeles-based Jason Rothberg through his independent label, Lion's Pride Records. It opens with the theme track, "Generations," written by former Clash guitarist/vocalist Strummer and recorded under the band name Electric Doghouse. The song highlights the articles of "Generations 1," and salutes Eleanor Roosevelt's role as architect of the document.

Strummer says, "I'm a fan of Jack's. It's a pleasure to work with him aside from helping with some U.K. Amnesty work at Milton Keynes where I played along with Aswad and others. So when Jack called me up and told me about this, I was inspired to put pen to paper.

Copeland worked extensively with Healey in the '80s and was keen to get involved with "Generations 1." He says, "As a不一样的 generation of human rights activists, we are an issue—like Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria, where I spent my youth—this was a subject matter I knew a lot about. When I heard about the 'Generations' concept, it was a natural marriage between my past work as an artist and my interest in human rights.

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Healey's organization plans to mark the 50th anniversary of the U.N.'s Declaration of Human Rights by launching a campaign dubbed Right Now!, which will include a music compilation titled "Generations 1—A Punk Look At Human Rights."

Due Feb. 11 on Miles Copeland's EMI-distributed Ark label, the album features such prominent artists as Joe Strummer of the Police and Sting, who agreed to share profits from the proceeds of the release.

Tim Shincler, GM of BMG Turkey, which assisted the development of the music industry in Turkey, says that the country has already been becoming more prominent in the era of EMI, BMG, and Sony.

EMI took a majority holding in its licensee, Kent Elektronik, at the beginning of the nineties, and has played a key role in the basis of its new affiliated EMI Kent. BMG was formerly licensed to local company Turkey Music Turkey, when BMG Turkey was established, using Raks manufacturing and distribution services, Sony Music Turkey opened in January 1994.

The one missing major, Warner Music International, for the moment retains a licensing agreement—begun in 1989—under which Warner distributed its recordings through local company General, which also distributes for Sony.

LOCAL VS. INTERNATIONAL

Local repertoire is the majors' main focus in the Turkish market, which, according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), was $803 million in 1996. Local sales vary to $60 million last year.

The attractions are obvious: While international repertoire produces significant sales—a strong release will account for about 75% of BMG Turkey's 70,000 unit sales, according to Tim Shincler, GM of BMG Turkey, while a strong album can reach 250,000-400,000, and an exceptional one can top the 1 million mark.

Ayse Birkan, EMI Kent's international manager, puts the current ratio at 10%-15% in favor of domestic product, though in 1994, B.Ü. G. S., and Kent Birkan, general manager, says international repertoire could be as low as 5% in 1996. Birkan and Giresano agree that the market for Turkish music by the nation's plethora of record labels and TV stations breeds success for local artists. MTV Europe has a part-time broadcasting agreement with Number One TV, the once-hour dedicated Turkish music channel, Kral TV, and the mainstream TV channels, which broadcast large amounts of local music. Artists also receive a further boost through appearing in popular TV soap operas.

Tony Woolcott, senior VP at Sony Music Europe, says that the Turkish market became attractive to the majors because of the growth and maturity in terms of such factors as copyright protection. Sony's commitment to it has been rewarded, he states, by a catalogue of recent sales and profits from 1995 to 1996. He adds, though, that there are more general signs of encouragement, most notably the introduction of the CD at the expense of the cassette.

But while CD sales are growing, player penetration remains low. According to Raks' research, cassettes accounted for 84.2% of all units sold last year, with CDs making up the remainder, however, according to the company, cassette sales are down while those of CDS are on the increase. "CD is the growing CD," adds Giresano.

The market though, is not what it used to be. Until the early '90s, an album of local repertoire often sold between 10,000 and 20,000 units, but burgeoning private radio sector satisfied much of the market's demand for music and sales fell. On top of this, in 1994 some 300 outlets were closed due to inflation breaking out of its usual 70%-80% range and hitting 125%.

BMG Turkey's GM, Nese Muzik, says, "It's a problem that about this time the market became saturated with releases, particularly in Turkish pop. He says that the number of new releases is still rising, but that "the pie doesn't get any bigger."

The general economy, though, is the key to the market reaching its full potential. "The domestic market depends on consumer spending power."

Certainly, that spending power is not great. Only 2.9 million people had a per capita income of $2,700 in 1996—though with great regional variation—which explains why 1996 music sales were equal to an expenditure of about $1.43 per person.

Even within Istanbul, the largest city in Europe, with a population of about 15 million and the highest living standards, are extreme levels of poverty live cheek by jowl in a mass concentration, say Janice, Brazil, or Bombay, India, rather than Europe. On the positive side, Turkey has a young population, which, according to recent research, makes up about 60% of the total—and it is growing at a rate of 2.5% a year.
### Billboard 200 Top Albums (January 25, 1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>Black Sabbath</td>
<td>Heaven and Hell</td>
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<td>152</td>
<td>The Beatles</td>
<td>The White Album</td>
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<td>153</td>
<td>Enya</td>
<td>Watermark</td>
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<td>154</td>
<td>Michael Jackson</td>
<td>Dangerous</td>
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<td>155</td>
<td>Guns N’ Roses</td>
<td>Use Your Illusion I</td>
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<td>156</td>
<td>Madonna</td>
<td>Like a Virgin</td>
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<tr>
<td>157</td>
<td>Nirvana</td>
<td>Nevermind</td>
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<td>158</td>
<td>Pearl Jam</td>
<td>Ten</td>
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<tr>
<td>159</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Come On Over</td>
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<td>160</td>
<td>'N Sync</td>
<td>No Strings Attached</td>
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<td>161</td>
<td>Metallica</td>
<td>Metallica</td>
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<td>162</td>
<td>Foo Fighters</td>
<td>The Colour and the Shape</td>
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<td>163</td>
<td>Beastie Boys</td>
<td>Check Your Head</td>
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<td>164</td>
<td>Garth Brook</td>
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<td>165</td>
<td>Alice Cooper</td>
<td>Along Came a Spider</td>
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<td>166</td>
<td>Bob Dylan</td>
<td>Blood on the Tracks</td>
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<td>167</td>
<td>Elton John</td>
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**Top Albums**

- **R.E.M.** - **Lm**
- **Rose Royce** - **Lm**

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**Notes:**

- The number in parentheses following the artist's name indicates their position on the Billboard 200 chart.
- "Lm" stands for "Live Music" category.
- "R.E.M." refers to the rock band led by Michael Stipe.
- "Rose Royce" was a popular disco-funk group in the 1970s.

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**Billboard 200 Continued**

- **Top 109 - 200**
- **Artist**
  - **Title**
  - **Weeks On Chart**
  - **Peak Position**

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**Advertising Note:**

- The Billboard 200 chart is a weekly ranking of the best-selling albums in the United States, published by Billboard magazine.

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**Editor’s Note:**

- This issue includes a special section on the chart’s most notable albums of 1996.

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**End of Year wrapping:**

- The year-end edition of Billboard 200 typically features a countdown of the most successful albums of the year.

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**About Billboard:**

- Billboard is one of the oldest and most respected music industry publications in the United States, covering various aspects of the music business, including charts, industry news, and trends.

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**Website:**

- www.billboard.com

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**Contact:**

- For inquiries about this issue or past issues, please contact the Billboard customer service department.
stable emergence, and to have them introduce the audience to the newly found Chinese acts.

In television, TK News is aiming to develop an English-language youth music channel for distribution on JSkyB in Japan and eventually on other Japanese TV, satellite platforms worldwide.

Murdoch was introduced to Komuro through the efforts of Guy Dunstan, chairman of Channel V, the music TV channel that is part of Murdoch-owned STAR Television, and Jeff Murray, the network’s director of artist relations. Murray, who knew Komuro when both men were mentored by Sony Music director Shigeo Maruyama in Japan, will head A&R duties for TK News, while continuing his existing responsibilities; Dunstan will serve as the new firm’s managing director while continuing to lead Channel V. Maruyama will serve as a director of the venture.

A staff of up to 20 will be hired during the first two years.

“If anything, we’re trying to be a catalyst for change within Asian music,” says Dunstan, pointing to the influential role of V in popularizing Hindi pop through the channel’s impact in India. “But we’ve yet to see that kind of fundamental change in Chinese pop, yet to see that major breakthrough.”

Murray says, “We’re not taking Japanese artists and exporting them to other Asian territories. It’s not repackaging sushi. We’re also not asking Asian acts to sing in English.

TK News will be associated with the record label that has helped Komuro to achieve much of his success in Japan: Ayes D.D. “We’re going to be involved with this company on the production side,” says Ayes chairman Tom Yoda, “and distribution-wise in Southeast Asian countries through the Ayes network.” The exact relationship between Ayes and TK News has yet to be finalized, he says. “Our collaboration with Tetsuya Komuro remains the same. Ayes is always involved with Komuro.”

According to Komuro, TK News will work with Ayes to introduce Ayes acts he has produced to Asian markets, as well as promote artists the new company discovers.

**STAGGERING SALES**

Komuro’s musical career began in the early ‘80s, when, along with Takashi Tahara, Yumi Aoyamia and Naohiro, he formed techno/pop band trio TMN. In 1992, with TMN about to break up, Komuro put together tf (for Take Five), and since debuting in early 1993, the five-member group has reportedly sold a staggering 21 million singles and albums. In 1996, tf sold more product than any other Japanese act.

For the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996, Komuro was Japan’s No.1 song-writer in terms of royalties collected—a feat he is likely to repeat once Japanese performance/mechanical rights society JASRAC initiates the royalties for the most recent 12 months. Komuro also has his own weekly TV show and record label, Orumok, which is distributed by Pioneer LDC’s Internet home page (in English and Japanese) is located at http://www.komuro.com.

In Los Angeles last month, News Corp. president/CEO Peter Chernin said TK News could be profitable within one to two years. The potential for having a top-notch software provider in Asia on the TV side is considered obvious: In addition to its STAR interests, News last year acquired a 25% stake in Asiah Broadcasting, one of Japan’s major networks.

“You’ve got a problem in that you need local content in Asia,” says Lachlan Murdoch, “but that content doesn’t always work out to meet your needs. And, of course, anyone in the business can tell you that you cannot simply import content from other sources.” TK News is one way in which we can raise the level and up the ante.”

Globally, brother James Murdoch is leading News Corp.’s increased commitment to music. “As head of music for News Corp., James will naturally be involved with TK News,” says Lachlan. “He is excited by this new joint venture. He has expressed particular interest in the online side of the company, which in Japan currently receives 600,000 hits per day.

“We’re still in the stage of learning about the Asian music markets,” he adds. “But I’ve spent some time in Taiwan recently, where it was extremely encouraging. People are earning more, more, and they want to spend on music. When Guy Dunstan showed us the numbers on the potential of the market, even if you have a pessimistic view of the possibilities—even if you have the estimates in that initial proposal—the business is exciting.”

The principals of TK News are aware that Japanese pop music in its original form has not traveled well, particularly in the West. This is borne out by unsuccessful efforts to promote some of Japan’s biggest-selling phenomena to American consumers, such as Seiko Matsuda. She first received a major push across the Pacific last year, followed by PolyGram (via A&M) tried with a new English-language album. Neither made a significant impact. Others before Matsuda include Nokio, a singer with the multi-platinum group (in Japan) band Rebecca, and Toshihiko Kubota.

“At first we want to cooperate (with News Corp.) in introducing new artists to Asia,” says Komuro. “Later, I want to use their media network, such as satellite broadcasting, because there are many Japanese and Chinese living in the U.S., and I believe they want to be able to listen to this kind of music.”

Komuro stresses that he does not want to push the music in territories where it is unknown. “I just want to make it available where there is a natural market,” he says.

Last year, Komuro’s “Europroven” project for Aves found him producing and promoting dance music acts in the U.K. through the company’s British subsidiary. He has also worked in aiding the Japanese marketing of such acts as C+C Music Factory.

Elsewhere, News Corp. owns long-established Australian independent Festival Records and a 50% stake in another seasoned Australian indie, Mushroom Records.

**SESAC INKS BLANKET LOCAL-TV LICENSING PACT**

_Additionally, Swid says, the deal is “a recognition by the local TV industry of how far we have come in such a short time.” This is not an isolated development, as several dramatic moves made by the new owners of SESAC, which was established in 1991 and has always been privately owned.

Three years ago, the organization established SESAC Latina, said to be the first performing rights group dedicated to exclusively representing Spanish-language music and the first to utilize state-of-the-art monitoring technology by Broadcast Data Systems (BDS). Last July, SESAC expanded its use of BDS to track radio exposure for royalty distribution in other music genres.

SESAC in the last three years has also made notable deals with such as Bob Dylan, Neil Diamond, Paul Shaffer, and RuPaul, bolstering the roster that also includes the likes of Cassandra Wilson and Jim Brickman.

Looking ahead, Swid is bullish about local TV’s role in the use of music, claiming that “local TV, unlike network TV, has the opportunity to be more creative in terms of what it can do.”

As for its relationship with network TV, Swid says that negotiations for a new license were amicably suspended last June in order to allow SESAC to focus on other local broadcast business.

However, he notes that SESAC has already reached licensing agreements with CBS and ABC’s-owned-and-operated TV stations, and negotiations are scheduled to be rekindled with the networks beginning Monday (20).

In a prepared statement, Paul Collins, SESAC’s senior VP of licensing, says that SESAC is “thrilled to kick off 1997 with the signing of the agreement... and looks forward to making more announcements such as this one in the coming months.”

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**JAPAN’S KOMURO, MURDOCH LINK**

_In continuation from page 10_

**probably not.**
Alternative Distribution Alliance (ADA) and simultaneously released worldwide. A companion LP, "Mooney Bag," was released by Redeye Records, while a third LP, "Bag Records," was released in Japan.

The "Can Concert," a triple LP featuring contributions by such artists as Brian Eno, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Lindsay Kemp, was released by Polydor Records in 1968.

The "Rolling Stones" concert was held at the Hammersmith Odeon in London on April 20, 1971, and was released on a triple LP by the Rolling Stones Record Company.

The "Rolling Stones" concert was held at the Hammersmith Odeon in London on April 20, 1971, and was released on a triple LP by the Rolling Stones Record Company.

Mooney performs a version of "Father Cannot Buy You a Rose" which was released on the album "Mooney's 20th Century Project" in 1980.

Frank says, "Mooney Mooney happened to walk in [to Ameeba] one day, it was a free thing for him, but he was really free, since he was in the band, and Mark was like, 'Right.' But Mark's a huge Can fan, so they then started playing together.

Mooney Mooney was a member of the band Can, which formed in 1968.

Can's "I Can" was released on the album "Mooney's 20th Century Project" in 1980.

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COUNTRY MUSIC'S DROP IN '96: CAUSE FOR WORRY? (Continued from page 5)

country music's emphasis has changed from being artist-oriented to being song-oriented, resulting in decreased audience loyalty. Second, they say the downturn is a signal that country has lost its "fringe" audience, which brews in a genre for a while and then leaves.

"We've lost them back to alternative rock, and that hurt ticket sales and albums sales. That's really what a valuable consumer market, says Arista/ Nashville president Tim DuBois.

A third factor, cited at the retail level, is the fact that the music faces from other entertainment areas such as video games, computer games, and 'Nintendo and [computer] software killed us at Christmas," says Skip Young, senior music buyer for the American radio hit charts bestseller Hastings Books, Music & Video chain.

While he says he expected the 12% decline for 1996, RCA Label Group president Joe Galante says the fourth-quarter decline may be steeper than forecast, but it is not entirely unexpected.

"The first quarter of 1995 had a number of packages that were stronger, in terms of being biggest hits, whether it was Garth Brooks, Bruce & Sch-

The circle and the last three albums sold between 2 mil- lion and 5 million copies each. Jackson, "Love," was released in 1994, and "Love, Love, Love," is lagging behind his last two releases: 3.1 million for "The Greatest Hits Collection" and 2 million for "Who Are You?"

Of other new artists, Mindy McCready sold 471,000 units of her debut RCA/RCA album "Ten Thou- sand Angels." In '96, White Strait and, in 2000, the "Satellite," "Two" and "I've been blessed," was sold 281,000 of Colum-

Newer artists have been gaining momentum. Obviously, says "Hasty," "But we've been very good. We've forgotten about artistic development, we've put our,

"The labels have to do better in making sure we're not putting out one-hit wonders that are a single and not resurrected for five years.

Some publishing sources are ques-
tioning whether the country market is going to be sustained as the current surge of new artists.

Whatever is agreed on at MIDEM, the dispute is now on a legal footing. Having been formally notified of a complaint, DG4 has a number of options open to it.

It could decline to investigate or, if it does begin an inquiry, it could legal-

whatever the outcome, it would be broad enough to encompass any or all of the large labels and their repertoire.

One complication is that, while there are several independent labels that are part of direct distribution, they are not aware of the complaint.

Regardless of what happens, DuBois says it is a "very important issue" and one that the labels will have to deal with in the future.

"We're getting nibbled on the edges. The answer is to make compelling music and get back to what we do in the '90s," he says. "We've got to make things work."

Hasting buyer Young says that the entertainment dollar is being shifted away from country music, "We're down 15%-20% in country," he says, "but we're down across the board as well. But in the future, may of them will be worth boxed sets," he says. "It's a lot of it has to do with consumer attention. The consumers who help create the big boom in country have gone on to something else."

As for answers to the downturn, everyone says it's in the music, "A hit record solves everything," says DuBois.

Hinton, "We'll stay with our philosophy of sticking with the artists and develop them and concentrate on that.

"My greatest fear is that people will choke," says Mercury Nashville presi-
dent Luke Lewis. "There is a severe widespread negative reaction, but that's no reason to panic and begin cutting back, especially creatively. I'm cer-
tainly not doing anything differently.

We all need to find the artists and pick the best songs." Blackburn says the country fans "are out of love with us the last couple of years, but they still like us. We have some [Country Music Assn.] audience studies in the works that are encouraging. It's not as bad as you think.

TURKISH MUSIC MARKET (Continued from page 107)

For his part, he says that Poly- Gram's intention to work closely with Turkish executives to maximize the potential of the musical culture each provides.

The PolyGram and Raks structures will mesh easily, he states, because each company comprises a collection of separate commercial, artistic, and label roles.

More immediately, Gözalan says he is eager to instigate a music pub-
lishing presence in Turkey to admin-
ister income from the plethora of radio and TV stations that last year began paying airplay royalties for the first time.


SCANNING THE TURKISH MUSIC MARKET

(H-4) [Continued from page 107]

The country sales across the EU will reduce commission rates from an average of 8% of revenues to 6% if they sign to a merchant that is independent and not resurrected for five years.

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tioning whether the country market is going to be sustained as the current surge of new artists.

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Spice Girls, Gina G On The Move

The British are advancing on two fronts. As predicted last week, the U.S. has fallen to the charms of Virgin's Spice Girls. The quintet makes history as "Wannabe" opens on the Hot 100 at No. 1, tying The Beatles for the highest new entry ever for a debut set. In March 1960, Lennon and McCartney scored a No. 1 with "I Want to Hold Your Hand." Although it was her first commercial single in the U.K., she had just come off a "magical" reunion with her group, "Spighta Know?"

In the past few years, it's been almost a common event for superstars to debut in the top ten. No one was surprised when Tony Braxton's "You've Made Me High" and Whitney Houston's "I Believe In You And Me" both began their chart lives at No. 1, but for a new act to open this high in the charts, it's big news. In the '80s, the Swedish group Roxette earned a mention in the Billboard Beat when their first single, "The Look," debuted at No. 10 on Feb. 11, 1989. At that time, it was the highest new entry by a debut act since the Duran Duran spinoff group Arcadia debuted at No. 46 with its first single, "Electric Day," on Oct. 26, 1985.

"Wannabe" reaches No. 1, as it has in many countries, which will be the first British chart-topper since "Kiss From A Rose" by Seal hit pole position in August 1996.

SEVENTEEN WITH A BULLET: Spice Girls are not the only British flag flying high. Elsewhere on the Hot 100, Gina G advances 23-17 with "Ooh Aah... Just A Little Bit" (Eternal/Warner Bros.). True, Gina is Australian, but she represents the U.K. in the 1996 Eurovision Song Contest with "Ooh Aah," which is now the highest-ranked British Eurovision entry in U.S. history. And Ooh Aah is the first album released by her new label, Deram Records, which is distributed by Island Records, one of the major U.S. labels.

Another effect of the post-poll return to normalcy is the resurgence of Patsy Cline's "12 Greatest Hits" to No. 1 on Top Country Catalog Albums. It's the discs' 25th anniversary, and now, 10 weeks shy of a five-year run at the No. 1 spot, it is finally making its way back to the top of the charts.

SONG OF THE WEEK: "I Want To Hold Your Hand" by The Beatles. This week, it is the most played song on the airwaves, as it has been for the past two years. It's a huge hit in the U.K., and it is the first U.S. hit to reach No. 1 on the Hot 100 since "Kiss From A Rose." The song also marks the return of The Beatles to the Top 10 for the first time since 1969, when "Help!" was released.

"Baby One More Time" by Britney Spears is No. 1 on the Pop Albums chart, and it is the highest debuting album of the week. Britney's album has sold over 2 million copies in the U.S., and it is now the fastest-selling debut album of the year. The album also features the hit single "I'm a Slave 4 U," which is currently No. 1 on the Hot 100.

"Baby One More Time" is also the highest debuting album on the R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart, where it debuts at No. 2. The album features the hit single "Oops!... I Did It Again," which is currently No. 1 on the Hot 100. The album also includes the hit single "Don't Let Me Be The Last To Know," which is currently No. 3 on the Hot 100.

"Baby One More Time" is also the highest debuting album on the Dance Club Songs chart, where it debuts at No. 1. The album features the hit single "I'm a Slave 4 U," which is currently No. 1 on the Dance Club Songs chart. The album also includes the hit single "Oops!... I Did It Again," which is currently No. 3 on the Dance Club Songs chart.
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