Marketer Takes Music To U.S. Ethnic Groups

LOS ANGELES—Using data from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, a multilingual staff, and a network of ethnic media and retail outlets, a New York-based marketing firm is working with major labels to help drive incremental U.S. sales for such world artists as Japanese jazz pianist Akiko Yano, Native American artist Buffy Sainte-Marie, and Spanish-Galician bagpiper Carlos Núñez.

The company, Intercultural Niche Strategies (INS), joins a growing number of firms working within the music industry to help labels get their product into the hands of specialist audiences via targeted marketing.

(Continued on page 86)

Interscope Emphasizes Mkts. Basics For Polara

LOS ANGELES—When Interscope Records launched Polara’s second album, “C’est La Vie,” April 22, it will be after months of setup by the label, which is committed to breaking the band by using such old-school tools as releasing an EP months in advance of an album and keeping the act on the road.

Polara is the brainchild of Minneapolis mainstay Ed Ackerman, known for his fine pop songwriting and production.

(Continued on page 83)

Durban Steals Spotlight In South Africa Coastal Town Is Center Of Burgeoning Music Scene

DURBAN, South Africa—In little more than two years, this lethargic coastal resort city has shouldered its way into the very center of the South African music scene.

Among the labels cited by sources as a potential new home for Mammoth are Mercury Records and Interscope (Billboard Bulletin, March 27). Faires, president and founder of the Carrboro, N.C.-based label, declines to comment on negotiations but says a number of labels have expressed interest in Mammoth. He has thus far sat out this round of bidding to willingness to play.

(Continued on page 15)

Mammoth Leaves Atlantic Label Shopping For Strategic Partner

NEW YORK—Armed with a proven track record, a well-thought-out game plan, a hot album, and high hopes, Jay Faires is shopping for a strategic partner for his Mammoth label, which officially ended its relationship with Atlantic Records March 26.

Among the labels cited by sources as a potential new home for Mammoth are Mercury Records and Interscope (Billboard Bulletin, March 27). Faires, president and founder of the Carrboro, N.C.-based label, declines to comment on negotiations but says a number of labels have expressed interest in Mammoth. He has thus far sat out this round of bidding to willingness to play.

(Continued on page 15)

COUNTRY NEWS

Brooks To Promote Set With Free Park Concert

NEW YORK—Garth Brooks is hoping that the reverberations of his Aug. 7 free concert in Central Park here will be felt in record stores around the world.

Expectations are that the concert by Brooks could draw more than 400,000 fans.

Decca’s Womack Catches Fire At Radio

NASHVILLE—When Lee Ann Womack made her all-important debut before some 2,500 radio attendees at this year’s Country Radio Seminar (CRS), she missed her cue.

“We had videotaped an intro by her dad, who used to be a DJ,” says Decca VP of national promotion (U.S.) John Lytle. “She had her hands over her ears because she was afraid she’d cry if she heard his voice. I had to go up and push her out of the way.”

She can laugh about it now, but the 30-year-old Womack’s dream since she was a little girl was to get to Nashville and perform where her idols sang and played.

(Continued on page 86)
From the strength of many comes the power of one

PGD and the PolyGram Family of labels thank the retail and wholesale community for honoring us as the NARM Distributor of the Year for the 4th consecutive year.

www.americanradiohistory.com
Australia’s CD Pricing Saga Likely To Heat Up

Relaxed Import Restrictions Proposal Has Industry In Arms

**BY CHRISTIE ELEZER**

SYDNEY—The Australian music industry is preparing for yet another verdict in the world’s longest-running investigation into CD prices.

“The gathering storm clouds are getting dark and darker,” says Michael Smelie, BMG Entertainment Australia’s general manager and senior Pacific Rim executive and a former chairman of the Australian Record Industry Assn. (ARIA), “although it hasn’t rained yet.”

A downpour is likely by the end of April, at the latest. That is when Sen. Richard Alston, the Australian government’s minister for arts, culture, and communications, expresses his government’s plans to consider proposals to change the country’s copyright laws to relax parallel import restrictions on CD prices.

The government’s goal is to see the retail prices of CDs reduced by permitting merchants to source legitimate product from elsewhere in the world without restrictions. The same goal was once sought by the previous government, and it remains as contentious an issue today as it was in 1994, when a treasury minister empowered the Prices Surveillance Authority “to conduct an inquiry into the prices of sound recordings.”

Among the large developments in the seven-year conflict is the departure from music industry consensus by prominent retail chain HMV, whose British-based chief executive, Stuart McAlister, says that he is keen for his Australian stores to acquire their import products through the major labels here, they will look to other sources if necessary.

Also, a study released March 5 by the Australian Consumers Assn. found that local music buyers were paying 42% more for CDs than American consumers. The report prompted the music industry’s nemeses, Prof. Allan Fels, of the Australian Competition and Consumer Assn., to question the prices that high prices are due to an “import monopoly” by the six major record companies. Fels’ statement that the move would reduce “pricing power” by at least 5% has won popular support.

Copyright law changes to parallel imports could result in trade developments against Australia by the U.S. government. In a recent letter to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade Tim Fischer, the acting U.S. trade representative, Charles Bold, warned, “Permitting parallel importation would deal a serious blow to [intellectual property rights] protection for U.S. industries dependent upon copyright, patents, or trademark protection. You can be sure that these industries will demand action. In the interest of the U.S., including these industries, I will not be able to ignore those demands.”

The Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) has made its displeasure known with the potential changes known to the U.S. trade representative, according to an RIAA representative. At press time, no U.S. government action was on the table, according to a government source.

Australia’s copyright laws are in line with the international agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. Similar developments have been given by officials acting for the U.K. and the European Union. British High Commissioner Sir Roger Carver made his views known at the National Press Club in Canberra. “There’s a chance it would lead to erosion of copyright and the attractiveness of the Australian market,” he said.

EU representatives have also met with Sen. Alston, claiming that EU copyright recordings account for about 30% of the $608 million (600 million Australian) local music market and that a significant increase in piracy—anticipated because of the unrestricted flow of goods into Australia—would lead to an estimated $40 million and $180 million to Euro- pean record labels. ARIA estimates the resultant piracy from some countries would claim 40% (in units) of the Australian business. The timing couldn’t be worse. After years of recession, this music market is growing—by 15% in 1995—to up to 16% in 1996—with domestic acts making their greatest global impact. The six major waves of curtailment in new talent, as they have in the past, and possibly going offshore.

The threat of U.S. trade sanctions and (Continued on page 85)

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**PolyGram Restructures Its Philips, Verve Groups**

**BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER**

NEW YORK—The global restructuring of PolyGram’s music operations continues with major realignments of PolyGram Classics & Jazz’s Philips and Verve groups.

What was Philips Classics Productions is now the Philips Music Group, incorporating four labels: Philips Classics, Gimell, Imaginary Road, and the newly expanded Point Music Point. The new president of the Group is Costa Pilavachi, formerly VP of A&R at Philips Classics; he succeeds Hans Kindl, whoretires at the end of April. Formerly based in Baarn, a suburb of Amsterdam, the Philips Music Group has relocated to central Amsterdam offices.

For its jazz labels, PolyGram has centralized A&R and marketing under the Verve brand umbrella. New York’s Chuck Mitchell, formerly senior VP/GM of Verve Records U.S., is the new president of Verve Records, assuming worldwide A&R and marketing responsibilities for Verve, Antilles, and Verve Forecast.

Mitchell and Pilavachi report to Chris Roberts, president of PolyGram Classics & Jazz.

Robert says the realignment reflects the company’s aim to be “more flexible worldwide and offer a more diverse repertoire,” emphasizing in particular the “brand” differentiation of each label.

The shifts at Verve and Philips are part of an already announced $90 million reorganization of PolyGram’s music operations, which includes significant production cuts, personnel shuffling, and the elimination of some $50 million worldwide (Billboard, Feb. 22). Both of Philips’ sister classical labels, Sony Classical/Philips (DG) and Lono-Don/Decca, have made alterations in recent weeks.

DG just announced a scaling back of its production by one-third, cuts to its Hamburg headquarters staff by one-quarter, and a new president, Karsten Witt, and new A&R boss, Michael Fine (Billboard, March 1 and March 22). London/Decca also has a new president, Roger Lewis (Billboard, Jan. 18).

Alpine Asian Ventures, however, Bob Roberts, the changes at PolyGram’s repertoire centers will in turn bring modifications to the sales operations of the various PolyGram operating arms (Continued on page 44)

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Alpine Asian Ventures, however, Bob Roberts, the changes at PolyGram’s repertoire centers will in turn bring modifications to the sales operations of the various PolyGram operating arms (Continued on page 44)
Put The Consumer Before The Environment

The following is adapted from an address delivered March 17 at the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) Convention in Orlando, Fl.

BY BARNEY COHEN

We've heard lots of people say over the past couple of years that what our industry really needs is a good ad campaign, our own version of the Milk Bowls' "Got Milk?" I am a big supporter of this idea, but I also believed we had to do our homework properly before we could commit to spending millions of dollars. We need to know who any messages should be directed at and what that message should be.

The National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) and the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) hired a research firm to provide us with information about who we all need to be paying attention to whether we do an ad campaign or not. Some messages I think we've been ignoring.

One key finding from our research is that consumers don't perceive tremendous value in our industry. The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences' Michael Greene wrote a commentary recently (Billboard, Feb. 23) in which he claimed that consumers are tired of paying $15 for albums that have only one or two decent cuts on them.

I agree with Greene, and so did a lot of the consumers in our study. Successful label executives have always placed an emphasis on marketing the artists and the music. The executives need to get back to the fundamentals of making records that are good all the way through.

A few years back, I remember a lot of label executives got hysterical over the sales of used CDs. But sales of used CDs, like home taping, reflect consumer perceptions of the value of our music.

Why, in a marketplace in which hardcover books sell for more than $20, the cost of a couple of movies going to the movies can be over $20, concert tickets may be $50, and Valentine's Day roses and chocolates, consumers express concerns about spending less than $20 on a CD that can be used over and over and last most of a lifetime? It's clear we have a job to do regarding perception.

Another message from consumers is that they want to know something about what they are getting. It's our problem, and it's not we're giving the consumer enough information about the music. With a book, there are the jacket notes. With movies, we have the DVD extras. With music, we've relied on radio and MTV to spread the word.

The preliminary findings in the research would be that what many of us have suspected for quite awhile—radio's effectiveness as a primary source of music information for most consumers has diminished. And consumers are expressing interest in being perceived as just another entertainment outlet on cable, rather than the music-oriented channel it started as.

Our problem is not that we are doing a better job, too. Consumers can't tell the difference between a CD single, a double CD, and a multimedia CD. It's always the same thing. But why are we surprised? As an industry, we still have not figured out how to deliver our packaging information to consumers of the '90s as if it were 1979 and we were adding a 12- by 12-inch package of graphics. Times have changed, and we need to rethink how we market the product. We can be getting millions of little discs that could be movies, or music, or video games—but will surely be sitting in retail racks next to thousands of other little discs that look exactly the same. As an industry, in our infinite wisdom, we've made our package smaller, harder to open, and with liner notes that are almost invisible to the buyer.

I was a retailer for almost 20 years before I started Valley Record Distributors, and I still visit stores wherever I go. I'm convinced that one of our biggest challenges is the retail environment today.

I think consumers are tired of being waited on by a sales staff that they perceive as lazy and rude. Some of the focus-group participants characterized buying records as a "chore." I get nervous when my core customer asks, what do we have to meet them more than halfway. We have to invite them into our world. We have to make our product and our world more attractive.

I wonder how many retailers could describe their store's marketing concept? I think we've gotten so far, how many have an articulated plan for implementation? Do you know anything about your customers? Do you have identified your target customer is?

We have some shining examples of companies that know what they're selling and to a trend to be afraid of, rather than take it from us. If we look around, perhaps starting outside music, why is the Hard Rock Cafe so successful? They have a clear mission statement and a strategy of how to do it.

I think the Internet is going to have a big impact on the way we market music in the near future and it is going to be a lot of music in the future. Valley has seen significant growth from Internet sales in the past two years, and I think it's a trend that's going to continue. I don't think it's a trend that's going to continue. I don't think it's a trend that's going to continue. I don't think it's a trend that's going to continue.

VH FUELS COLE'S FIRE

Thank you for last week's excellent piece on Paula Cole ("Slow Start at Warner's Paula Cole," Billboard, March 29). As sometimes happens, however, one of Paula's earliest believers and most important supporters was left out—VH1. The channel responded to her "Where Have All the Cowboys Gone?" video almost immediately, designating it an Inside Track clip and adding it into Large Rotation.

We at Warner Bros. would like to publicly thank John Sykes, Lee Chessnut, Wayne Isaac, and everyone at VH1 for playing a critical role in the breaking of Paula Cole.

Steven Baker President Warner Bros. Records Burbank, Calif.
ALL-NEW MATERIAL, PLUS SEGMENTS FROM HIS HBO STAND-UP SPECIAL "BRING THE PAIN," NOW AVAILABLE ON HOME VIDEO

IN STORES APRIL 8

Produced by Prince Paul  Associate Producer: Merry Harper  Executive Producer: Chris Rock

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$2 Million In Bulgarian Pirate CDs Seized
Amsterdam Bust Add To Plea For Better EU Control

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

LONDON—Two million dollars' worth of Bulgarian-made pirate CDs have been kept from distribution on the European market by an alert Dutch customs officer.

A total of nearly 100,000 discs—the Netherlands' largest haul—was seized at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport March 29 after being flown there on a Bulgarian capital flight (Schiphol Bulletin, March 29). The discovery of such a large number of discs adds weight to the international record industry's call for greater European Union action against Bulgarian pirates (Billboard, March 29). The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry says Bulgarian pirate exports cost the European record industry $10 billion a year and that the country represents a threat on the same scale as that posed by China.

The shipment found at Schiphol was labeled as tiny cards. Transport documents accompanying it said it had been flown from Sofia, via Serbian capital Belgrade, to Schiphol, from where it was to be transported by road to Ukrainian capital Kiev.

However, a customs officer became suspicious as quickly as he arrived in Amsterdam. The discs add 3,000 miles to the 1,000-mile journey between Sofia and Kiev.

Anti-piracy staff at Dutch authors' body BUMA/STEMRA were alerted, and after determining the CDs to be counterfeiters of, among others, the new albums from U2, David Bowie, and No Doubt, secured a seizure order from the Haarlem district public prosecutor.

The discs seized were packed on spindles, which allows for far higher concentrations than if they were in boxes. BUMA/STEMRA says the haul had retail value of 4 million Dutch guilders ($2.4 million).

The delivery of the discs to Schiphol

Home Video Sell-Through Numbers Up At Year's End

BY DON JEFFREY

NEW YORK—Consumer purchases of home video during the year-end period increased 11.2% from the year before, according to a new study.

“Studies are much more aggressive in putting titles directly to the self-through retail, and the demand is there,” says Barbara McNamara of Alexander & Associates, the New York-based consulting and research firm that tracks video sales.

For all of 1996, consumers spent $21.8 billion on video rentals and purchases, according to the researchers, a 5.8% rise from the year before. Sell-through is the faster-growing segment of the industry, as sales increased 7.2% to $10.4 billion from $9.7 billion. Rentals were up 5.5% to $11.5 billion from $10.9 billion.

Alexander & Associates reports that 88% of all video purchases were recorded retail during the eight-week holiday period from Nov. 13-Jan. 7, compared with 87.1% the year before. The remaining purchases were split between home video rentals, and other nontraditional sources.

The report was by far the biggest seller in the retail sell-through market, with a 24.5% share of consumer purchases during the holiday period. After that came competing discount merchandiser Kmart at 8.1%. Video rental chain Blockbuster Video was third at 7.1%. Next were Target Stores (6.9%) and Sun's Club (5%).

The best-selling titles during the Christmas season were: 1. “Toy Story” ( Walt Disney Home Video); 2. “Independence Day” (FoxVideo); 3. “The Nutty Professor” (MCA/Universal Home Video); 4. “Twister”.

Lisa Cortes Sues PolyGram
Former Exec Claims Discrimination

BY ELENA OUMANO

NEW YORK—Lisa Cortes, former president of the now-defunct Loose Cannon Records, is charging parent company PolyGram Records and senior management with sex discrimination (Billboard Bulletin, March 24).

In a suit filed March 19 in U.S. District Court here, the 35-year-old African-American woman says that lack of marketing support and consistent exclusion from PolyGram's decision-making process led directly to her label's demise.

PolyGram denies the charges. “PolyGram has a history of being extremely supportive of African-American and female executives,” says Dawn Bridges, PolyGram senior VP of corporate communications.

Cortes joined PolyGram in February 1990 as a VP of A&R for Mercury Records. Four years later, prior to the expiration of her contract, Cortes was offered her own label. According to the suit, Cortes developed the name Loose Cannon, and concept for Loose Cannon and was named its president.

A year later, Cortes was informed that Loose Cannon had been merged with A&M Records, a part of PolyGram. Cortes says, which was a joint signing between Loose Cannon and A&M Canada, a part of PolyGram. Cortes was assigned another PolyGram label, but four days ago, I received calls from two managers...

Bono

Court: U.K. Publishing Rights To 'To Know Him' Belong To Spector

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

NEW YORK—A High Court judge in London ruled March 21 that Phil Spector is the proper owner of the U.K. publishing rights to his seminal rock-n-roll song “To Know Him Is To Love Him” and that the artist/producer did not violate a U.S. songwriter contract he signed in 1988.

Mr. Justice Ferris' ruling, following a weeklong hearing in January based on legal action taken by Spector against Loose cannon, the U.K. affiliate of New York-based Bourne Music, gives Spector the U.K. rights to the song dating back to 1988, as well as a future determination of foreign publishing royalties due him.

Some sources say those royalties could involve payment to Spector of up to $1 million in subpublishing royalties from Bourne Ltd.

Before revision of the U.S. Copyright Act in 1976, a songwriter could retrieve the publishing rights to a work after completion of its 28th year of copyright life. Since the 1976 revision only applies to works copyrighted after 1978, the year the new law took effect, many copyrights still fall under the provisions of the old law.

The judge ruled that Spector did not violate the terms of Paragraph 8 in a uniform contract created in 1947 by the American Guild of Authors and Composers (AGAC), the predecessor to the Songwriters Guild of America. This is a requirement that Spector would need to sign a subpublisher six months' prior notice that he intends to recapture his copyright and make a new subpublishing arrangement. By not making such a notice, the subpublisher can assume that it can continue its role.

According to Ferris, the reason for that because Spector assigned the song to himself, rather than to a new subpublisher, he was not required to give Bourne notice of that intention. It is unclear to this writer that Spector had to give notice in all circumstances. In his judgment, Ferris stated that to construe "para..."
A PERFECT 10

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Real McCoy Shows Its Stuff ‘One More Time’
Arista Keeps Pop Act On Front Lines For Its 2nd Set

BY LARRY FICK

NEW YORK—As Real McCoy sprouts up the Hot 100 with “One More Time,” the lead single from its new Arista collection of the same name, the Euro-pop act appears to be successfully fending off the dreaded sophomore jinx while maintaining its role as one of the leading forces in the ongoing dance music revolution at top-40 radio.

“One More Time” has sold 28,000 units since its release March 11, according to SoundScan. It’s a solid way to usher in the album, which hits retail Tuesday (1).

“If all of our records were like this, life would be like living on a cruise ship,” says Jim Elliott, Arista’s VP of pop promotion (U.S.), with a laugh. “Seriously, we take nothing for granted in terms of radio acceptance, even though Real McCoy proved to be a bodesetting act the first time around. People tend to get nervous with a second record. You have to work just as hard with the follow-up—if not harder.”

The good news is that radio has embraced “One More Time” in a big way. According to Broadcast Data Systems, the single is currently reaching more than 20 million people on a daily basis.

“This record was made for radio,” says Erik Bradley, music director at WBBM-FM (96.3), Chicago. “Real McCoy has done a lot to elevate the image of the dance genre as a whole. They’ve proved that it’s possible to make strong dance records that are also good song-driven. The music here is every bit as strong as the music on the first album, so there’s a good reason to believe that this will be an equally huge project.”

That first album, “Another Night,”

has triggered an endless string of acts copying Real McCoy’s infectious style of laying thorny male rapping and chirpy female vocals over bouncy beats and sunny synths. Released in November 1984, “Another Night” went on to sell 1.2 million units, according to SoundScan, and spawned three hit singles—including the top five title track. “The trick with this record is to make sure that we separate Real McCoy from the pack and present them as the act that helped define this current trend,” says Tom Ennis, VP of artist development (U.S.) at Arista.

To accomplish that task, the label is sending the group on an intensive six-week radio, retail, and TV promotion tour beginning May 10. It’s a move that’s already meeting with positive feedback.

“It’s become pretty common for a group that has hit as big as Real McCoy to back off and be less accessible the second time around,” says Marion Creagon, manager of Record Kitchen, an indie retailer in San Francisco.

“The fact that they’re pigging back into the trenches says a lot. Even though this record is better than all of the sound-alikes out there, it’s a good idea for them to go back into the street and take claim of the ground they broke. I think it will pay off in the long run.”

Because of the glut of copycat acts, it was important for Real McCoy, which comprises German rapper/songwriter DJ Jay and American singers Vanessa Mason and Lisa Cork, to temper its successful formula with some fresh ideas. “One More Time” is fleshed out with R&B-laced ballads like the single-worthy “Look At Me,” hip-hop-flavored midtempo ditties like “Love Almost Faded,” and darker, more house-edge (Continued on page 93)

Royalties Award Marks Start Of New Chapter For Darlene Love

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—With a recent court victory and an award of back royalties in her pocket, R&B vocalist Darlene Love is looking to the future with a new book deal, the hope of a new record contract, and maybe even a film based on her eventful life.

“There’s a lot of sticks in the fire,” Love says with a laugh. “We’re just saying, ‘Wooo, which one is gonna catch on first, honey?’.”

On March 7, a New York Supreme Court jury awarded Love $353,000 in her long-running lawsuit against producer Phil Spector. The jury ruled that the evidence at trial proved that Love had a contract with Spector and that Spector was obligated to pay the vocalists royalties for her work on some of the producer’s biggest hits of the 60s. Love, who in the late 50s and early 60s was a member of the L.A.-based vocal group the Blossoms, was utilized by Spector as the lead vocalist on the Crystals’ Top 1 pop smash “He’s A Rebel” and Bob B. Soxx & the Blue Jeans’ No. 6 hit “Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah” in 1962. Love also cut six singles under her own name for Spector’s Phillips Records, including “(Today I Met) The Boy I’m Gonna Marry” and “Wait Til’ I My Bobby Gets Home”; her thunderous rendition of “Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)” was a highlight of Spector’s 1963 seasonal classic “A Christmas Gift To You.”

Love says of her suit, “[Spector’s] whole thing was that I didn’t have a contract, that I was just running around singing and making hit records, No. 1 records for people, and I didn’t care whether I had a contract or not. But we found a royalty statement—that’s why we were able to go to court, because everybody knows that you don’t pay people royalties if (Continued on page 93)

Australia’s Savage Garden
Is In Bloom On Columbia

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

BRISBANE, Australia—In nine months, Brisbane-based pop duo Savage Garden has scored two Australian hit singles without the benefit of live performances or interviews.

Now, with its debut single, “I Want You” —Australia’s biggest-selling single of 1996—23-year-olds Darren Hayes and Daniel Jones have an international smack on their hands.

Released in the U.S. on Columbia, “I Want You” debuts at No. 31 on the Billboard Hot 100 Singles chart in March (Airwaves, Billboard, March 15)—quite a feat for a non-U.S.-based new act. In this issue, the song is up to No. 13. Savage Garden’s debut album was released March 24 in Australia and will bow April 22 in the U.S.

“It’s scary sometimes,” admits English-born instrumentalist Jones. “I certainly don’t view us as successful yet. What we want to achieve is a long way from here. But to be in front of the public, with everyone watching and hearing throughout Australia that the boys from Bris- bane have debuted on the Billboard charts, is so completely strange.”

Atlantic’s Tireless Efforts Break Sheik
Self-Titled Debut Earns Heatseeker Impact Status

BY DOUG ROECE

LOS ANGELES—Atlantic Records can add Duncan Sheik’s name to its list of Heatseeker Impact artists, which includes such recent successes as Jewel and Poe.

Sheik’s self-titled debut broke into the top half of The Billboard 200 at No. 92 for the week ending Saturday (29), making Sheik a Heatseeker Impact artist. “Duncan Sheik” is at No. 84 this issue.

The album, which was released in June 1996, has sold more than 156,000 units, according to SoundScan.

Sheik’s steady growth is reflected in his debut single, “Barely Breathing,” which is still being played on the radio nearly a year after it was first issued.

The single, which was commercially released last November, has sold more than 156,000 units, according to SoundScan, and is No. 19 with a bullet on this issue’s Hot 100 Singles chart.

Like several tracks on the album, the song bares the wounds incurred during a relationship gone sour.

All of Sheik’s songs are produced by Duncan Sheik Songs/Happ Dog/Careers-BMG Publishing Inc., except for “Little Hands,” which is also published by Banished Music.

Writing the album, says Sheik, was a cathartic process. Since he was an unknown at the time, Sheik wrote with an openness that he admits may be sacrificed in the future.

“I have some concern that I’m going to be more careful about things next time,” says Sheik. “I received not a huge amount but a fair amount of grief about the things I got into in my lyrics. I don’t think they were too harsh; it’s just that I was writing a song about something torturing me, and they don’t want everyone in the world to know about that.”

While certain parties may not feel comfortable with the content on “Duncan Sheik,” Atlantic has been working tirelessly to familiarize consumers with the album.

Atlantic senior VP/GM (U.S.) Ron Shapiro says the label took its first step in the journey toward breaking Sheik by pairing the artist with Jewel on tour in the weeks leading up to the release of his album.

The tactic proved successful after “Duncan Sheik” sold more than 400 units its first week of release, according to SoundScan, with little awareness of the artist outside of that tour.

“Barely Breathing” was shipped to modern rock and triple-A stations May 3, 1996. While the song did not take off at the former, it quickly found a home at triple-A.

In fact, as a testament to the song’s resistance to burn, some triple-A stations are still playing it.

Triple-A KQPT Sacramento, Calif., music director Carrie Owens says the station has been playing the song in various rotations since June 1996.

“It just consistently tested well on our call-out and was one of our top five phones for a long while,” says Owens.

“And the beauty of it now is that it still tests well. It could be that [Sheik’s] (Continued on page 89)
Ponte’s 3-CD Boxed Set
On RMM A Latin Music First

By Bill Holland

Bandleader, arranger, and percussionist Tito Puente, who celebrates 50 years in the music business this year, receives a first in Latin music history: his own three-CD limited-edition boxed set.

Slated for release April 9 on RMM Records, the set, “50 Years Of Swing,” begins with his 78 rpm discs from the late 1940s, which brought together the powerful forces of bebop and Afro-Cuban music. The set also features hits from the glory days of mambo, special guest collaborations, and selections of the fiery gumbos that is modern-day salsa.

“It’s hard to believe it’s been that long,” says Puente. “But I feel great. And the music on the set is terrific—although sometimes I listen and think, ‘Is that me?’ But it’s nice to get the respect and recognition.”

Puente, more than any other Latin bandleader/musician, opened the ears and moved the feet of listeners and dancers with uncompromising, authentic Afro-Caribbean music, always keeping pace with stylistic changes.

He is particularly noted for his early embrace of both bebop and the groove-oriented soul jazz that followed and is recognized as royalty in the Latin jazz community.

“I found myself listening to the songs and saying, ‘Wow, that’s good’ or ‘Wow, the sound on this one is great!’—and come to find out it was recorded in the ’50s or ’60s,” says Puente.

R&B Mainstay Harold Melvin, 57, Dies
His Blue Notes Featured Number Of Upcoming Stars

By J.R. Reynolds

Los Angeles—Harold Melvin, who led his group Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes to four Grammy hits, is being remembered as an influential talent and bandleader who helped bring the Philadelphia sound to prominence.

Melvin died in his sleep March 24. He was 57.

The Blue Notes were formed as a doo-wop act in 1954 in Melvin’s native Philadelphia. Originally consisting of Melvin, Bernard Wilson, Jesse Gilles Jr., Franklin Peaker, and Roosevelt Brodie, the group underwent numerous personnel changes over its 30 years.

The act recorded for several labels in its early years before gaining fame and fortune beginning in 1971, when it was brought to Philadelphia Internationally by Melvin’s longtime friends and label founders Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff.

Says Huff, “I’m saddened by the news of his death. Thinking of Harold brings back good feelings and memories for me.”

Melvin was more than just a front man for the group. “He had the talent of putting together guys who could sing,” Huff adds.

During their tenure with Philadelphia International, Melvin & the Blue Notes earned a string of R&B No. 1s between 1972 and 1975: “If You Don’t Know Me By Now,” “The Love I Lost (Part 1),” “Hope That We Can Be Together Soon,” and “Wake Up Everybody (Part 1).” During that period, the group featured the distinctive lead singing of drummer-turned-lead-vocalist Teddy Pendergrass.

“I learned a great deal during my days with the Blue Notes,” Pendergrass said in a statement. “Mel was a great drummer and bandleader. Melvin, who resided in the Mount Airy area of Philadelphia, had suffered strokes in July and November of 1986. At press time, it could not be confirmed if Melvin had succumbed to yet another stroke. According to medical reports, he had a history of vascular disease and wore a pacemaker.

The Blue Notes began its recording career in 1957 with “If You Love Me,” its first R&B No. 1 hit. The act earned its deal after traveling from Philadelphia to New York’s Apollo Theater, where

(Continued on page 85)

Japan’s Kodo Drums Up Global Audience
Tristar Brings 19-Member Percussion Group To U.S.

By Bradley Bambarger

NEW YORK—Even with the processed beats of techno inducing mainstream raves, the sound of unadorned percussion still exerts its primal pull. Witness the crowds drawn to the myriad drumming ensembles on urban streets, the long-running course of off-Broadway revue “Stomp,” and the sold-out tour and growing album sales of the traditional Japanese drumming ensemble Kodo.

Kodo just completed a 35-city U.S. tour, its 12th trek around the country and most eventful so far. Promoting “Ikuwakku”—the group’s 10th album and fourth U.S. release—on the Sony company Tristar Music, Kodo not only performed its first in-store appearances but played on “Late Show With David Letterman” and “Live With Regis And Kathie Lee.”

“Ikuwakku” debuted at No. 7 on the Top World Music Albums chart for the week ending Feb. 15, and the recent TV exposure and such high-profile gigs as Carnegie Hall help the album retain its spark this issue at No. 11.

Playing toko, the traditional Japanese drum and drumming style, the 19-member Kodo casts a ritualistic spell, with the hypnotic percussion accentuated by flute and the occasional group chant. The ensemble formed in 1981, and it has since performed more than 2,000 concerts in five continents, collaborating along the way with such notables as master jazz drummer Max Roach, Grateful Dead stickman Mickey Hart, and the fusion maestro Bilal Laswell, who produced “Ikuwakku.”

In Japanese, “Kodo” can be read as either “heartbeat” or “children of the drum,” both of which are appropriate, according to Kodo member Eiichi Saito. He says the altar of t tako is elemental, with the rhythm of the heartbeat being one we know from the womb. “The drum is a primordial expression of the human spirit—and it’s in all cultures,” Saito says. “When I play, I can feel a connection with people from Minneapolis or London.”

In promoting Kodo in the U.S., Tristar has worked to take advantage of the group’s elaborate, kinetic live performances. According to Tristar VP/GM Howard Gabriel, the majority of sales for “Ikuwakku” come at the shows and at such non-SoundScan-reporting outlets as Barnes & Noble.

Kodo is currently on tour, at the Barnes & Music & Music in the Los Angeles suburb of Torrance, Calif. (which has a significant Japanese-American population), drew more than 400 people. “It was a phenomenal event—one of the best performances we’ve ever had here,” says Jessica Hartwell, community relations coordinator for Borders. The group didn’t speak any English, but its presentation translated so well. Kodo is calling its tour the One Earth Tour. “It’s incredibly true. The group drew all kinds of people: Asian-Americans, African-Americans, whites, Hispanics, young, old. It was a diverse crowd, and the people bought a lot of product.”

Recording for Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) at home, Kodo has issued its last several albums—Kodo III in the U.S.: “Nasca Fantasy,” a collaboration with Japanese synthesist Isao Temita; “The Hunted,” a film soundtrack; and “The Best Of Kodo,” a release culled from the group’s Sony Japan catalog. Released in 1995, “The Best Of Kodo” peaked at No. 14 on Top World Music Albums and is its best-selling U.S. release at 54,000 copies, according to SoundScan. Each of Kodo’s albums sells 10,000-20,000 copies in Japan, according to Sony.

Peter Broeker, Kodo bass drummer in the Sea of Japan, Kodo divides its yearly regimen into thirds: the first part touring America and Europe, the second touring Japan, and the remaining at home, preparing new material and overseeing the group’s summer Earth Celebration drumming festival. Kodo invites collaborates with other artists at the festival, and this year, jazz saxophonist Joe Lovano is scheduled to perform.

For the future, Sony’s goal is to provide the public with as many “windows into Kodo’s world as possible,” says Andrea Megaro, the New York-based GM of international artist development for Sony Music Japan. For instance, remixes of Kodo songs by ambient and dance-oriented producers are a possibility, and a documentary video is in production. The group is in Northern California this week filming interviews with Hart, who included Kodo in his book “Planet Drum” a few years back. According to Gabriel, the new material will be combined with footage from Kodo’s “Live At The Apollo” performance video, issued by Sony.

(Continued on page 82)

Executive Turntable

ZANNINI HENSLEY BROOKS SANDERS BOURGEOIS SINGLETON SINGER

Nancy Zannini is promoted to senior VP of soundtracks for PolyGram Classics & Jazz in New York. She was VP of soundtracks.

Chris Hensley is appointed senior VP of marketing and promotion for N2K Encoded Music in New York. He was VP of marketing and promotion for Guardian/EIM Records.

Peter Brooks is promoted to senior VP of logistics management for EMI-Capitol Music Group in New York. He was VP of operations.

Richard Sanders is appointed GM of V2 Records in New York. He was VP of artist development for Arista Records.

Brent Bourgeois is named VP of A&R for Word Records in Nashville. He is a musician and producer.

For the Group Distribution.

Felicia Swerling is appointed director of national pop promotion for Sony BMG in New York, in addition to her current role as West Coast promotion director for A&R Records.

Michele Singer is promoted to senior counsel of legal and business affairs for BMG Entertainment in New York. She was senior director of legal and business affairs.

MCA Records in Universal City, Calif., promotes Allen Carroll to director of album promotion, Don Overton to director of business affairs, and Allyson Cuneo to national singles sales director. They were, respectively, West Coast promotion manager and singles sales special- istic specialist at PolyGram Group Distribution.

Arista Records promotes Rani Hancock to director of A&R administration in New York and appoints Delana Walker West Coast associate director of publicity in Los Angeles and Paul Barrette East Coast regional promotion director in Boston. They were, respectively, associate director of A&R administration, director of national publicity at Motown Records, and East Coast director of promotion for MCA Records.

Hybrid Recordings in New York appoints Kalani Lee and Jense Bamburg national directors of promotion and Jason Fisher promotion coordinator.

Arista Records promotes Rani Hancock to director of A&R administration in New York and appoints Delana Walker West Coast associate director of publicity in Los Angeles and Paul Barrette East Coast regional promotion director in Boston. They were, respectively, associate director of A&R administration, director of national publicity at Motown Records, and East Coast director of promotion for MCA Records.

Will Hawkins is appointed director of promotion for Blackbird Recording Co. in New York. He was head of college radio at Blue Thumb/GRP Records.

Publishing: BMI in Los Angeles promotes Michael Creppezzi to director of performing rights research and Aaron Traven to director of writer/musician administration. He was director of writer/publisher relations and Delia Orozco regional manager of Latin music. They were, respectively, associate director of performing rights research, talent buyer at Avalon Attractions, and West Coast publicity director and promotion representative at RMM Records.
More than 12,000 people watched The Grammy®s live for the first time ever in an arena.

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The New York City Grammy Host Committee

Our biggest round of applause goes to you and your colleagues for making music's biggest night the biggest yet.

Madison Square Garden
The world's most famous arena
DURBAN STEALS SPOTLIGHT IN SOUTH AFRICA
(Continued from page 1)

few years. Persuaded by the band's guitarist to return, reluctantly, for a
one-off reunion gig in 1996, Johnstone was amazed by the revolution that had
taken place in the public's taste for indigenous sounds.
Performing only freshly composed original songs, the band avoided the
sound of sold-out gigs, causing Johnstone to remain in the country. Since then,
Scooters Union has played alongside the Skin Doctors and Tracy Chapman
at 5 FM's Birthday Bash in Johannesburg, and their independently released
gong, "Blue Man In A Building", received frequent national airplay with its
ldsiderous blend of roots, pop, Cajun, and African sounds. The band has also recorded an album, which it
May.
"There is a notable difference in the way local bands are perceived nowa-
days," says Johnstone. "There used to be two types of bands in this country:
underground bands, anti-establishment remnants of old school, and pop bands
and industry-manufactured contrivances that had no credibility.
There are now a lot more 'real' bands, and the underground scene has rad-
ally disappeared.
Charles Kahn, head of Gallo Music, believes that Durban music followers are
unsung heroes in the promotion of indigenous musical trends. "A lot more alternative
and rock products take off in Durban compared to Johannesburg," he
say.
"The music from Durban is really a spinoff of regional hunger for interna-
tional music. People coming from abroad tend to be attracted to coastal
towns. It's more relaxed, less stressed out than Johannesburg, and this cre-
ates a springboard for creativity."

However, the big difference, according
to Johnstone, has been radio air-
play. "The public are far more inter-
ested in seeing a band whose songs
they've heard on the radio— it gives them something to identify the band
with and makes them perceive the band as successful."
In increased airplay (success of an
impending quota system dictating that
air time be dedicated to South
African artists) has been only one fac-
tor responsible for the recent surge in
the popularity of local acts.
Another has been the emergence of a
post-apartheid national identity, with
South Africans discovering pride in
their "new" nation and looking within
the country's boundaries for creative
inspiration.
"Durban has become almost a breed-
ing ground for growth," says Andy
Duke, assistant station manager at
leading pop station 5 FM. "The local
care support their local bands and then
look around for new talent. We would like
to take a lot of credit for the Durban
explosion, especially after bands like
Sipho "Hotline" Makichana played in
here."
We released a CD called 'My Generation',
with [record label] Tusk, featuring a lot of the bands.
Tusk marketing director Benji
Mudie says, "Durban has produced
some great rock bands over the
decades. They were the first to
embrace punk in the late 70's.
Bands that have emerged out of
Durban include Darius Brubeck (son of
drummer Dave Brubeck) and the punk
quartet the Centre's original figure getting the Durban
sound recorded. He warns that, as successful as the area's music
has been relative to that from the rest
of the country, the market is not des-
perate for South African sounds, even
in Durban itself.
"The Durban people are different from the Johannesburg people because
they aren't willing to pay to watch bands. They would rather
spend that money at the bar. Add to
that the fact that there is no live music
venue that can actually call itself a live
music venue, as well as the lack of man-
agement expertise, and suddenly the
picture changes.
"There are signs that record compa-
nies are now more willing to take risks
on new artists, a case in point being
PolyGram's development of Durban's
new female vocal talent, Samantha
Horvill. However, they are still far
from capable of signing every talented
act, primarily because of the relatively
small audience for pop music.
"It always comes down to venues and
management of those venues," says
Carlo. "The Backstreet club in
Pinetown had great potential: It takes
between 500 and 600 people, but it only
has 50 chairs. We need more estab-
lished live music to instill these
people to do what they're doing. Right now we only have one,
Funky.
Hannalee Coetzee, director of
Birch and Teal, Durban's top
booking and production agency for live
acts, says, "The industry must de-
velop, diversify, and expand the market.
To a certain extent, apartheid-era
notions of separation—where white
people listen to rock and black people
listen to 'bassman' and dance to disco—prevail. (But) we've taken white rock
acts into the townships, and the audi-
ence embraced it.
This cultural crossover is a market-
ing angle yet to be exploited by the industry. Instead, the hot new form of
dance music (experienced by mas-
sively successful artists Boep Shaka,
Abie Banita, and Chikopo) has much in
common with a short-lived fashion in
dance music, while "white" rock often con-
tains the driving beats found in African
music. The ultimate derivations of
rock'n'roll from African rhythms is,
after all, a well-documented fact.
To this end, Coetzee and her part-
ner, Neil Comfort, are soon to open a
significant venue, the Concert Hall, to
give a shot in the arm to Durban's
local music scene. It will be the lead-
ing venue in the Durban music scene.
The move may well provide part of
the answer to Carlo's call. Situated
in Durban Harbour's BCT Centre, a
multifaceted arts center administered
by the BCT Centre, the Concert Hall
aims to provide a platform for all
goings-on in music in a venue with a size
and sound system quality of inter-
national calibre.
The Concert Hall will benefit from
the BCT Centre's already diverse
crowd, and the scale of its concerts
should give the live music scene a wel-
come boost and provide at least some competition to the dominant techno
scene.
"The rave's hold on the youth's imag-
ation is probably going to be an obsta-
cle yet to be overcome by Durban
bands in creating a real masterpiece.
Enormous raves are held regularly in
Durban, where as many as 4,000 young
people gladly part with 80 rand ($15) at
the door. Yet the same kids are gener-
ally out of touch with what's happening
in terms of live music in their home
place orb at paying 15 rand ($1.40)
for a live music performance.
However, there also remains a large
degree of crossover between rave and
rock scenes, and one local musician
says that, "the rave scene has actually
infiltrated the local dance music
discosphere and vice versa, and what's happening
in these places.
At any rate, the live music scene has
undergone profound change in a few
short years, as witnessed at the semi-
annual Bongo & Hedges Boom boom
tour last year, where for the first time local
town bands drew thousands of fans and irritated
the local authorities at performances.
In Durban, the future is healthy. The
icoconlastic Urgent Crew recently
went on a successful tour of Belgium and
released its second album, 'Urgent'.
'Tightrope', with indie label Tic Tic
Bang, to great critical acclaim; Squeal
is about to release the follow-up to the
highly successful 'Long Pig'; the
seductive country-tinged Famous Cur-
tain Trick signed to EMI and had
its eponymous first album geared
with music critics; alternative rock act
Arapaho is set to launch its second
album with PolyGram; alternative hard
rock band Blind is in the studio recording
a successor to 'De commodized' with
the 20,000 rand ($4,500) worth of stu-
dio time they won in a recent battle of
the bands contest; and Turquise is on
the campaign trail with "Syndrome."
Sales figures are hard to confirm, as
marketing departments of record companies
often inflate the volume figures relative to
both their own and the other bands' sales.
Durban music has grown dramatically from
an extreme low base.
Two years ago, leading rock acts
played small venues when they topped sales of 2,000 units; now
8,000-10,000 is the norm. While the
prospect of a gold disc from local
bands is still an aspiration for the
majority of Durban bands, the needs are being
served.
Squeal's latest release is on the
Cardis label, and many hot young acts
to become a true force to be
reckoned with.

Teal's Carlo says he was moved by
the number of talented young bands
walking around his office with demo
tapes, but recording contracts were still at a premium, and everyone went home
empty-handed. Carlo felt that all this
talent was going to waste by not being
recognized, and it was his suggestion
of a compilation album of unsigned Dur-
ban bands that has resulted in Poly-
Gram's West Coast Territories
Produced by Squeal's Birch and
engineered by Neil Smyan at Durban
Beach Studios, the compilation con-
contains a profound array of musical
styles. The songs chosen range from
Turquise's suave, jazz/jive/rock to
Bliss, Blistin, Bluebird, and Norden to
crusty punk and heavy metal:
14-year-old cuan Integral
Tara Fataar to the Black Sabbat-
inpired darkness of Stendehede;
from the Beir remixes influenced
Free Taxi to Caffine Substitute's cool,
meekly effulgent lyrics.
Other artists include post-grunge
pioneers Bongo & Hedges; Santa
from Tongaat, a small coastal town just
north of Durban; ironic beheaders
Khaki Tango; and Royal Heights,
their surf band Surf Band; and various
other purveyors of original rock.
PolyGram has a six-month option on
each band of the compilation, with
the label plans to throw some serious
promotional backing and nationwide dis-
tribution behind the effort; there are
promotional plans as yet for international release.

Carlo says, "This is the perfect way for
exposing the rest of the country and the
world to the depth and talent this
city has to offer."

The exchange rate used in this story was approximately 1.40 to the rand.
Mercury Makes Way For Hanson

**Teen Sibling Act Turns Out Timeless Pop Tunes**

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK—While the three brothers who make up Hanson don’t expect listeners to ignore their youthfulness, they hope to remind them of the music on their May 6 Mercury debut, “Middle Of Nowhere,” ageless.

“People are going to say, ‘Oh, they’re young kids, they don’t know what they’re doing,’” says 15-year-old Taylor, who is part of the act with Isaac, 16, and Zac, 11. “But you just have to listen to it. The music speaks for itself.”

The brothers, who wrote or co-wrote all the songs on the album, base their tuneful pop creations on songs penned before they were even born. “We lived abroad because of our dad’s job. We started in Ecuador and Venezuela, and then [moved to] Trinidad and Tobago,” says Isaac. “We had music tapes that my parents had gotten from the Time Life series. It was like 1950s, early ’60s rock’n’roll, Otis Redding, Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Aretha Franklin, Beach Boys, all those songs. That was the first stuff we really listened to that we were inspired by.”

That explains “Middle Of Nowhere,” a timeless, timeless song, melody, words, and harmonies, the likes of which have filled radio airwaves through the decades.

Another reason for the songs’ immediacy is that Mercury VP of A&R Steve Greenberg paired the burgeoning songwriters with some of the top pop tunesmiths in the business, including Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil, Mark Hudson, Desmond Child, and Ellen Shipley, to co-write 12 of the 13 tracks. (The brothers wrote the remaining four by themselves.)

These traditional song structures are juxtaposed against production by some of today’s hottest alternative producers, such as the Dust Brothers (Beck) and Stephen Lironi (Black Grape).

“Many people who have dealt with kids on record have taken a fairly conciliatory approach and made very judicious on the sound side of it in order to maintain a great deal of musical credibility,” says Greenberg, who oversaw the project. “The music that the Hansons had written demanded greater care than that.”

The producers recommended to them were incredibly creative and attuned to what was going on. A lot of the excitement about the album comes from the fact that these classic-style songs are produced in a totally contemporary fashion.

Given the hip cache of the album’s producers, it comes as no small surprise that the group is developing a college following. “We supplied college...” (Continued on page 15)

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Epitaph’s Kramer Tells His Story With ‘Citizen Wayne’

BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—Past, present, and future converge on guitarist Wayne Kramer’s third solo album, “Citizen Wayne,” which Epitaph Records will release May 6. The set reunites Kramer—who defined hard rock guitar-playing as a member of Detroit’s seminal MC5—with producer/musician/songwriter David Was, who helped reignite the axeman’s career in the late 70s with appearances on his band’s Was (Not Was), “Citizen Wayne” combines songs taking in Kramer’s checkered career as revolutionary rocker, drug addict, and convict with forward-looking looping and sampling techniques.

Kramer—who drolly refers to himself as the “O.G.” (original gangsta) of Epitaph’s roster—is a major inspiration for the company’s young punk rockers, according to label marketing exec Andy Kaulkin.

“Really, what is now known as punk rock really started with lefty Kramer,” says Kaulkin. “He was the first guy that really played loud, hard, electric-guitar rock’n’roll...I think punk rock owes a lot to the MC5, and there are a lot of fans of that band, but Kramer has never been included, who grew up listening to it.”

Kramer produced his first two Epitaph albums, “The Hard Stuff” (1996) and “Dangerous Madness” (1996). But, for “Citizen Wayne,” he sought out fellow L.A. resident Was, who, with then partner Don Was, used the guitarist in the early 80s for the first studio albums by Was (Not Was) and on the band’s early tours.

Kramer explains, “I wanted to...” (Continued on next page)
Artists & Music

EPITAPH’S KRAMER TELLS HIS STORY WITH ‘CITIZEN WAYNE’
(Continued from preceding page)

stretch the sound out a little bit more, and I wanted to be able to use a recording studio as a tool, as opposed to a place where you record a band, and really use it as another instrument. David and I share a particularly keen sense of musical world view, and I think he’s one of the premier lyricists of our generation, of our time... He also brought his expertise in his ‘Veg-O-Matic’ computer editing and mixing and sampling and looping.

“A lot of what you hear on those actually is live musicians,” Kramer says. “For the loops, Brock Avery, my wonderful drummer, and I went in the studio, recorded for two days, then we mixed those to DAT, took them up to Dave’s [home studio], put them on his computer, and rejigged ’em. So it’s actually us, but we found new ways of phrasing things that I wouldn’t necessarily have thought of.”

On Kramer’s first two solo albums, the material was heavily political in nature. On the new album, several new songs (published by Westbeach/FMI [Kramer] and EMI/ASCAP [Wai]) look back on Kramer’s tumultuous career and life.

“I’d call it ‘auto-mythologizing,’” Kramer says with a chuckle. “I’m trying to tell the story of this kind of wiggy existence I’ve had, from the days of the MCS and jail, and then mostly what it’s like to do this work as a grown-up and to be an adult.”

The retrospective-styled tracks include “Back When Dogs Could Talk,” an overview of the political and musical ferment during the ’70s in Detroit, “Down On The Ground,” about the MCS’s ill-fated show in Chicago’s Lincoln Park during the riot-torn 1968 Democratic National Convention; “Count Time,” an off-tiller reflection on Kramer’s time in federal prison in the mid-’70s, after he was busted for selling more than a sound of cocaine to undercover agents; and “Snatched Defeat,” a reminiscence of Kramer’s experiences in the the ’70s band Gang War with another notorious junkie, guitarist Johnny Thunders.

“Citizen Wayne” arrives as the MCS and Kramer are receiving renewed recognition. The guitarist’s reminiscences have been featured in the last year in two high-profile books, Legs McNeil and Gillian McCain’s oral history of punk, “Please Kill Me,” and Fred Goodman’s industry study “The Mansion On The Hill.” Additionally, Picture/Now Films in Chicago is assembling a documentary on the MCS that will include interviews with Kramer and recently discovered footage of the band.

Kramer says, “It’s always gratifying to be recognized for the work you did, and I think the story of the MCS is an important story, and I’m glad to hear it getting told.”

Epitaph, which will issue “Citizen Wayne” at a low $11.98 list price, plans to capitalize on the current media attention, according to Kaulkin.

“I’ve been having some conversations with the publisher of ‘Please Kill Me,’” Kaulkin says. “I’m trying to find ways to maybe do tie-ins with the book. It’s coming out in paperback very soon from Penguin/Viking... We’re trying to do things with stores that carry books and records, like Tower, Borders. We’re trying to figure out ways of merchandising the two things together and bring it to people’s attention.

Kramer’s album will be one of the first projects promoted to radio by a new company in which Epitaph has a stake.

“Epitaph owner [Brett Gurewitz], along with Left Bank Management and Tommy Boy Records, has formed an independent promotion company that works exclusively for our labels,” says Kaulkin. “That way we can be competitive with major labels, but still remain independent and not be beholden to anybody.”

Kramer—who manages himself in partnership with Bill Adler in New York and is booked by Andy Somers at ICM—will tour aggressively backed by drummer Avery and bassist Paul III, to support the album. Efforts kicked off in March with the first of many Southern California dates.

“Andy’s idea was, there’s 14 million people in the L.A. basin,” Kramer says. “Let’s go out to the neighborhoods. Let’s go out to where real people go to hear bands in Orange County and the Inland Empire and Riverside and play the local venues. Then we’ll start a proper U.S. tour in June. And we’re talking with the H.O.R.D.E. guys about that as a possibility this year.”
MAMMOTH LEAVES ATLANTIC (Continued from page 1)

As he shops for a partner, Mammoth will continue to be distributed by ADA in the U.S. distribution in Europe is currently handled either by Atlantic on a territory-by-territory basis or by Mammoth Europe. Mammoth goes through Attic in Canada; Polystar in Japan; White in Australia and New Zealand; and Pony Canyon in South- east Asia. Distribution in those coun- ries may change, depending on the deal Mammoth strikes with a partner.

Faires adds that the label will likely stay with ADA in the U.S. even after a new deal is struck.

Mammoth, which was founded in 1988, had been part of the Atlantic fold since 1992, when the Warner Music Group bought 51%. In the Faires era, equity, Atlantic provided Mammoth with a line of credit, says Faires.

Current acts include Juliana Hat- field, Squirtle Nut Zippers, Joe Henry, the Melvins, Frente, and Victoria Williams. All its acts will remain on the label except for the exception of Seven Mary Three.

In 1996, in addition to continuing to head Mammoth, Faires became VP of A&R at Atlantic. As changes took place at Atlantic, a difference of opin- ion developed between the label and Faires about what his role should be at Atlantic. “Our visions no longer over- lapped,” says Faires, so the two parties agreed to an amicable split. Faires has relinquished his Atlantic position.

In a statement, the Atlantic Group said, “We are happy to see this new direction for Mammoth, which is in the hands of the label.”

As part of the split, Seven Mary Three, which scored a platinum album with its “American Standard,” has signed with Atlantic, and a new set, “Rock Crow,” will be issued June 3. Atlantic and Mammoth will share prof- its on that album, as well as on future releases from the band.

In leaving, Mammoth will buy back the 51% Atlantic owns. Faires declines to say how much that will cost.

Last year, Mammoth achieved sales of $15 million. Faires projects revenues of some $45 million in 1997, which would represent a tripling of sales for a label that may seem ambitious, he says that label executives with whom he has talked think it is conservative.

Faires plans to release 20-30 titles this year. Currently, he believes Mam- moth is on the brink of exploring the Squirtle Nut Zippers’ album “Hot,” which has sold 132,000 units, according to SoundScan (Billboard, March 2).

The next edition of “Buzz Bin” will be ready by September. Also in the works is a live-tracked version of its rock hits, covered by country artists. Details are pending. Faires also expects two titles involving tribute bands, which he plans to release later in the year, pending finalization of the deal. Mammoth is building a recording stu- dio, which has financed its first feature-length film, “100 Proof”; and created a retail marketing company, Hi Frequency. “It’s an exciting time for us,” says Faires.
**HEATSEEKERS® ALBUM CHART**

**COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE AND RACK SALES REPORTS COLLECTED, COMPARED AND PROVIDED BY SoundScan®**

**# NO. 1 #**

- **1.** Squirrel Nut Zippers - Walking in the Rain (3:37) (9/8.90/15.98)
  - HOT
- **2.** Ronan Hardiman - Philips 335775 (10/9.87/16.98)
  - MICHAEL FLATLEY'S LORD OF THE DANCE
- **3.** Jonny Lang - A346026 (9/9.80/16.98)
  - LIE TO ME
- **4.** No Mercy - ARMD 26241 (9/8.98/16.98)
  - NO MERCY
- **5.** Benny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)
  - KENNY LATTIMORE
- **6.** Cherie & The Biddies - EMI 46175 (10/9.84/16.98)
  - WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY
- **7.** Three 6 Mafia - High Roller (4:29) (10/9.85/16.98)
  - GOODNIGHT SWEETHEART

**REGIONAL HEATSEEKERS® NO. 1s**

- **MOUNTAIN**
  - Squirrel Nut Zippers, Not

- **PACIFIC**
  - Squirrel Nut Zippers, Not

- **MIDWEST**
  - Benny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)
  - *That's Not Me*

- **SOUTHERN**
  - Three & Moto, The End

- **EAST NORTH CENTRAL**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

- **SOUTH CENTRAL**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

- **WEST NORTH CENTRAL**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

- **NORTHEAST**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

- **SOUTHERN ATLANTIC**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

- **MIDDLE ATLANTIC**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

- **SOUTHWEST**
  - Kenny Lattimore, Kenny Lattimore - Columbia 67215 (10/9.86/16.98)

**THE REGIONAL ROUND-UP**

**Top 10 listings of best-selling titles by new and developing artists.**

- **PACIFIC**
  - 1. Squirrel Nut Zippers, Not
  - 2. White Town Women In Technology
  - 3. Less Than Jake Living Stereo
  - 4. Kenny Lattimore Kenny Lattimore
  - 5. Ray Big Fish Turn The Radio Off

- **MIDWEST**
  - 1. Squirrel Nut Zippers, Not
  - 2. Mathew 22:30 Urban Or Someone Like You
  - 3. David G. Jones Get Up
  - 4. Michael Seligman Richards Essential
  - 5. Red Hot Chili Peppers The Battle Of Los Angeles

- **SOUTHERN**
  - 1. Squirrel Nut Zippers, Not
  - 2. Matthew 22:30 Urban Or Someone Like You
  - 3. David G. Jones Get Up
  - 4. Michael Seligman Richards Essential
  - 5. Red Hot Chili Peppers The Battle Of Los Angeles

**The Heatseekers chart lists the best selling titles by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of the Billboard 200 chart. When an album matches this level, the album and the artist's subsequent albums are immediately eligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart. All albums are available on cassette and CD.***

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**S M E L L S P H I S H Y:** Audiences seem hungry for the bluegrass hippie hardcore served up by Mountain Division/Hollywood Records recording act Leftover Salmon. The Boulder, Colo.-based act, whose album "Euphoria" was released March 18, is at its charismatic live performances and loyal followers, or "salmon heads." The band has a few things in common with recording act Phish. "Euphoria" was produced by Justin Niebanck, known for his work with the Elektra band. And, like Phish, Leftover Salmon once sold its own self-released albums during rigorous road trips.

Simultaneous with the release of "Euphoria," Mountain Division/Hollywood Records released "Bridge To Bert" and "Ask The Fish," originally put out by the band in the 1995 and 1996, respectively. Word has spread a lot about the act through electronic appearances at the Telluride Bluegrass Festival in Telluride, Colo., and the Merle Watson Festival in North Carolina, as well as at a two-week stint on the H.O.R.D.E. tour last summer.

While Hollywood has no immediate plans to release a single or promote the album at radio, the band will continue touring. Leftover Salmon, which is booked by world band, Madrid-based Vision International, recently finished a five-week tour that culminated in a sold-out show at New York's Wetlands.

On Tuesday (1) and Wednesday (2), the band plays the Fillmore in San Francisco, followed by a gig April 9 at the House of Blues in Los Angeles.

**RE-FAIZING:** Before Dawn/Touchwood is headlining to get "Ruff, Ruff, The Album" by label rap artist Fraze to retail while the artist's single, "Ruff Rude/Ruff Rida," is still climbing the rap charts. The song, which is at No. 34 on the Hot Rap Singles chart this issue, was produced and mixed by the 69 Boyz. The forthcoming album features production by Disco Rick and Chris Wong Won. A clip for the single featuring boxer Mike Tyson will be serviced Tuesday (1).

Fraze will also kick off a radio promotion tour in the southeastern U.S. at the end of the month.

**CHOICE CUT:** Sony 550 act's Choice is due for a progress report. The Belgian darlings, whose album "Paradise In Me" was released last August, are finally beginning to attract state-side attention, thanks in part to the momentum behind the record single, "Not An Addict." The song, which takes a first-person look at addiction, is gaining spins on such stations as KJDE Dallas and KXWD Sacramento, Calif. In support of the band's breakthrough, 550 will release a videoclip for the song directed by Peter Kristoferson (Rage Against The Machine) sometime in April.

**SECOND DEBUT:** Rocket Records/A&M artist Ryan Downe is getting a second chance. The labels announced in late March that Downe, Working Streak, "Mann's Chinese," the first single from the second-debut from Red Ant act Naked, has been designated one of Rock Airplay Monitor's mainstream rock greatest gainers for two weeks running. Boosters include WZAT Savannah, Ga., and KEGL Irving, Texas.
BMG Music Publishing congratulates Duncan Sheik, Atlantic Records, Immortal Music and David Leinheirdt Management on nine fruitful months!

Duncan Sheik released June 1996. 18 weeks on Billboard Heatseekers Chart. #1 Heatseekers Billboard March 22, '97.
Heatseeker Impact Billboard March 29, '97.


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CONQUERING THE MIRTH MARKET

The search for bucks has record companies promoting yuks just like rock ‘n’ roll.

BY MELINDA NEWMAN

While the days of the ’60s and ’70s, when comedy albums often topped the pop charts may never come again, the success of a number of recent projects has labels laughing all the way to the bank.

In the last several months, a number of comedians have appeared on the Billboard 200, ranging from pranksters the Jerky Boys to parodist “Weird Al” Yankovic. “Saturday Night Live” alum Adam Sandler has logged a number of weeks on the chart, as has country comedian Jeff Foxworthy, who many credit with starting the revival. Fellow Warner Bros. Nashville signee Bill Engvall is also currently climbing both the country and pop charts with his album, “Here’s Your Sign.”

Additionally, Warners’ blue comic Robert Schimmel, whose album “Comes Clean” was released last fall, continues to grow in popularity, and Rykodisc is spreading the word of late comic Bill Hicks, through four sets released in February. Moreover, new albums from Chris Rock (DreamWorks), Julia Sweeney (Warner) and David Brenner (Uproar) are in the works.

“We’re in a boom period,” says David Droen, president of comedy-only Uproar Entertainment, which is distributed by INDI and is home to such hot comics as Brenner, Margaret Cho, Bobby Collins, Richard Jeni, Brian Regan and a number of up-and-comers. “The clubs are full of people. People have become aware of just how much is out there through people like Jeff Foxworthy.”

TAKING LAUGHS TO MARKET

With ears and pocketbooks receptive to the genre, the challenge to the labels is how to market comedy in a way that will reach people who don’t necessarily frequent comedy clubs.

In some cases, the answer is to market a comedy album exactly how you promote a rock ‘n’ roll or country album: that is, go to radio.

Engvall’s record, released last May, has just begun to soar into the upper reaches of the Billboard Country Albums chart based on airplay from the single, “Here’s Your Sign (Get The Picture),” which features a catchy musical chorus performed by Travis Tritt.

“Getting on the radio is certainly a very important part for Engvall,” says Bill Mayne, Warner Nashville’s senior VP of promotion. “The single with Travis Tritt was the major catalyst that enabled country radio to put Bill in regular rotation.” As Mayne notes, Warner Bros. has experienced similar success with Foxworthy routines that featured Little Texas and Alan Jackson.

In addition to radio airplay, such projects have greatly benefited from video airplay on such outlets as CMT or TNN. Razor & Tie parodist Cedric T’Judd has become a mainstay of the video outlets with his humorous clips.

Similarly, DreamWorks plans to promote Rock’s new album, called “Roll With The New,” as if it were a music release. “We’re working it like it’s a rock ‘n’ roll record,” says DreamWorks executive Michael Ostin.

ROCK TO JOCKS

In a more reminiscent of rock records, Rock will premiere his album on the Howard Stern show the morning of its April 8 release. Like Foxworthy and Engvall, the comic will also have a video worthy of MTV and BET national-outlet play for a sketch on the album called “Cheap Pete.”

But even then, DreamWorks is covering bases well trod by other comedy releases that don’t have music outlets. “We’re going to the morning shows, we’re going to the personality jocks, but we’re also going to sports talk shows, since Chris is the voice of L.A. (the character in the Nike commercials).”

While some albums, like those by Rock, Foxworthy and Engvall, can be marketed in ways similar to a music album—with segments serviced to radio, etc.—the majority have to be marketed in non-traditional ways.

The key to working comedy albums, says Mayne, who is quick to point out that Foxworthy was already a platinum act before landing his weekly television show, is thinking creatively. “You’ve got to be open-minded. You’ve got to get outside the box and realize there is an opportunity for this art form without the traditional outlets,” says Mayne.

That’s the thinking behind Rhino’s “spoken-word and comedy” campaign, which begins in April.

Although most labels have no trouble getting their product in stores, it’s often hard to get clerks excited about the projects. “For the most part, record store clerks are largely unfamiliar with the kind of comedy Rhino puts out because it’s not MTV-type comedy,” says Shane Tierney, Rhino director of product management for catalog development. “It tends to skew to an older audience. It gets put in the back of the bin with exercise and spoken-word releases.”

To build awareness inside the stores and out, Rhino’s campaign will promote its catalog in 20 top markets, tying in radio, retailers and comedy clubs.

Selected radio stations in each of the markets will give away Rhino boxed sets and comedy videos, as well as passes to local comedy clubs. The clubs, in turn, will hand out bounceback coupons on Rhino catalog to drive consumers into stores.

VITAL REISSUES

 Rhino has found a treasure trove in the reissue comedy market. Tierney estimates that 95% of the comedy projects are re-releases. But they are usually projects with a twist. For example, this spring, the label will release a Tom Lehrer double set comprised of studio versions of his first two albums originally released in the ’50s. The material had been released in live form via Warners, but the Rhino issue marks the first time in 40 years that the studio versions have come out.

Of course, the inherent problem with reissues is that the comedian is either dead or seldom touring. However, Tierney says that in lieu of a body to plug the release, Rhino often has something better: a game plan based on the artist’s original audience. “For example,” Tierney explains, “we know that Tom Lehrer plays very well to a university crowd and to the Northeast. Those

Continued on page 80
BY DOUG REECE

Welcome to Yuk Yaks Comedy Barn, folks! It's time again to run down new comedy albums, and have we got a show for you. It's a star-studded affair, chock-full of comedy stylings by everyone from Uncle Millie to a gaggle of "Saturday Night Live" alums. Oh, and remember, it's a two-drink minimum.

Chris Rock, whose widely acclaimed HBO special brought the former SNL cast member to a new level of comedic stardom, will follow with "Roll With The New." The album, which will be released by DreamWorks on April 8, features Rock's blunt, hilarious observations and commentary.

Adam Sandler, too, is back on the circuit, with a follow-up to his platinum-selling album, "What The Hell Happened To Me?" Co-producer Brooks Arthur says the comedian is planning an album featuring musical spoofs interspersed with comedy bits. Similar to previous Sandler musical projects, says Brooks, the untitled album will feature respected session players such as Waddy Wachtel, Bob Glaub and Teddy Castellucci. The "Happy Gilmore" star will most likely tour with his band in support of the Warner Bros. album, which will be released in late summer or early fall.

Meanwhile, Eddie Murphy's third comedy album, "Greatest Comedy Hits," is making a splash. The set, released March 25, includes such classic Murphy characters as Buckwheat, Grandma Klump and Uncle Gus, as well as material from previous albums and SNL episodes.

Television vet Bob Newhart's latest album is already in circulation; a live recording, "Bob Newhart's Button-Down Concert" was released late last month by Nick At Nite Records. And Ray Stevens is back, promoting a worthy successor to "The Streak" and other musical misadventures in "Hum It II" (MCA).

New Releases Will Have Retail Rolling In the Aisle

John Leguizamo—featured on the big screen in such films as "The Pest" and "Romeo & Juliet"—will launch his new record label, Minimum Wage Records, with the release of a new comedy album, "Mambo Mouth" bows in early July. And Julia Sweeney weighs in with "said God Ha!" April 22, a double CD of performances recorded in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco.

On the heels of Howard Stern's major motion-picture debut "Private Parts," Oglio will release a new album by Stern sidekick Mike "The Jokerman" Marling. "Hogwarts & Donuts," which bows in June, will be supported by Martin visits to Stern affiliate stations, and stores and comedy-club appearances.

All American will issue "Phone Jackin,'" a collection of crank calls by the high-spirited forty albums and SNL episodes.

Computer users will be able to download archival comic photographs and a screen saver, and the CD will be available over an 800 number, as well as at Laugh Dome's website at http://www.laugh.com.


REYNOLDS' GROWTH

Rhino is also expecting a boost for the Rick Reynolds album, "All Grown Up And No Place To Go," from the premiere of "Life...And Stuff," his new CBS comedy series. This bittersweet comic monologue was originally released last year, then reissued by Rhino in January as a two-CD set featuring a 25-minute bonus selection not previously available. Reynolds will also be performing at comedy clubs to support the album.

Conquering the Market

Continued from page 19

The Jerky Boys, who record on their own Mercury-distributed imprint, Ratchet, are considering bringing other comedians to their roster.

However, as many of these artists may find, running a label is not always a barrel of laughs.

Ellen DeGeneres started Soda Jerk, a Lava/Atlantic imprint, with the release of her album, "Taste This," last October. The intent was to sign both comedic and musical acts. However, when called for an update on the label, a source said that it no longer in existence. Atlantic remains the home of George Carlin.

Although not artist-run, other new imprints include Summertime Entertainment, a Def Jam custom label that will package highlights from HBO's popular "Def Comedy Jam" series, as well as present new artists; and a new imprint run by Comedy Central. The cable channel is talking with prospective labels about forming an alliance to release products based on the channel's original programming as well as a way to launch new talent. Comedy Central already has an existing home-video deal that runs through Rhino Home Video.

Warner Nashville's Mayne, for one, isn't at all surprised by the flurry of activity, but he hastens to remind companies stepping into the comedy whirlpool that they cannot open minds. "We can't afford to put blankets on," he says. "We all need to be aware of what the consumer is not just going to accept—but to truly enjoy."
Go ahead and laugh. Warner Bros. Records has been the King of Comedy since long before Rupert Pupkin got his first 7 minutes. Back in 1960, Bob Newhart saved our collective cans with his Grammy® winning “Button Down Mind.” We’ve been kickin’ comedy butt ever since. So, have you heard the one about the priest, the rabbi and the cock-a-too? Nevermind. (Badum-bum.) Anyway gang, have you ever noticed: Bill Engvall has the #1 comedy album on the Soundscan Comedy Chart; Jeff Foxworthy has three albums in the Top 10 and has sold over 7 million copies; and both of Adam Sandler’s platinum albums remain in the Top 10? Heckle that. So, this bald guy walks into a bar. No, make that a comedy club. His name is Robert Schimmel and he kills (on tour, on his debut album and on radio show gigs). So’s your wife. Now stick around because later on we’ve got two really funny, funny people, Julia Sweeney and Crazy Al Cayne, with new releases coming right up. Thank you, you’ve been a great crowd. And don’t forget to tip your waitress.
Comedy Spotlight

Video Comedy: Unseen Beans And White-Trash Diaries

In addition to the slew of comedy albums being released, there are also a few noteworthy comic videos circulating.

For instance, fans of Rowan Atkinson's comic alter ego, "Mr. Bean," have just been treated to another helping of the character's silent, uproariously funny pratfalls and predicament sketch comedy in the PolyGram Video release "Mr. Bean: Unseen Bean." The video, which bowed March 25, features some of Atkinson's best previously unreleased material.

Rhino Home Video is also getting into the act, with two videos originally aired on Comedy Central.

"Viva Vietnam: A White Trash Adventure Tour," features Tom Rhodes, star of the NBC sitcom "Mr. Rhodes," in a bizarre Vietnam travel-diary style program. In the clip, Rhodes attempts to introduce Vietnam natives to American low-brow culture in the name of bringing international peace through laughter. The video was released March 18.

The second Rhino Home Video project, "Please Call To Confirm," revisits a hysterical episode of the animated series "Dr. Katz Professional Therapist." Guest patients include Gary Shandling and Judy Tenuta.

On the laserdisc front, image last month issued a compilation of all 21 of "Weird Al" Yankovic's music videos. The set will likely benefit from the parodist's "Weird Al Show" series, which premieres on CBS in September. TV crossover can't but help the eighth volume of the Beavis & Butthead series, which streets July 15. —DOUG REECE

Comedy Is Becoming The King Of Pop Inside The U.K., But Border Crossings Are Rare

BY PETER DEAN

LONDON—Audio comedy accounts for 27% of the 67 million pound ($107.2 million) spoken-word market in the U.K. Although not a new market segment, it is an area of fast-growing sales due to the high repeatability of comedy tapes, their purchase by marketing computer salespeople, and the comparative lack of comedy programming on radio.

EMI's audiobook imprint Listen For Pleasure, for example, has been releasing comedy since the 1920s. Much of the material on Listen For Pleasure or from the defunct BBC Radio Collection, was recorded in the 1940s and 1950s. Major releases include "Round the Horne," "The Goons," and "Hancock's Half Hour," while no self-respecting thirtysomething has a record collection without one Monty Python or Derek & Clive disc.

Although the BBC has access to a wealth of material from its radio and TV production departments, spoken-word comedy in the U.K. traces its roots mostly into the music-hall and variety shows in Britain, one reason why the market has traditionally fallen into the hands of record companies rather than book or spoken-word publishers.

While classic comedy titles sell through book and department stores, a new wave of comedians is primarily distributed through record outlets. New comedy titles are also accorded a release on CD as well as the traditional cassette format.

The long-standing companies that have classic comedy labels are also investing heavily in A&R for new comedy acts who have exploded onto the British market like true pop stars. In fact, comedy has, in the view of many, become the new rock n' roll.

Following an explosion in comedy clubs in Britain in the 1980s, there is an increased blurring between the music and comedy business. Open a music magazine and you'll find major tour listings for comedians such as Sean Hughes or Craig Charles alongside the itinerary for the latest Britpop sensation.

Comedians now introduce music shows, such as Jack Dee on BBC TV's "Top Of The Pops," and last year comics David Baddiel and Frank Skinner teamed up with the Lightning Seeds to release the chart-topping football anthem, "Three Lions."

RISING STARS AND COSTS

Publishers looking to cash in, however, face the dilemma of paying dearly for popular performers—a reason why such big multimedia companies as the BBC, EMI, PolyGram and VCI take the lion's share of the market.

Comedy, like most other high-profile entertainment genres, is also being exploited on several fronts simultaneously by the multimedia giants. Vic Reeves, a popular British comic whose mock game show "Shooting Stars" was one of TV's biggest hits last year, had a variety of products released from BBC World-wide last Christmas, including a video, "Nude And Unviewed," a blue version of "Shooting Stars," and a book with an interactive audio CD.

Some big names in audio comedy are also best-sellers in video, such as Billy Connolly and Roy Chubby Brown, but there is no direct correlation. The comedy video market is worth just under 100 million pounds ($160 million) per annum in consumer sales, with PolyGram and the PolyGram-owned VCI distributing the top-10 comedy titles of last year.

LIMITED RELEASES AND EXCLUSIVE DEALS

The independents in the market, of which Laughing Stock is the most conspicuous, compete with the majors by keeping a firmer grip on the pulse, limiting releases and setting up exclusive deals with retailers—such as W.H. Smith with its current Rowan Atkinson tape. The company has had a best seller with its popular Long John tape and has rights to other "pop" comedy stars like Eddie Izzard, who has recently taken his brand of laid-back delivery to the U.S.
"Weird Al" Yankovic

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**Roc-A-Fella’s Faith In Christión**

**Label’s Debut R&B Act Heating Up Early**

**BY J.R. REYNOLDS**

LOS ANGELES—With Def Jam’s marketing and distributing muscle behind it and a promotional track that heated up faster than anticipated, Roc-A-Fella Records is confident that the debut album from Christión has the elements needed for success. Based in Oakland, Calif., Christión’s Kenny Ski and Allen Anthony wrote and produced the set “Ghetto Cyrano,” which is due early this summer. Citing Marvin Gaye, Steve Wonder, and Curtis Mayfield as influences, the two report that while their music is indeed smooth, their fans are not as mellow.

“We want to demonstrate the same universal appeal as Marvin, Stevie, and Curtis in today’s marketplace,” says Roc-A-Fella CEO Damon Dash. “They’re the kind of act that can tour as part of a rap or R&B package. Their music is soulful, but they really need to tour with a Kanyon, G, if they wanted.”

Although “Ghetto Cyrano” is traditional R&B with a contemporary feel, the pair welcome the growing alternative soul sound in the marketplace. They say both forms stem from the R&B sound of classic R&B of the ‘60s and ‘70s. Says Ski, “With the changes going on in R&B today, we think that our more universal approach, musically and lyrically, is right on time.

“Music is cyclic, and when the industry is saturated with a sound or concept like what’s been going on for the last few years, somebody goes back to the more grassroots sound, and it catches on,” he adds. Christión, managed by Los Angeles-based C+C Management, publishes its songs through its own Poetix in Motion Music Publishing. According to label executives, the act’s commercial potential became apparent soon after marketing ground work on the project began.

“We had sent out a limited number of white-label product of the group’s first single, ‘Full Of Smoke,’ back in January,” says Dash. “We weren’t trying to go at full speed, it was just sent to a few DJs to begin gaining an underground interest. But we ended up getting a quicker response than we anticipated.”

The single was made available commercial on Jan. 21 and was supported by a videoclip that was serviced to BET, the Rox, and local shows during the same month. Roc-A-Fella plans to aggressively promote “Full Of Smoke” at mainstream and R&B adult stations starting Tuesday (1). It will receive crossovers radio April 11.

Because it’s a smaller label, Roc-A-Fella’s philosophy is to develop its acts from an underground perspective. “Reasonable Doubt,” by the label’s June ’96 debut act, A-Z, peaked at No. 3 on the Top R&B Albums chart and sold 380,000 units, according to SoundScan.

“We have the streets locked,” says Dash, referring to the New York-based label’s strong East Coast presence. “We’re working Christión in the same manner we would a rap act so we can react quickly to market demands.”

In February, the act was on a two-week road trip that extended from Rhode Island to Atlanta. Dash cites touring as an important element of its Christión campaign. “Because we’re a small label, we’re supported by bigger exposure mediums like MTV and major radio initially,” Dash says. “So we go after the strong underground vibe and work our way up.”

Roc-A-Fella, which was formed a year ago, recently dissolved its former distribution deal with Priority. Through Priority, Roc-A-Fella released product on its debut act Jay-Z and “Full Of Smoke.” Christión’s first single. The label is scheduled to finalize its Def Jam distribution pact April 5, with product by Christión and other acts flowing through Def Jam’s distribution pipeline.

Roc-A-Fella’s pairing with Def Jam broadens the year-old label’s realm. “Our former deal with Priority was just a [pressing and distribution] thing, whereas Def Jam is a co-venture,” says Dash. “They know that we’re hungry up here, we know how we were in our shoes, so there’s a lot of enthusiasm and support over there.”

Although a broader concert tour is in the act’s future, the label is in no hurry and will examine options after the act’s set is finished. “We’ll begin initially at the club level,” says Dash. “That’s our foundation. Then we’ll work our way up to larger and larger venues.”

Closer to the album’s release date, Roc-A-Fella plans to service radio with “Anything Goes,” the act’s next single.

Tru Dat. Standing in a sound booth at Mirror Image Studios in Long Island, N.Y., Priority trio Tha Truth! watches over the shoulders of Priority & VP T-Smooq, seated at left, and rapper/product Erick Samson. Shown standing, from left, are Teresa, Jamie, and Cindy of Tha Truth!
## Billboard Hot R&B Airplay

**AUGUST 23, 1997**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>In My Bed</em></td>
<td>Toni Braxton (LaFace/Arista)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>One in a Million</em></td>
<td>Makaveli (Death Row/Interscope)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Get It Together</em></td>
<td>Aaliyah (Blackground/Atlantic)</td>
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<tr>
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<td><em>One in the City</em></td>
<td>Nas (Ruffhouse/Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>8:46 PM</em></td>
<td>Erykah Badu (Kedar/Universal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><em>Music Is Just Like Too Much Medicine</em></td>
<td>Mase (Ruffhouse/Columbia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><em>Why You Came</em></td>
<td>Usher (Epic/Interscope)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Knocks Me Off My Feet</em></td>
<td>John Legend (Sony)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Now That We're Together</em></td>
<td>Dr. Dre featuring Snoop Dogg (Interscope)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>I'll Be Alright</em></td>
<td>K-Ci &amp; JoJo (Atlantic)</td>
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<td><em>We Don't Wanna Be a Player</em></td>
<td>The Notorious B.I.G. (Bad Boy/Def Jam)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td><em>Knock It Out</em></td>
<td>R.Kelly (Jive)</td>
</tr>
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<td>13</td>
<td><em>Believe in You and Me</em></td>
<td>Mary J. Blige (A&amp;M/Interscope)</td>
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<td><em>Never Let You Go</em></td>
<td>John Legend (Epic/Interscope)</td>
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<td><em>Boomerang</em></td>
<td>L.L. Cool J (Def Jam)</td>
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<td><em>I Love You Some Him</em></td>
<td>Aaliyah (Blackground/Atlantic)</td>
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<td><em>Let's Get Down</em></td>
<td>Nelly (E1/Eleven)</td>
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<td><em>Unbreak My Heart</em></td>
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<td><em>I Love You So Much</em></td>
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<td><em>The Real Thing</em></td>
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<td><em>Two ppq</em></td>
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<td><em>The Real Thing (Remix)</em></td>
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<td><em>I Love You Some Him</em></td>
<td>Aaliyah (Blackground/Atlantic)</td>
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<td><em>I Can't Sleep Baby</em></td>
<td>Foxy Brown (Interstate/Def Jam)</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td><em>I Can't Sleep Baby</em></td>
<td>Foxy Brown (Interstate/Def Jam)</td>
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## Billboard Hot R&B Singles Sales

**AUGUST 23, 1997**

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**Notes:**
- Billboard Hot R&B Airplay chart features the top 20 songs based on airplay data.
- Billboard Hot R&B Singles Sales chart lists the top 20 songs based on sales data.
- Both charts are compiled from Nielsen SoundScan, Inc., and are updated weekly.
PHILADELPHIA, PA—The Rap Column continues from preceding page

The end of her party starring single from Funkmaster Flex's "Mix Tape Volume II," Jones says her homage to his work is "so cute and interesting but clearly he was more excited about his own upcoming project, which features stellar live musicians like Vincent Henry, Weldon Irvine, Van Gibbons (Grammy-winning Salama Remi's partner), the Ohio Players, and the Bar-Kays.

The performer mixed the album in Memphis with legendary producer Willie Mitchell, who revisited Al Green's "Let's Stay Together" for the first time in more than 20 years. Juice tracked a remake of the classic song with Michelle Watley, Jody's baby sis.

Concerning the album, he says, "It's really the same thing that I've been doing, only now, because of everything else that's going on, it will be refreshing."

On "Stuckey MCs," his new single on Della Cab/Seespot Records, Special Ed, who used to be known as "the Magnificent," takes it to the face of rappers who think they're all that and he's not. "Whatup, punk, you wanna try me?" he asks over a sharp, stringy Howie Tee track. "This ain't a taste test. I'm already hot. I'm the man. You come at me when I'm walking. You get stepped on."

Then he adds, "My skills are never to be questioned" and "I got so many styles that I stopped counting."

James Aozor, former of Priority Records, is now VP of marketing at Refugee Camp Entertainment, the Ruffhouse/Columbia-connected company helmed by members of the Fugees.

Gram'Ma Funk, known to New Yorkers as da "funk hostess wi da mouth," is due to embark on an European tour. This exuberant party promoter and fashion personality—she's been in several music videos and onstage with folks like George Clinton and P-Funk—is taking her Afro-puffed "Funk Hut" concept across the pond to host a TV show as well as jams for the next few years. Her ban was to be at the March 25 at Tramps in New York with celebrity guests. Mother Supiera, Mr. Checks from the Lost Boys, Bush Babies, and others were to perform, and DJ Dazz Joyce was to be on da wheels of steel. The send-off was a charity event benefitting two youth agencies: Door and the Center for Community Alternatives.

THE RAP COLUMN

(Continued from preceding page)
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THERE IS NO DANCING BAREFOOT IN THE PARK any more. In the waning years of the late 1960s, a new twist was added to established traditions, and the result was a fusion of two separate styles of music, culminating in the beginnings of dance as we know it today. With the rise of the rock and roll generation, the traditional dance halls began to change. In their place, a new form of music emerged that would eventually become known as dance music.

A new wave of artists began to emerge, some of whom would become household names. Among them was Tameka Starr, who released the track “Now That You’ve Gone” in 1969. The song reached number one on the UK charts and was covered by numerous other artists. The success of this song paved the way for Starr to pursue a career in music and continue to release hits throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Starr’s success was not limited to the UK, as she also had a significant following in the US. Her hit “Mama Don’t Allow” became a favorite among soldiers stationed in Europe, and her performances were a regular feature of the Armed Forces Network. The popularity of this song led to a record deal with MCA Records, and she was soon touring the US with her own band.

Throughout her career, Starr remained true to her roots, and her music continued to evolve with the times. She embraced new technologies and production techniques, allowing her to stay relevant in an ever-changing music landscape. Her legacy continues to be felt today, as her influence can be seen in the work of contemporary artists who continue to push the boundaries of dance music.

In conclusion, Tameka Starr is a testament to the power of music to transcend time and place. Her story is one of perseverance and dedication, and her music remains a source of joy and inspiration for fans the world over. As we look back on the history of dance music, it’s clear that Starr played an integral role in shaping the genre and leaving a lasting mark on the music world.
### Billboard's HOT DANCE MUSIC

#### CLUB PLAY

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<td>2</td>
<td>I'M ALIVE (NHBG)</td>
<td>STRETCH AND VERN PRESENT MADDOG</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>PEOPLE HOLD ON (ARISTA)</td>
<td>LISA STANSFELD</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>GIVE IT UP (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>VICTOR CALDERONE</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>HAVANA (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>RENNY G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>STAR PEOPLE (DINO'S DJ'S)</td>
<td>GEORGE MICHAEL</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>DISCOTHEQUE (ISLAND)</td>
<td>LADY GAGA</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>IT'S JUST ANOTHER GROOVE (BEG 1975)</td>
<td>THE MIGHTY CAT KATZ</td>
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<td>INNOSYNTH (CHEEKY:WAX)</td>
<td>FAITHLESS</td>
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<td>LOVEFOOL (TRANSMISSION)</td>
<td>THE CARDIGANS</td>
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<td>NEW YORK'S CALLING (CREATIVE)</td>
<td>SOUL S. K.</td>
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<td>QUEEN IT'S OVER (RHYTHM)</td>
<td>LE CLOQ</td>
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<td>STEP BY STEP (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>WHITNEY HOUSTON</td>
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<td>THAT SOUND (KING STREET)</td>
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<td>RUNWAY DANCE STYLING (COLUMBIA)</td>
<td>NULYORICAN SOUL FEATURING INDIA</td>
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<td>MOMENTS... (STREET)</td>
<td>NOISE MAKER</td>
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<td>CALLING YOUR NAME (STUDIO RECORD)</td>
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<td>I WANT YOU TO KNOW (DANCE TO)</td>
<td>PSYDOSKONIC</td>
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<td>ARE YOU THERE... (DANCE TO)</td>
<td>BARRY HARRIS</td>
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<td>MAKE MY WAY (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>MAMA LA CHICA (ATLANTIC)</td>
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#### Power Pick

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<td>AALIYAH</td>
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<td>SPACE GIRLS</td>
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<td>SAY YES (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>MIUNAS</td>
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<td>WANT YOU TO KNOW (DANCE TO)</td>
<td>ME'SHELL NDEGE OCIO</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>A LITTLE BIT OF LOVE (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>RUPaul</td>
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<td>YUM YUM (ELVIS)</td>
<td>PULSE FEATURING ANTONETTE ROBERSON</td>
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<td>DRIVE HARD (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>GEORGE WILLIAMS</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>ONLY YOU (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>JAY JONES</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>SNAP</td>
<td>ELYSIE MAGGIOLE WITH MARY JANE LAYMON</td>
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#### Hot Shot Debut

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<td>JAY WILLIAMS</td>
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<td>MAKE YOUR OWN KINGS (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>MANOA CASA</td>
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<td>WHERE HAVE ALL THE COWBOYS GONE? (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>PAULA CALE</td>
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<td>UP TO NO GOOD (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>THE PORK KINGDOM</td>
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<td>SEARCHING 400 OR 4000 (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>MOOD II SWING FEATURING LON CLARK</td>
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<td>THE SALSO</td>
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<td>PHONES &amp; FOOL (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>JAI ALAI</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>FUNK LIKE DAT (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>BARRY HARRIS</td>
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<td>SHUFFLE INC.</td>
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<td>37 BREAK (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>OVER NOT YET (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>GRACE</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>NEVER FELL THIS WAY (ATLANTIC)</td>
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### MAXI-SONG SALES

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<td>WU-TANG CLAN</td>
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<td>STEP INTO A WORLD (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>THE DAMAJA</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>LET ME CLEAR MY THROAT (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>OK KOOL</td>
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<td>INNOSYNTH (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>FAITHLESS</td>
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<td>I'M NOT FEELING YOU (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>YVETTE MICHELE</td>
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#### Greatest Gainer

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#### Hot Shot Debut

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<td>JOCELYN ENRIQUEZ</td>
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<td>TALK TO ME (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>WILD ORCHID</td>
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<td>DON'T SPEAK (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>114</td>
<td>OVER HEELS (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>ALLURE FEATURING NASH</td>
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<td>115</td>
<td>ONE MORE TIME (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>REAL MOJO</td>
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<td>UN-BREAK MY HEART (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>BIG DADDY (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>HENRY D</td>
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<td>118</td>
<td>THE THEME (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>FRANCIS JONES</td>
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<td>IT'S JUST ANOTHER (ATLANTIC)</td>
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#### New Entry

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<td>STOP (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>MARIK MILLAY</td>
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#### Re-Entry

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<td>BEFORE TODAY (ATLANTIC)</td>
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<td>SUGAR IS SWEET (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>BRIAN FENTON</td>
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<td>47</td>
<td>GET UP (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>TIM CAMPBELL</td>
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<td>48</td>
<td>ONE THING AT A TIME (ATLANTIC)</td>
<td>STU PAPES</td>
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**Títulos con las mayores ventas de la semana**

Los títulos con las mayores ventas de la semana son seleccionados por Billboard. El Power Pick en Club Play es el que ofrece la mayor elevación en las ventas de las nuevas canciones de la semana.

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Daniels Tips His Blue Hat Label

Debut Sets Tour Tie-In And Store Gigs

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—After more than 30 years in the music business, Charlie Daniels has gained total control of his musical destiny with the formation of his own label, Blue Hat Records.

The debut album from the new company is a blues project by Daniels and his band, set for release May 12. Initially, the album will be available exclusively at Wal-Mart, with broader release scheduled for later.

The president of the label is David Corlew, Daniels' manager of nine years. Paula Stoegis has been named VP of advertising, promotion, publicity, and production. Belle Evans will serve as VP of project management. The new company has hired director of administration, Danna Carmack as director of operations, and Jody Hall as director of finance.

"I've got to do this for myself, it's something I always wanted to do," Daniels says in discussing his decision to start his own label.

"The last album [a country record, Capitol] I had to use studio musicians and do it a certain way... and I can't work that way. I can't have somebody tell me what to do with my music, because I feel like I've been doing it well over half my life, and if I didn't know what I was doing by now, I'd quit."

He continues, "In this case, it's not a distribution deal, and I put out what I want instead of what somebody else wants me to. I got tired of fighting for the things that mean something to me, the things for major [labels], but it will be a record-by-record thing. I'm doing a kids' album for Sony... but I don't have to listen to some of my own albums, I have to be me."

OTHER ACTS TO COME

Corlew shares Daniels' enthusiasm for the new venture and says it makes perfect sense for Daniels at this point in his career. "Charlie wanted to take hold and create his own destiny," he says. "Charlie has a fan base and a consistent sales record. Charlie is an artist who has sold 200,000 and 300,000 pieces of a hit catalog. So we know new fans are buying Charlie's music. There's a base there Charlie is committed to serving."

Daniels is the first act on the label, but he says others will be signed. He and Corlew plan on Blue Hat being a full-fledged label. "We want to get the basic structure in place so we know it will work," Corlew says.

"Once we get a couple of projects under our belt, then I think we'll be able to look at some other artists... there are a lot of artists that have marquee value and a fan base and have the desire to continue to put their music out.

"Sometimes a major label doesn't feel that way about a certain artist. So I think we as an industry have to give artists a chance. That's what I'm doing for artists. Hopefully, there will be places like Blue Hat where artists can continue their art."

Following the first album, Daniels says that later in the year he plans to release a "greatest hits" of the old Charlie Daniels Band album, and his band cover such Southern rock classics as "Can't You See" and "Free Bird."

"We'll also do a ZZ Top song and a Hootie song, songs that are identified with the South," Daniels says.

The blue album is something he has wanted to do for a long time. "It's like a lot of stuff we did back in the '70s," Daniels says. "We did a lot of blues, but I never devoted a whole album to it."

Low-Key Angle Pays Off For Walker; Gibson Comes To Downtown Nashville

CHECKING IN WITH...: By far the most understated achiever in country music these days must be Clay Walker. A year after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, he's leading one of the hottest tours on the road with his Four Star Blowout (featuring Terri Clark, James Bonamy, and Emilio) and has a No. 2 single this issue on Billboard's Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart with "Rumor Has It," taken from his upcoming album. The company has purchased a four-story building on Church Street, near the Ryman Auditorium, in which it will consolidate its bluegrass instrument production facilities, along with a bluegrass museum, a classic Nashville "meat and three" dinner, a bluegrass instrument and merchandise store, and an outdoor venue to seat up to 400 people. Gibson makes a wide line of bluegrass instruments, including guitars, banjos, mandolins, and dobro. The facility may be open to the public by this summer, according to Gibson head Henry Juskiewicz.

Gretchen Peters, Michael McDonald, Harry Connick Jr., Mann, Cynthia Weil, and Jimmy Webb head the list of headliners for the new venue to open on Tin Pan South April 15-19 at 11 venues here. This fifth annual songwriter fest will feature 250 writers. Concluding the first week will be the Legendary Songwriters Acoustic Concert at the Ryman Auditorium... Former RCA Label Group media relations and artist development director Chuck Thompson has opened TEG Entertainment Marketing as a public relations and marketing firm.

The Pigeon Forge area in east Tennessee will gain yet another musical venue with the September opening of the Louise Mandrell Theatre. It's next door to the Alabama Grill and near the Dollywood Music Mansion Theatre. . In an unusual move, a video for a never-released single from Mandy Barnett's first any album released under the label that was accompanied by a music video on CMT. In the classic "hey kids, let's put on a show" tradition, friends of Barnett donated their time and services to make a video for the Jim Lauderdale song "Planet of Love."

The Country Music Assn. takes its "America's Sold Out Country" campaign to the Plaza Hotel in New York Wednesday (2) and to Chicago's Marriott/Downtown April 17. The half-day presentation showcases country music as a marketing tool. John Berry, Suzy Bogguss, Matraca Berg, and Brandy Scals join the New York presentation; Johnny McRae, Raul Malo, and Jim Lauderdale will be in Chicago, along with Bogguss and Berg. Adweek magazine VP-Publisher-in-chief Craig Reiss will deliver keynote for both dates... Eddie Rabbit signs with Intersound...
Eyes That See in the Dark: With an increase of more than 1,000 units, Kenny Chesney’s “Me and You” grabs our Greatest Gainer medal on Top Country Albums, with 20,000 units over the past week. The single peaked at No. 1 on the country chart, and a move into the top half of The Billboard 200 (101-890) qualifies it for Heatseeker Impact status. The title accumulated 35 mentions, and Chesney’s song is increasing. By retail contest at Blockbuster that involves cross-promotion with Curb’s David Kersh, the industry has been working nonstop to keep Top Country Albums and Chesney’s single “When I Close My Eyes” alive and well.

Hillbilly Giggles: Comedy Bill Engvall’s “Here’s Your Sign (Get the Picture)” controls the No. 1 position on Top Country Singles Sales, with an increase of 5,000 units. The single outdistances the No. 2 title on chart by more than 10,000. Meanwhile, Engvall’s album moves more than 17,000 units to bullet at No. 1 on Top Country Albums charts.

Eddie Reeves, executive VP at Warner-Reprise in Nashville, says country music has a rich legacy of comedy performers stretching from the early days of the Grand Ole Opry to the present. "I think the current stream of comedians is just like any other wave of performers that have come. It used to be that every country act had some comedy in their shows, and I don't think that's the case anymore. When Country Corner asked Reeves to comment on the similarities between the label's marketing plan for Engvall and labelmate Jett Foxxworthy, he quipped, "Here's your sign."
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CONFEERENCE UPDATE: As we gear up for the start of Billboard's eighth annual International Latin Music Conference, showgoers face several changes to note for the concert, which is scheduled to run April 28-30 at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Miami.

Added to the panel lineup in "Hot Latin Tracks—New Horizons." Slated to take place April 30, this session will examine the Latin Tracks radio chart and its current relation to radio stations, networks, and record labels. Billboard director of charts Geoff Mayfield and this columnist are set to host the panel.

Scheduled to perform at the "Writers To The Round" acoustic set are Victor Manolo Tena, Fulano De Tal, and Cesar Lemus. "Writers In The Round" is sponsored this year by Warner/Chappell Music, BMI and ASCAP.

Among other additions are Ayelet Soto to the Latin rock panel. She is president of the prominent Mexican-American Women's Association, the Marketing Entertainment Group of America. Also Sony Discos dance act Dr. Noz has been confirmed to perform at the Latin dance showcase April 29.

Finally, Billboard's fourth annual Latin Music Awards is set to cap the conference April 30. Scheduled performers, so far, are Sony recorders Robi Draco Rosa and Herb Alpert, whose 1997 recipient of Billboard's lifetime achievement award El Premio Billol. Alpert is expected to perform two tracks from his Latino-rooted April 29 release, "Passion Dance." ASCAP will sponsor a post-awards party.

FINISHING TOUCHES TO LATIN CONFAB

LATIN TRACKS A-Z

TROJAL/SALSA REGIONAL MEXICAN

1 EMIGRANTS 
2 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
3 HOT LATIN TRACKS
4 APRIL 5, 1997
5 THIS WEEK
6 LAST WEEK
7 NEW ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
8 OFF CHART NEws
9 TROPICAL Salsa
10 REGIONAL MEXICAN
11 THIS WEEK
12 LAST WEEK
13 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
14 OFF CHART
15 NEWS
16 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
17 HOT LATIN TRACKS
18 APRIL 5, 1997
19 THIS WEEK
20 LAST WEEK
21 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
22 OFF CHART NEws
23 TROPICAL Salsa
24 REGIONAL MEXICAN
25 THIS WEEK
26 LAST WEEK
27 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
28 OFF CHART
29 NEWS
30 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
31 HOT LATIN TRACKS
32 APRIL 5, 1997
33 THIS WEEK
34 LAST WEEK
35 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
36 OFF CHART NEws
37 TROPICAL Salsa
38 REGIONAL MEXICAN
39 THIS WEEK
40 LAST WEEK
41 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
42 OFF CHART
43 NEWS
44 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
45 HOT LATIN TRACKS
46 APRIL 5, 1997
47 THIS WEEK
48 LAST WEEK
49 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
50 OFF CHART NEws
51 TROPICAL Salsa
52 REGIONAL MEXICAN
53 THIS WEEK
54 LAST WEEK
55 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
56 OFF CHART
57 NEWS
58 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
59 HOT LATIN TRACKS
60 APRIL 5, 1997
61 THIS WEEK
62 LAST WEEK
63 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
64 OFF CHART NEws
65 TROPICAL Salsa
66 REGIONAL MEXICAN
67 THIS WEEK
68 LAST WEEK
69 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
70 OFF CHART
71 NEWS
72 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
73 HOT LATIN TRACKS
74 APRIL 5, 1997
75 THIS WEEK
76 LAST WEEK
77 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
78 OFF CHART NEws
79 TROPICAL Salsa
80 REGIONAL MEXICAN
81 THIS WEEK
82 LAST WEEK
83 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
84 OFF CHART
85 NEWS
86 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
87 HOT LATIN TRACKS
88 APRIL 5, 1997
89 THIS WEEK
90 LAST WEEK
91 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
92 OFF CHART NEws
93 TROPICAL Salsa
94 REGIONAL MEXICAN
95 THIS WEEK
96 LAST WEEK
97 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
98 OFF CHART
99 NEWS
100 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
101 HOT LATIN TRACKS
102 APRIL 5, 1997
103 THIS WEEK
104 LAST WEEK
105 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
106 OFF CHART NEws
107 TROPICAL Salsa
108 REGIONAL MEXICAN
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110 LAST WEEK
111 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
112 OFF CHART
113 NEWS
114 BILLBOARD APRIL 5, 1997
115 HOT LATIN TRACKS
116 APRIL 5, 1997
117 THIS WEEK
118 LAST WEEK
119 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
120 OFF CHART NEws
121 TROPICAL Salsa
122 REGIONAL MEXICAN
123 THIS WEEK
124 LAST WEEK
125 ARTISTS ON BILLBOARD
126 OFF CHART
127 NEWS
Julian Plaza Tops Argentine's ACE Music Awards

BUENOS AIRES—Julian Plaza emerged as the surprise top performer at the 1996 Argentine ACE Music Awards. The tango composer landed three awards during a ceremony held March 12 at the San Martin Theater here.

Besides winning in the best tango album by an orchestra and best arrangements categories, Plaza won the Golden ACE Award, which is considered the most prestigious accolade at the event.

The majority of the other winners were veteran singers and composers, including folklore icons Juan de la Carra, and Mercedes Sosa and tango vocalists Tito Reyes and Maria Grafía. Other well-established artists earning kudos were pop-rockers Pito Pérez, Fabiana Cantilo, Juan Carlos Baglietto, and Man Ray.

Among the winners who were not Argentinean honorees were Rubén Blades, Thalia, Malvina Vivanco, Rosario, Nilda Fernández, and Amistades Peligrinos.

The winners were chosen by the press association Asociación de Cronistas de la Espectáculos, better known as ACE.

Although the two-hour evening ceremony was less elaborate than the 1995 edition—there were no musical performances, and no dinner was served—artists from every musical genre were on hand.

The event was originally scheduled to take place in December, but it was postponed in order to secure a TV broadcast. Cable music channel Crónica Musical aired the show.

As usual, industry executives were critical of the awards ceremony, saying that few trophies were handed out to best-selling artists. They noted, as well, that many awarders had no recording contracts.

Others complaints came from non-mainstream artists who griped that their albums were being bundled into generic categories due to the limited release of product that applied to their own musical styles. Popular blues act Memphis La Bruza chose not to compete in protest of being nominated in the pop category.

Following is a partial list of winners:

Golden ACE: Julián Plaza
Song: “Escondido En Mi País,” Gustavo Patiño

New artist: Andrea Prodan.


Fonovisa: Inks Jordi. Fonovisa president/CEO Guillermo Santiago, left, offers a warm handshake to Jordi shortly after the Spanish singer-songwriter signed a recording contract with the Los Angeles indie. Jordi’s label debut, which was produced by his father, Diego, is expected to drop in May. It is scheduled to be showcased April 28 during Billboard’s eighth annual International Latin Music Conference in Miami. The concert is sponsored by 28-30, the Hotel Inter-Continental in Miami.

Selena’s big aspiration, of course, was to make it as a crossover star. In fact, the only time she ever said that she was frightened by the prospects of performing before gringos was after she was named the recipient of the impressive Young Artist Award at the Billboard Latin Music Awards. "I think I’m going to cry. I'm overjoyed," Selena said.

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## Billboard Top Classical Albums

### Top Classical Midsleeve

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<td>Mozart for the Morning (Col)</td>
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<td>Various</td>
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<td>Only Classical CD You Need (Phil)</td>
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<td>Various</td>
<td>Pachelbel Canon (Phil)</td>
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<td>Barcarolle (Phil)</td>
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<td>Scott Joplin's Greatest Hits (Phil)</td>
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<td>Broadway Classics (Phil)</td>
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### Top Classical Crossovers

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### Classical Keeping Score

**Birthday**

EMI Celebrates its centenary this year. Born the Gramophone Co. in 1896, the label made its first recordings in August 1896 at Maiden Lane in Lon- don. In 1931, it merged with the Columbia Graphophone Co. to form Electric and Musical Industries Ltd. (EMI), and in 1955 it established Angel Records in the U.S. EMI has several initiatives planned for its 100th birthday. First is an 11-volume “The Centenary Edition” set, which traces the history of EMI through its artists. The set begins with those first recordings at Maiden Lane: conductor Edith Cozzens singing Schubert’s “Ave Maria” in 1886, Enrico Caruso with “Vesti La Giubba” in 1909 and “Mia Mamma” in 1903, and Edvard Grieg playing his own “Norwegian Bridal Procession” in 1903. It also includes Joseph Szigeti playing a prelude from a Bach partita (1923), Ignacy Paderewski playing Chopin (1912), Arthur Nikisch conducting the Berlin Philharmonic in the first movement of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 (1910), and a starry assortment of singers, including Fyodor Chaliapin, Maria Jeritza, and, for some good old Bohemian sentimentalities, Béla Bartok singing Elgar’s “Land Of Hope And Glory.” And that’s just the first decade.

Schwan Landowska, Heifetz, Kreisler, Menuhin, Schwarzkopf, Ferri, Pre, Perlman, Rostropovich, and Domingo are a few more names picked at random from the set. To tie it all together, the 11th disc is a documentary mini-series narrated by Thomas Hampson, with 37 musical examples. In addition to the “Centenary Edition” set, EMI plans five more initiatives. First is the 80-volume “Herbert Von Karajan Edition,” which is being released in segments through 1996. In April, EMI focuses on Itzhak Perlman and will be promoting the violist’s top 12 titles at retail, displayed in a (re)statement bin and accompanied by in-store point-of-purchase materials and contest giveaways.

In July, EMI will release remastered versions of 10 Capost Classic recordings that have not been in print since the late 1950s and early 1960s, with some original covers. Some will include performances by Nathan Milstein, Rudolf Firkusny, and others. In August and September, the focus switches to Maria Callas: EMI is releasing 20 Callas recordings, with another 20 titles to be released in January 1998. In the fall, EMI will release 30 remastered and repackage “Historical Best Sellers,” including the Bach-Cello Suites performed by Pablo Casals and the Verdi “Requiem” with Carlos Maria Giulini.

EMI is also sponsoring three live events, including a gala opening of the new Carnegie Hall with Barenboim and other YSO players; an RAJ collection concert with Brasil’s Quarteto MANGOLAND in a Romeo and Juliet setting; and a Country Music Hall of Fame exhibit featuring the newly restored instruments of the fiddle player’s old friends.

* * *

**Horns of Plenty:** It’s said that Louis Armstrong’s impact is felt everywhere there’s a jazz solo in play. The trumpeter’s work with the New Orleans Jazz Band and the Savoy Ballroom, his role in the development of swing, and his influence on the entire development of modern jazz are too numerous to count. His style is a true original, a true icon of the 20th century’s most important musical period.

Louis Armstrong was born on August 4, 1901, in New Orleans, Louisiana, the son of Louis and Mary Armstrong. His mother worked as a domestic servant, and his father was a street musician. Armstrong began playing cornet at the age of seven and soon became known as "Satchmo." He had a powerful, wide-ranging voice and a natural talent for improvisation. His playing style was influenced by King Oliver, a famous cornet player from New Orleans, and by the blues, which were popular in the south at the time.

Armstrong’s early career was marked by several recordings and tours with various bands, including the King Oliver’s Creole Jazz Band, the Royal Society Orchestra, and the New Orleans Jazz Band. His records were widely popular and helped to establish the style of jazz known as "Swing." Armstrong’s band continued to tour extensively and record, and his influence spread across the United States and internationally.

Armstrong’s popularity continued to grow throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and he became one of the most beloved and respected musicians of the era. His records were often accompanied by the music of other famous musicians, including Duke Ellington and Fletcher Henderson. Armstrong’s influence on the development of jazz is still felt today, and his music continues to inspire musicians around the world.

Armstrong’s career was marked by several significant events. He moved to Chicago in the 1920s and recorded frequently with his own band, the Hot Five and Hot Seven. He also recorded with other important musicians, including Louis Prima and Joe Venuti. His first recording contract was with Okeh Records, and he was later signed by Columbia Records, where he recorded some of his most famous and influential works.

Armstrong’s legacy continues to be celebrated today, and his music is played in orchestras and concert halls around the world. His influence on the development of jazz is still felt today, and his music continues to inspire musicians around the world. His last recording session was in 1972, and he died on July 6, 1971, at the age of 63. Despite his relatively short life, Armstrong’s music has left a lasting legacy on the world of jazz and continues to be enjoyed by audiences of all ages.
KEEPING SCORE

(Continued from preceding page)

In the U.S., the company has also embarked on an educational venture, donating funds and sets of its Classics For Dummies series to American schools through the Music Educators National Conference. On March 18, EMI Classics presented the organization with a donation of $10,000 for music education in schools across the country.

KIDS: Speaking of music for kids, the Children's Group is still looking for new cover art designs for its "Classical Kids" series ("Beethoven Lives Upstairs," etc.). The contest is open to children ages 7-16 who attend schools that have registered for the contest. Teachers in the U.S. can register at 800-668-0242, in Canada at 905-818-1995. The contest closes May 16. More than $25,000 in prizes and merchandise will be awarded.

"Classical Kids" will have a new title in the fall, centered around Mozart. Five of its titles have been expanded with interviews and historical material into one-hour radio programs that have been picked up by Public Radio International. They will be broadcast on 147 stations, beginning with the Handel program at Easter and continuing through April.

A VERY GRAND PRIZE: There's lots of Schubert in New York for the composer's 200th birthday this year, and Hyperion is offering still more. During WNYC New York's forthcoming membership drive, Wednesday (2) - April 11, listeners who call the membership hot line on the selected day of the giveaway will be entered in a drawing to receive the Hyperion Schubert Edition "The Complete Songs Of Franz Schubert," which now numbers 27 volumes. Begun in 1987 with Goethe and Schiller settings sung by Dame Janet Baker, the edition is expected to fill 36 discs when it is completed in 1998.

BLUE NOTES
(Continued from preceding page)

& Brasil '96.
Special EFX co-founder George Jinda has been hospitalized in New York. A condition known as anemia, likely due to an allergic reaction, has impaired his speech and motor functions. Therapy has been recommended. Special EFX's latest disc is the new "Here To Stay" on the JVC label. Best wishes and hopes for a full recovery to Jinda.

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THE JAZZ EVENT OF THE YEAR

TALES FROM THE HUDSON

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ARTISTS & MUSIC

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TOP CONTEMPORARY JAZZ ALBUMS

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KEEPING SCORE

(Continued from preceding page)

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THE JAZZ EVENT OF THE YEAR

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

JAZZ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

JAZZMAN OF THE YEAR

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9012

Congratulations Michael, you make us very proud

1997 DOUBLE GRAMMY WINNER

BEST JAZZ PERFORMANCE

BEST JAZZ SOLO

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THE NEW Wave of Jazz is still on Impulse!

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Music. Jeffrey ing executive "Last Frank ent media conglomerate DreamWorks, and Son major publisher side group, because about includes film giant Warner Lane and the publishing wing of the tape and song. Primont says, "We have to exploit the material we would have to do in the past."

Here's how the deal works for us: DreamWorks will want to exploit the songs they buy by the popular culture in its presentations. We will have a strong outlet to bring the songs to the world. For instance, some of the most profitable projects in the past have been on the large animated films. We expect DreamWorks to come out with some blockbuster hits.

Primont, who is a minority partner in DreamWorks Music with founder Milt Okun, says his company will administer the songs on major DreamWorks features, including two animated projects. "Prince Of Egypt," with a score by Stephen Schwartz, and "Elbo- rado," with a score by Elton John. Network weekly TV shows now administrated by DreamWorks are "Spin City," "Ink," "Arsenio," and the television series "High Incident."

The first of DreamWorks' labels to fall under the Lane administration is Powerman 5000.

According to Primont, the current ties with DreamWorks and primont will be the last shape after DreamWorks' label chief, Mo Ostin, inquired if Okun, an old friend, was interested in selling all of DreamWorks' music to DreamWorks. Okun, who lives in California, turned down that prospect, but indicated that both companies might be able to assure each other ways of involving Primont.

Primont met with Kaye in Los Angeles last summer, and a "hybrid" concept was discussed. "We felt," says Primont, "that if we got a fair price for half of our song catalog, DreamWorks' exploitation of that material would make our remaining share more valuable. Within two months, we worked out the structure of the deal."

DreamWorks' Los Angeles office provides music supervision services to the film and TV industry. Three years ago, DreamWorks opened an office in Berlin. It remains the only American music publishing company officially registered to conduct business in the People's Republic of China, according to Primont.

Another important dividend Primont envisions is that other producers will realize that an independent music publisher can compete with the major studios. "It will be easier for us to close deals in the future. Producers will want to get a deal based on the thought that if DreamWorks is good enough for DreamWorks, then they should be good enough for us."

Primont's view that the ties boost independent music publishing is echoed by DreamWorks executive Okun, who says that the companies with a major stake in the other respected music publishers active today has chosen an independent publisher to represent its catalog.

"This is a tremendous boost to independent publishers all over the world."

Besides DreamWorks' ties with (Continued on page 44)

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**CHUCK KAYE, PETER PRIMONT**

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**They're Playing My Song!**

**Written by Robbie Folks**

Published by Songwriter's Ink (BMI)

When the four-man all-Chinese band decided to cover a Robbie Folks single and make it the title track of their latest album, due April 1 on Epic Records, it didn't seem like the band was going outside the group, because its members had been friends with Folks from the beginning. But according to lead singer/guitarist Tom Melien, guitarist Stephen Antonakos, bassist Paul Poglini, and keyboardist Tim Tisdale, they decided to go out on a limb and do a modern-day version of Folks' "Songwriting, International (Uno, Dos, Tres)," a song that included Folks and his band in a rehearse studio playing that song. It was just one of those things that happened, and it was the only way to do it. They added "I'm great," and you have to keep reminding the tape and listening to it over and over again. The number of people who have taken their name from their favorite children's song have been so many, the Folks happened to be in town when they were recording. "We dragged him out to the recording studio and made him sing on our song," Poglini says of Folks' ever-increasing background vocals. It was a happy accident. We also decided to make it appear to be able to go back to the 1970s in Chicago to do that."

We turned it off a rehearsal tape of the new song. The song is written by the Folks single and was the title track of their latest album, due April 1 on Epic Records. Folks, who was so excited about the song, says, "The only way to do it was to let it happen."

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**Words & Music**

by Ivor Lichtman

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**No.1 Song Credits**

**The Hot 100**


HOT COUNTRY SINGLES & TRACKS

(TWENTY THINGS) NO THINKING @ C. Bailey, T. Trosset • Hallmark/EMI Blackwood/BMI, Ty Land/BMI, Starstruck Writers Group/ASCAR Mark J. DASCAP

HOT RAP SINGLES


HOT LATIN TRACKS

ENAMORADO POR PRIMERA VEZ • Enrique Iglesias • Fonomatik/SASCAP

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**BMB Gets Piece Of Bloc-Notes: Musicals Of The '60s, Part II**

**BMG Bloc-Notes Stake: BMG Music Publishing has acquired an unspecified minority interest in Ed- die Block-Notes Publishing, regarded as a major force among independent publishers in Quebec. In the wake of the deal, Bloc-Notes takes on the Canadian licensees for BMG's non-English-speaking works. Current management of Bloc-Notes, owned by the Roy president Diane Finet, stays put.**

Bloc-Notes publishes such name acts as René Dupére, Aldo Nova, Roger Kott, Gemma Gauthier, Sylvain Boudreau, Jeff Nystrom, and Yves Laferrière. The company also has an extensive subpublishing catalog, including catalogs of artists/writers Francois Cabrel and Patrick Bruel.

**Shows Of The '60s: The play was hardly the only thing in the third installment of this season's five-part "Broadway & Lyrisica" series at New York's 92nd Street Y, which had four performances of the weekend of March 8. The program, this season's second show based on '60s musicals, whose songs and librettos had equal weight and significance, extended the '60s Broadway tradition. The shows were joined by selections from musicals that had to do with the "twilight years" in the world of Broadway. The shows were directed and produced by the New York State Theatre Institute in association with the Warner Music Group and Warner/Chappell Music. The title role is played by Christine Welsbach."

2. Celine Dion, "Falling Into You."
3. Jim Brickman, "Picture This."
5. LeAnn Rimes, "Blue."
Digital In The Mix At AES Show

Convention Marks Shift From Analog

By PAUL Verna

MUNICH—Despite the explosive suc-
cess of digital storage and editing media in the past 15 years, many audio professionals remain unconvinced that digital is the answer.

MUNICH—Despite the explosive success of digital storage and editing media in the past 15 years, many audio professionals remain unconvinced that digital is the answer.

Some of the reasons: Digital sound is just not as good as analog sound; digital recording is too expensive; digital editing is too complex; and digital files are too difficult to transfer from one system to another.

But at the 102nd Convention of the Audio Engineering Society (AES)—held at the Munich Convention Center March 25-27—several new ideas were presented that offer hope for the future of digital audio.

One of these ideas is the concept of the digital audio workstation (DAW). DAWs are computers that contain all the components of a traditional analog studio, but in digital form.

In addition to the software, DAWs also include hardware such as digital recording devices, synthesizers, and effects processors. This allows professionals to create and edit audio in a way that is more efficient and flexible than traditional analog methods.

Another idea presented at AES was the concept of the digital audio library (DAL). DALs are collections of digital audio files that can be accessed and used by audio professionals around the world.

These libraries can be used for a variety of purposes, such as creating new music, mixing and mastering, and archiving audio recordings.

The future of digital audio looks promising, but there are still some challenges that need to be overcome. For example, the lack of standardization in digital audio formats can make it difficult for professionals to share and access digital audio files.

Despite these challenges, the AES Convention was a positive step towards the shift from analog to digital in the world of audio engineering.

One attendee at the AES Convention said, "I see the future of audio as digital, but it's going to take time for everyone to adapt."
been feared some years back. HHB sales director Steve Angel said, “Five years ago I would have expected to see a lot more computers by now than I’m seeing at this show. I’m still seeing dedicated hardware. And this all-computer day that seemingly is looming, I’m not seeing it. There still seems to be a lot of resistance to this mouse-keyboard-screen way of working that I would have thought we would be seeing a lot more of. And I’m glad it’s worked out that way.”

The 102nd AES also reaffirmed trends that have been gathering momentum in recent years. For instance, the gradual upgrading of digital media toward a de facto ceiling of 44.1 kilohertz sampling and 24 bits of resolution continues apace, with more and more hardware makers offering products that work in that range—substantially above the CD standard of 16 bits at 44.1 kilohertz.

HHB’s Jones said, “With DVD becoming a reality, high-bit, high-sampling is a megatrend that the record industry is going to have to embrace and get behind.”

Although there has been no public announcement of a standard for audio DVD, the professional community has signaled its readiness for DVD by upgrading itself to the likely specifications of the format, according to various attendees here.

Another technology trend evident here has been the move toward multichannel mixing, primarily for visual media but also in some audio-only applications. Speaker manufacturers said they were increasingly filling orders for five or more units per control room, and studio architects noted that more and more clients are specifying surround-sound environments.

Many of the exhibit-demonstration rooms here boasted impressive multichannel programs.

The AES show also brought to the surface the blurring of the lines between the project-studio sector and the high-end, with onetime high-end manufacturers like Drawmer and Focusrite offering affordable versions of their state-of-the-art signal processors and Avid partner Alexios joining forces with digital multitrack powerhouse Studer to offer a recorder that promises to cater to clients across the board—from budget-minded home recordists to owners of class-A studios.

While technology pushes forward, older-fashioned analog tape still predominates in certain circles. Top mixing engineer Bob Clearmountain—a forward-looking digital enthusiast in his own right—said he preferred to remain in the analog mixing realm at his studio, facility outside of Los Angeles, noting that many of his rock ‘n’ roll clients still prefer the sound of analog tape and an analog mixing surface.

“For classical and ‘clean’ pop music, it’s all digital,” said Clearmountain, who was in the midst of mixing Puff Daddy’s upcoming album. “But for rock ‘n’ roll, there’s still nothing like analog.”

### Production Credits

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### Greg Archilla

(Continued from preceding page)

straightforward record; there’s a lot of special effects and things they sent. I didn’t have to do a lot, because they went ahead and created a lot of these effects. It was surprising, seeing as we did the first record, and it was so tradkrafty and rude; we lived this like a studio record, but it’s still got that trashy, rude vibe about it.”

And to prove that coincidence continues, it was Briggs who introduced Archilla to Young. “When Neil Young called me out of the blue and wanted me to do some work with him,” he says, “it really knocked me out.” But it was a stroke of fate that got Archilla hooked up with Collective Soul. “David Z was supposed to work with them, but he got in a car accident two days before they came, and he broke his collarbone. They were trying to figure out who could cover, and I happened to be at home, so they called me.”

Archilla met with Collective Soul songwriter/singer/guitarist Ed Roland, who also did some time behind the board before the band signed with Atlantic, and the two collaborated on the sessions.

“At first they were just putting ideas down, they weren’t thinking of this as an album,” he says. “At times we went on, the ideas evolved into great songs and great parts, and it turned into a record. When we started, Ed just wanted to do some recording, so we started recording.”

Fortunately there was no pressure from the label for an album, because the band was involved in a lawsuit with its former manager (Billboard, Feb. 8) and was busy touring. “It was toward the end of May [1996] when we started to realize that this was coming together, and it was really good,” says Archilla. “Then in October we started really concentrating, we put the finishing touches on it towards the end of the year, and now it’s out.”

For the March 11 release, the band recorded all but four tracks in the log cabin. Those songs, “Precious Declaration,” “Full Circle,” “Maybe,” and “Giving,” were recorded at the House of Blues in Los Angeles, and the album was mixed at Larrabee North in Los Angeles.

Archilla says that the Collective Soul sessions were reminiscent of the old days. “It got down to just using what I needed to use. It kind of simplified the engineering process for me, because I didn’t have to go do the extra things. I made it sound good in the room, and I put a mike in there, and that was it. I didn’t have all the other Gizmo’s to get through, so I didn’t really worry about it.”

Happeningness, coincidence, or what? The album, Archilla realizes, that he’s one of the fortunate few who have any longevity in this business. “Neil Young got me saying that I’m sitting in the window when I’m in the studio. You kind of put yourself behind the glass, and you’ve got these great treats in front of you recording. To me it’s a great life: I sit around and listen to music all day and help create it. I thank God I don’t have to lift bricks or say ‘Welcome to McDonald’s,’” says Archilla, bursting with laughter.

### Pub Deal Has Novel Features

(Continued from page 49)

Cherry Lane, Kaye reports other catalog or song deals. Kaye says DreamWorks is near completing the deal with Lionel Richie to buy his catalog of songs by Leon Russell.

Kaye also reports completion of a deal for Bob Montgomery’s NoosaCACHE front-end catalog, which includes such hits as “Misty Blue,” “Back In Baby’s Arms Again,” “Down On The Farm,” and “Maybe We Should Just Sleep On It.”

Also, DreamWorks has acquired an interest in Gil Music in two evergreen, “Whispering Bell’s” and “Come Go With Me.”

Among DreamWorks staffers are Michael Batini, formerly with ASCAP who is creative director, and Ron Handler, who joins DreamWorks from EMI Music Publishing’s A&R department.

DreamWorks has three affiliates, Songs of DreamWorks (BMI), DreamWorks Songs (ASCAP), and Music of DreamWorks (SESAC).

Cherry Lane has 55 staffers working in its headquarters, where its other publishing and administration clients include Hearst Corp., Showtime Networks, Genesis Entertainment, Fifth Avenue Entertainment, TransAtlantic Entertainment, Kartier, Lockwood, Arvett, Kerner, and Len Hill Entertainment.
**Epitaph’s Singular Success**

**One Company Covers EU’s One Market**

**BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS**

AMSTERDAM—Europe’s record companies are being shown the advantages that can be gained from the continent’s new single market—by an indie label based in California.

Epitaph, founded and run by president Brett Gurewitz, is using the lack of trading barriers within the 15-nation European Union to run all its activities here through just one company. Such a structure means one profit center covering the world’s second-biggest record market, one management, and one set of overheads.

**Rosana Leads Nominees In Spain’s New Award Show**

**Updated on next page**

**HMV Milestone In U.K. Draws Top Music Execs**

**BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS**

BIRMINGHAM, England—The top echelon of British record industry management turned out March 21 for the opening of HMV’s 100th U.K. store here.

Executives present, including British Phonographic Industry chairman John Preston and director general John Deacon, along with the heads of most of the major labels, expressed their respect for the scale of HMV’s achievement and welcomed a dedicated music and video outlet in a main shopping area.

HMV U.K. managing director Brian McLaughlin says of the impresive turnout of executives, “They see the need to have quality retailing and we feel we have been instrumental in bringing record retailing into the High Street.”

The 6,000-square-foot store is in the new Fort Retail Park outside Birmingham city center and was opened with a performance in front of a crowd of around 300 by Robbie Williams, now carving out a solo career after success with the group Take That. The performance was also broadcast live on local radio station BRMB.

Asked how HMV has managed to reach such a milestone, McLaughlin pays tribute to the investment commitment of HMV group chairman/CEO Stuart McAllister and new EMI Group chairman Sir Colin Southgate.

“These guys recognized that there was a huge gap in the U.K. for a first-class specialist retailer,” says McLaughlin.

“We were the people to fill this gap.”

(Continued on page 50)

**New Pres. Promises Changes At Victoires**

**BY REMI BOUTON**

PARIS—French music awards organization Victoires de la Musique is aiming to restore its appeal and credibility under a new president, Mercury France managing director Yves Bigot. His first move in the post has been to talk to the country’s leading artists to find out what some of them have stayed away from the ceremony.

Backed as a candidate by labels’ body SNEP and indie sector association UPFI, Bigot has his appointment unanimously approved by the board of the Victoires, which includes members from the gamut of music industry bodies.

Bigot, who was involved in the 1997 Victoires as a member of the event’s artistic committee, replaces Regis Talar from indie label Trema, who served for two years and did not seek re-election.

**Singing**

After this year’s show, Bigot wrote a five-page memo to the Victoires’ driving force, SNEP. In the memo, a copy of which has been obtained by Billboard, Bigot admits that “the 12th Victoires de la Musique have not been geared toward the dynamics we all expected, and that we need for our artists, the development of their careers, and their sales.

Bigot’s memo said that to restore popular interest in the event, urgent action is required.

He argued that artists should be involved in the decision-making process and recommended changes to the category system to prevent such veteran acts as Barbra, 63, or Charles Aznavour, 72, from competing directly against emerging acts. Noting Barbara’s and Aznavour’s successes as,

(Continued on page 50)

**William Shakespeare’s ROMEO+JULIET**

**MUSIC FROM THE MOTION PICTURE**

In addition:

Garage: Des’ree
Everbear: Butthole Surfers
Kevin Friday: The Cardigans
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Ireland: Larry Williams, 15 Independant Drive, Schaffnerweg, Dublin, Ireland; Phone: 353-1-405-3770, Fax: 353-1-407-587.

LONDON—Sony Music Entertainment has launched a dedicated hip-hop and R&B label in the UK, Sony Deep. The new label is dedicated to R&B and hip-hop.

DeeP is the brainchild of the late evergreen singer Dee, who passed away in 2007. Dee was known for his unique singing style and his passion for music. His music was loved by fans all over the world, and his legacy continues to inspire new generations of artists.

DeeP will be based in London and will focus on signing and developing new talent in the UK. The label will work closely with Sony Music’s international marketing and promotion teams to ensure that DeeP artists receive the best possible exposure in the US and worldwide.

DeeP is Sony Music Entertainment’s first dedicated hip-hop and R&B label in the UK. The label will be led by DeeP’s co-founder, Dee, who will oversee all aspects of the label’s operations.

The label will focus on signing and developing new talent in the UK, as well as working with established artists to help them reach a wider audience. DeeP will be dedicated to bringing new and exciting music to fans all over the world.

DeeP is the latest addition to Sony Music Entertainment’s growing list of labels, which includes Epic Records, RCA Records, and more.

DeeP is currently recruiting new talent for its roster, and interested artists are encouraged to contact the label for more information.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia—As the nation scrambles to meet government targets of "fully developed nation" status by 2020, the music industry is playing its part to shift into high gear.

Evidence comes in the form of the suitably named four bands of 300-odd people, a huge percentage of whom are young. The bands are 300-odd people, a huge percentage of whom are young. The bands are 300-odd people, a huge percentage of whom are young. The bands are 300-odd people, a huge percentage of whom are young.

The award ceremony, held March 22 at the Putra World Trade Centre here, received an added boost by being broadcast on terrestrial TV. The bands, which are selected on the basis of their talent and ability, are chosen after a rigorous judging process. The award is given annually to the band with the best overall performance.

The ceremony was attended by music industry executives, government officials, and celebrities. The award was presented to the band with the best overall performance, as judged by a panel of experts.

The award ceremony also featured performances by some of Malaysia’s top musicians, as well as speeches by government officials and industry representatives. The event was covered extensively by the media.

The award ceremony is an important event in Malaysia’s music industry, as it recognizes the talent and hard work of the country’s musicians. The award is a symbol of the country’s commitment to supporting its creative industries and promoting its cultural heritage.

Sony gets Deep into Dancepool Mexico!

LONDON—Sony Music Entertainment has launched a dedicated dance label in Mexico, Dancepool Mexico. The new label is dedicated to dance music, and will focus on signing and developing new talent in the country.

Dancepool Mexico will be led by DeeP’s co-founder, Dee, who will oversee all aspects of the label’s operations. The label will focus on signing and developing new talent in Mexico, as well as working with established artists to help them reach a wider audience.

The label will be dedicated to bringing new and exciting dance music to fans all over the world, and will work closely with Sony Music’s international marketing and promotion teams to ensure that DeeP artists receive the best possible exposure.

Dancepool Mexico is currently recruiting new talent for its roster, and interested artists are encouraged to contact the label for more information.
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# Hits of the World

**Japan**

| #1 | CAN YOU CELEBRATE! NAME AMI KURO *98/19 | 48 Hits | 1997/01/03 |
| #2 | 2 | 48 Hits |
| #3 | 3 | 48 Hits |
| #4 | 4 | 48 Hits |
| #5 | 5 | 48 Hits |
| #6 | 6 | 48 Hits |
| #7 | 7 | 48 Hits |
| #8 | 8 | 48 Hits |
| #9 | 9 | 48 Hits |
| #10 | 10 | 48 Hits |

**Germany**

| #1 | WANTIM TIC TAC TOE KARA | 19 Hits | 20/03/07 |
| #2 | TIME TO GO SAY GOODBYE KATHARINE & MOSES | 9 Hits |
| #3 | I CAN BELIEVE IF R. KELLY TRAVELTIME | 7 Hits |
| #4 | DON'T SPEAK NO INTERFERENCE INTERNATIONAL | 6 Hits |
| #5 | DON'T BE SO NAUGHTY SASH! DANCE | 5 Hits |
| #6 | ALONE GEE GS POLISH | 4 Hits |
| #7 | TIME TO SAY GOODBYE TO LOVE | 3 Hits |
| #8 | UN-BREAK MY HEART TONI BRAXTON | 2 Hits |
| #9 | I CAN'T TALK 'BOUT DUB APOLLO FOUR YORK | 1 Hits |
| #10 | WHEN I DIE NO MERCY ANNA | 1 Hits |

**U.K.**

| #1 | WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE/MAIKO SPICE GIRLS | 48 Hits | 1997/03/24 |
| #2 | NEW FLASH (NERO HARRIES/CHRIS T WALKER) | 48 Hits |
| #3 | ENDINE FOIS SASH! DANCE | 48 Hits |
| #4 | I CAN BELIEVE IF R. KELLY TRAVELTIME | 48 Hits |
| #5 | ROCK DA SHAPIGH THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS FREESTYLE FREESTYLE | 48 Hits |
| #6 | RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE FUGGEES | 48 Hits |
| #7 | IF I NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN WET WET WET THE PRIMAL SCREAM | 48 Hits |
| #8 | OXYGENE 8 JEAN JACQUES ERC | 48 Hits |
| #9 | IT'S OVER CLICK MARY | 48 Hits |
| #10 | WHERE DO YOU GO NO MERCY ANNA | 48 Hits |

**Canada**

| #1 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits | 1997/01/03 |
| #2 | VIBE BYE ROY | 48 Hits |
| #3 | SOMEBODY SMILE SHA NA NA | 48 Hits |
| #4 | I CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits |
| #5 | VIBES BYE ROY | 48 Hits |
| #6 | SOMEBODY SMILE SHA NA NA | 48 Hits |
| #7 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits |
| #8 | VIBE BYE ROY | 48 Hits |
| #9 | SOMEBODY SMILE SHA NA NA | 48 Hits |
| #10 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits |

**Netherlands**

| #1 | RESIDENT EVIL FRANS BAUER & MARJANNE WEISER | 48 Hits | 1997/03/24 |
| #2 | TIME TO GO SAY GOODBYE KATHARINE & MOSES | 48 Hits |
| #3 | UN-BREAK MY HEART TONI BRAXTON | 48 Hits |
| #4 | DON'T SPEAK NO INTERFERENCE INTERNATIONAL | 48 Hits |
| #5 | LET ME CLEAR MY THROAT DON'T SPEAK | 48 Hits |
| #6 | KEEP ME OVER NICKY Dformerly | 48 Hits |
| #7 | UN-BREAK MY HEART TONI BRAXTON | 48 Hits |
| #8 | I CAN'T TALK 'BOUT DUB APOLLO FOUR YORK | 48 Hits |
| #9 | WHEN I DIE NO MERCY ANNA | 48 Hits |
| #10 | FEEL IN LOVE WITH AN ALIEN THE KELLY FAMILY | 48 Hits |

**Australia**

| #1 | WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE/MAIKO SPICE GIRLS | 48 Hits | 1997/03/24 |
| #2 | NEW FLASH (NERO HARRIES/CHRIS T WALKER) | 48 Hits |
| #3 | ENDINE FOIS SASH! DANCE | 48 Hits |
| #4 | I CAN BELIEVE IF R. KELLY TRAVELTIME | 48 Hits |
| #5 | ROCK DA SHAPIGH THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS FREESTYLE FREESTYLE | 48 Hits |
| #6 | RUMBLE IN THE JUNGLE FUGGEES | 48 Hits |
| #7 | IF I NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN WET WET WET THE PRIMAL SCREAM | 48 Hits |
| #8 | OXYGENE 8 JEAN JACQUES ERC | 48 Hits |
| #9 | IT'S OVER CLICK MARY | 48 Hits |
| #10 | WHERE DO YOU GO NO MERCY ANNA | 48 Hits |

**Italy**

| #1 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits | 1997/03/24 |
| #2 | VIBE BYE ROY | 48 Hits |
| #3 | SOMEBODY SMILE SHA NA NA | 48 Hits |
| #4 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits |
| #5 | VIBE BYE ROY | 48 Hits |
| #6 | SOMEBODY SMILE SHA NA NA | 48 Hits |
| #7 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits |
| #8 | VIBE BYE ROY | 48 Hits |
| #9 | SOMEBODY SMILE SHA NA NA | 48 Hits |
| #10 | CAN'T CRY FOR ME ARGENTINA MADONNA WANG | 48 Hits |
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LONDON—Walworth's, the U.K.'s most broad-based music retailer with around 700 outlets, is remaining committed to the continued development of MVC, but Mulcahey says that Kingfisher remains committed to its growth.

McLaughlin says that when he took over as head of HMV here 10 years ago, the market was dominated by “Our Price.” Transformed into 2001.50, it is in stores and around 15 or 20 Virgin stores. After that, he had the nucleus of independent stores.

McLaughlin notes the U.K. label executives' enthusiasm for the new HMV and its presence in a shopping and retailing and containing a supermarket. Aida, that has caused concern through its cut-price music stocking policy.

Aida and Some chains have begun using cheap music to attract customers into their food and household goods departments. “We have to be very bright to do that,” says Alagh. “But we have been investing in this business for 75 years.”

McLaughlin says Walworth’s U.K. success has been due to our new ideas and we used our strength, which is offering selection, range, and service. Of the competition from the supermarktes, he adds, “We have faced it there, in Canada as well as in the States.” He argues that HMV will continue to succeed in the face of such a challenge because of the range it carries and its appeal to committed music buyers. “If you are interested only in chart records, you may be seduced by the supermarktes,” says McLaughlin.

ButKingfisher has questioned whether Kingfisher will continue to do the concerts being developed by MVC, but Mulcahey says that Kingfisher remains committed to its growth.

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Local Talent, New Genres And Traditional Rhythms
Feed South Africa's Continuous Growth And
Pave The Road To International Success

BY ARTHUR GOLDSTUCK

Johannesburg—The focus of the South African music industry has been dominated in the past by many issues, from the political to the economic, but seldom by its own lifeblood: a new musical style.

But such has been the impact in the past year of kwaito, a form of township-based hip-hop that uses the street lingo of "the townships in the context of erotic street-dance displays. Kwaito has shaped the fortunes of the industry. It is all the more ironic in that the street lingo used is based on the slang of tsotsis (pronounced "tsawtsee")—a term for township thugs.

Kwaito King Arthur

Unleashed on the market by the artist/producer known as Arthur a little more than a year ago, kwaito led the industry's continuing growth curve, which saw the 1995 sales of locally produced music grow by about 23% in value, and overall sales value by 16%—while unit sales were up 12%.

Arthur, signed to EMI-South Africa subsidiary CCP, helped boost EMI to a 34.5% share of the market for locally produced music, and 20.9% of the overall market.

CCP marketing director Harvey Roberts traces the roots of kwaito to a 1993 release by township superstar Brenda Fassie. Roberts says her single "I'm Straight Indaba" (street lingo for "What You See Is What You Get"), produced by Selwyn Shandel, "really introduced the township lyric style. A lot of the young artists and producers sat up and listened to that, because it was something fresh and new."

It also meant a double-platinum album (100,000 units) for Fassie in 1993 and an untapped source for a new artist, Arthur, signed to CCP that same year.

It would take another two years for him to produce "Kaffir," an album that shocked the industry with its seemingly offensive title ("Kaffir" is regarded as the worst racial slur in South Africa). Arthur's followers recognized the powerful protest message and pushed the album to double-platinum status.

His follow-up, "Die Poppe Sai Dans" (loosely translated, "Sparks Are Going To Fly"), has reached platinum (50,000 units). His main competitor for the kwaito production crown, Don Lake, owner/producer of Kalawa Records, has helped artist Boom Shaka to one of his two platinum albums, with gold awards going to two more Kalawa artists.

The Gospel Truth

Kwaito fever has almost obscured the continued dominance of one of the oldest musical styles around, gospel. Another CCP artist, Rebecca, has led the pack with her multi-platinum recording, "Usube Nam." Her previous album, "Shwela Baba," was runner-up for the best-selling award of 1995, while a third album, "Rebecca Malope Sings Gospel," has been certified double-platinum this year.

A live recording, "Rebecca Malope At The State Theatre," went gold (25,000 units). Tusk's gospel choir IPCC earned a platinum and two gold awards.

Continued on page 54
A year ago, South Africa was a magnet for international artists, but the current atmosphere has changed dramatically. A plunge in the exchange-rate value of the rand, along with a growing selectivity among audiences, has made live tour promotion one of the most harrowing pursuits in the entertainment industry. At the beginning of 1996, it took R4.70 rand to buy one dollar. A year later, that value declined to 4.70 rand to the dollar. While the currency has strengthened since, coming back to an R4-4.00 rand level, the economics of touring have altered radically.

**ECONOMIC LOGISTICS**

"It is becoming extremely difficult to secure acts as a result of the weak rand, and it is certain that South African audiences have become more selective. This is a big change from 1993 and 1994, when the public attended almost any show," says Ari Engelbrecht, head of Big Concerts, which has promoted the lion’s share of international tours over the past five years. "We have reduced the number of shows that we would normally offer an artist, and hence the ticket prices have had to increase. The artists have certain overheads to meet, regardless of whether they play three or six shows."

The past year was a busy one for Big Concerts, which brought on Tina Turner, who also toured for four stadium dates in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, drawing a total of 129,000 people despite high ticket prices. Meat Loaf, Chris de Burgh, ZZ Top and the Soul Invasion tour, featuring Randy Crawford, Kool & the Gang, the Stylistics and Maxi Priest, also were among Big Concerts’ tours.

"We are still experiencing major problems in this country with suitable venues," says Van Wyk. "Our arena capacities range from 4,000 to 6,000, and many of the acts on offer to us demand guarantees that cannot be achieved from an audience attendance of approximate 5,000. We have promoted these acts in stadiums with capacities of 50,000, which is extremely expensive. We are in desperate need of multipurpose arenas with capacities of 10,000."

**LACK OF VENUES**

Last year’s big event, the Pavarotti tour, saw Hazel Feldman and her Showtime Management off to a powerful start. However, her plans for a string of multipurpose arenas around the country have failed to materialize, due to delays in obtaining official casino licenses—a key to the viability of the venues.

"The government is dragging their heels," says Feldman. "It’s very obvious that artists are willing, able and available to come to South Africa, but the problems regarding the venues are backed up by the falling rand/dollar situation. The industry will remain absolutely static until we get appropriate venues."

"The government further taints our by taking up to 14% of the gross ticket sales," observes Feldman, noting that service charges imposed by the dominant Computicket booking system have increased another 10% to 12% of gross sales. Feldman’s former employer, Sun International, presented few major shows in 1996, aside from appearances by Tina Turner and Meat Loaf (open only to Sun City resort guests) and a concert by Jackson Browne, despite their Sun City Superbowl being one of the most technically advanced and best-known venues on the continent.

South City is now looking at more of a niche market, says entertainment director Kerry O’Brien. "People are tired of concerts in huge stadiums," she says. "We need alternative entertainment, like comedians, and groups like Green Day and Oasis, who haven’t been taken care of here before.

Roddy Quinn, formerly Artie van Wyk’s partner in Big Concerts and now head of Real Concerts, sees the exchange rate as a key element in what is definitely a tougher market. "Everything depends on the strength of the rand, which was terrible near the beginning of the year and made some acts absolutely unaffordable," says Quinn. "We will be still more expensive to tour big superstar acts. That is still a market that we need to keep an eye on, but we are not going to be too caught up by these acts and we are not going to be that sort of act."
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GALLO BUYS TUSK, ACQUIRES LICENSE FOR WARNER AND SHARE OF COMPACT DISK TECHNOLOGIES

The recent agreement by Tusk Music, one of the leading independent record companies in South Africa, to be acquired by its rival, Gallo, is one of the most significant developments in the South African music industry in the past decade.

A letter of intent signed Feb. 28 called for Gallo to acquire all of Tusk's operations, including its lucrative license to distribute Warner Music International repertoire in South Africa, and Tusk's one-third share of the Compact Disk Technologies CD factory.

When Tusk managing director Mike Oldfield decided to sell his 30% share in the company to Gallo, it prompted remaining shareholders to "sell it as a package," says Oldfield. Tusk staff members hold 28% of the company's shares through a trust set up when it was established a decade ago.

Oldfield says that Warner supported the deal and helped make it possible by allowing its license to be taken over by Gallo.

Oldfield is confident that, under Gallo, the remaining shareholders will disappear "because they're paying for it," he says. Tusk is likely to remain a separate division of Gallo.

The CD-manufacturing industry in South Africa will also be affected by the deal. The country's sole CD-manufacturing plant, Compact Disk Technologies, until last year had been jointly owned by Tusk, Gallo and EMI. A Gallo-PolyGram partnership acquired EMI's share, and now Gallo will control Tusk's share, giving it a near monopoly in the market. However, EMI-affiliated Sonopress is due to open its own South African plant last year, establishing an alternative to Gallo's Compact Disk Technologies.

—A.G.

LANO OF OPPORTUNITY
Continued from page 51

"I think the development of kwaito will continue, but on the live side it seems audiences are tiring of artists performing to a backdrop with numerous dancers on the stage, which is becoming sterile and boring," says Roberts. "What they are responding to now is real live music."

"We may also eventually see a move away from traditional music if the population shift to the urban centers continues," notes Roberts. "At the same time, religion is not affected by such changes, so gospel will remain the dominant genre in South Africa for the foreseeable future."

Traditional music also dominated sales for Gallo Africa, which recently signed a milestone agreement to purchase its rival independent Tusk Music (see story this page). Gallo artist Umlamu Wami received one platinum and two gold album certifications in the past year, while labelmate Lucky Dube also scored platinum success for Gallo.

David Gresham Records, celebrating its 23rd year as an independent record company, also felt the power of traditional appeal. "Our biggest hit last year was Okay Izikosi, a Zulu traditional act," says David Gresham. "People thought international R&B would take over, but that was forgetting that we have a huge rural population that still likes their own genres of music."

While he did not ride the kwaito wave himself, Gresham saw dance music in general gain tremendous momentum. His own Quama Zoo, which climbed the Hot Dance Music chart in Billboard in October, went on to be the best-selling album in South Africa.

DIAL VARIETY
Gary Finch, marketing director of PolyGram South Africa, agrees that the genre laid down by kwaito is subsiding, partly as a result of the launch of dozens of new community radio stations across the country.

"With all the independent radio stations coming, there's a far bigger selection of music for people to choose from," Finch says. "A lot of listeners are supporting traditional music, which is now the big sellers in the trade in November and December—especially Zulu and Sotho traditional. We had a Sotho traditional act, Pshoholima, that sold 30,000 units in two months—something unprecedented in that market."

At the same time, Finch and others point out a resurgence of local rock bands, due to the support of media and radio. "All of us...[the leading record companies] have three or four...some, five or six...acts in that market," says Finch. "It's partly because of the quota system, which requires a minimum content of South African music, but also because of the independent radio stations. That has resulted in a nice increase in sales in the African market.

The white Afrikaans community had been relatively neglected by the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation since a democratic government took power, and many had feared that Afrikaans culture would decline. Instead, says Finch, the community has rallied.

PolyGram, in fact, created a new division to handle what they call as an emerging Afrikaans market, setting up Ian Rossiter, former buyer for the MFP label, with a new label called Dawn Music.

"He had a phenomenal year, way past expectations, and became a major player in Afrikaans music in only nine months—from it being almost non-existent for us," says Finch.

PolyGram South Africa managing director Harry Venter says the company's main strategies have involved addressing the Afrikaans middle-of-the-road market and the Sotho traditional market and anticipating an increased demand for CDs in the black market.

GROWING CD SALES
"Undoubtedly, the key positive trend is continuing CD penetration," agrees Keith Lister, managing director of BMG Africa, which has enjoyed international success with the Soweto String Quartet and strong domestic sales with its R&B roster of such acts as Blackstar, 112 and Deborah Cox. The increasing share of CD sales in the market, says Lister, is "a trend that will continue, this year, next year and for quite a few to come—unless customs administrations and law and order break down completely and the pirates take over. That has been the case in the coin. As CD penetration grows, South Africa becomes an increasingly lucrative target for piracy."

The dramatic increase in CD sales was reflected in the CD market in South Africa. At the time these interviews were held, Gershman says, the CD market accounted for 50% of the total music market, compared to 12% in 1993. The reason for this growth, he says, is the "growth in the middle-class of the country and the buyability of CDs. The people are getting more money. This is a very rich country."

The other side of the coin, says Finch, is the "small percentage of people who buy this music...As for the rich class, they can afford anything."

The ability to choose from a wide selection of music means that "the people are now listening to their own music," says Lister. The growth of the CD market in South Africa has also led to a "growing interest in the world market, with the global market accounts for 10% of CD sales," he says.

"As for the future, as in anywhere else in the world, it is difficult to see how the music industry can possibly decline," says Lister. "We have seen a growth in the market, and I think it will continue."

—Billboard staff

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1. A soprano and tenor with experience and recognized professional repute to listen to the tapes and lyrics with a view to singing them publicly.
2. A recording company.
3. A theatrical company to read and listen to the musical plays with a view to their production of the stage.

Will anyone interested contact me.

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LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Continued from page 34

South Africa

purchases by the black audience, along with a resultant increase in the sales of R&B product and CD singles, are trends that will continue throughout 1997, concurs Mike Oldfield, managing director of Tusk Music.

Tusk set up a division several years ago to cater to what was then only an emerg-

ing market among black consumers for international music. "This has paid off for us over the past year," says Oldfield. "In the coming year, we need to focus on local hip hop dance acts."

Echoing the opinion of other executives, Oldfield states that South Africa needs to further develop its local mar-

ket "into a well-rounded industry that produces good royalties for its artists as well as giving some profit returns to record companies. Such an industry," he says, "would then have more money to invest in the marketing and promo-

tion of local artists. Currently, local artists sell at prices substantially lower than those for international artists."

READY TO TRAVEL

Dave Alexander, managing director for independent player Tequila Records, agrees with Oldfield. "Too many of the South African productions are low-budget, aimed at a casset
tete market, with no long-term development plans for the artist," says Alexander. "Tequila Records is focusing on the long-term development of artists with international appeal. Although our biggest-selling artist, Stimela, is very successful at home, our focus for the album is the international music market. MDEM this year has shown us that this is a successful route for us to pursue."

Fellow independent Gary Hesel-

man, head of Tic Tac Bang, has found that his niche market of alternative acts has also become mainstream. "Acts like Tic Tac Bang's Battery 9 and the Springbok Nude Girls [on Sony] are creating a nice big stir at last," says Heselman. "But can we really have our own pop stars? The talent in South Africa has always been there. Now it is perhaps more evident, as artists feel there is more of a goal to work toward."

In its first full year as a South African major in its own right, Sony Music secured a 19% share of the market for international music, with its local divi-

sion achieving a less notable 6% share, albeit from a zero base.

"Sony Music will be putting additional effort, time and funding into the development of local A&R, as well as strategic marketing," says managing director Guy Henderson. "I think the importance of South Africa as a region in the world music industry context will only be fully appreciated and realized once one of the South African compa-

nies achieves substantial international success with a South African act."

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PROTECTING THE NEW SUCCESS

A&R issues aside, most industry executives agree on the major prob-

lems facing the industry, and most concur that piracy is the single biggest issue. PolyGram's Voerman suggests the key concerns are "piracy and enforcement of copyright laws." David Gresham cites piracy and the need for retailers to continue supporting the industry with shelf-space for new prod-

uct, as well as the need for radio to support a broader range of popular music.

Lambert at peermusic places a priori-

ty on eradicating piracy and getting "our artists and writers released on 'working' labels and not just locally." Alexander at Tequila is concerned about "a total lack of understanding of intellectual property, on the part of the government, the enforcement sector, the live-entertainment proprietors and the public."

Sony's Guy Henderson, as chairman of the Association of the South African Music Industry (ASAMI), is at the heart of the anti-piracy battle and says con-

traband CDs from Eastern Europe and the Far East are a new concern, along with protection of copyright—particularly in view of the increased emphasis on digi-

tal transmission, such as the Internet.

BMG's Lister is critical of the indus-

try's apparent inability to "get their act together and create an effective body which can lobby properly for better laws and for the better administration of the ones that we need to protect and exploit our copyrights."

Heselman at Tic Tac Bang adds issues like the lack of management and performance infrastructure and the effects of crime on live entertainment to his list of priorities.

On the plus side, all agree that a tremendous opportunity awaits South African music in the international mar-

kets. Artists are already breaking through, such as PolyGram, whose Jabu Khanyile and his band Bayete have long been seen as the next big thing from South Africa. Island's宮sellers Blackwell personally selected Khanyile as an international signing during a "shopping trip" to South Africa a few years ago.

At CCP one of the company's key...
SA’S TALENT
Continued from page 52
female Zulu group, Twins, South Africa’s youngest Zulu group, comprising no less than two sets of twins.

Artist: Urban Creep
Album: Tightwre
Label/Distributor: Tic Tic Bong
Publisher: Shifty Music
Management: Banrhe Strijling
Booking Agent: Total Exposure
South Africa’s leading indigenous stock group has made a creative leap with its new release. While the debut, the critically acclaimed “Sea Level,” was an upbeat album with a few dance tracks, this album, produced by Lloyd Ross, has moved powerfully toward a South African rock sound. The unusual inclusion of a viola player makes the sound distinctive and extends the group’s appeal to an audience that might not have paid attention to a conventional lineup of musicians.

Labelmates To Watch: Battery 9, a hard-edged industrial group; Henry Ate, modern punk rock with a female vocalist; Robbin Auld, rock with an experimental funk edge; Matthew Van Der Walt, a “psychotic singer/songwriter.” Kous Kombias, a “bilingual folks wordsmith.”

Artist: Mean Mr. Mustard
Album: “Waiting For A Miracle”
(label title)
Label/Distributor: David Gresham
Records
Publisher: David Gresham Music
Management: Open
Booking Agent: Open
M r. Mustard is the newest big thing from the label stable that put Qkumba Zoo on Billboard’s Hot Dance Music charts (via a U.S. deal with Arista). Mark Belling’s Bowie-esque vocals anchor a grunge and counterculture sound tinted with the kind of “Afro-campers” that producers Alan Goldswain and Ernn O’Shey are introducing to the DGR studios. The first single off the debut album is “I Can’t Get Enough.” Gresham is adamant that the band will make an impact in South Africa before it is marketed overseas. The early verdict: He can make his airline reservations.

Labelmates To Watch: Qkumba Zoo, which went Top 10 on Billboard’s Hot Dance Music chart last autumn; Jabu, Zulu-influenced r&B.

Artist: Jabu Khandyke & Bayete
Album: A-set-untitled
Label/Distributor: Island/PolyGram
Publishing: PolyGram
Management: Chris Ghetalis
Booking Agent: G Management
J abu Khandyke and his band, Bayete, have grabbed the attention of both South African and international audiences with their poppy brand of township music. The highlight of the past year was a performance for Queen Elizabeth and Nelson Mandela at the Prince’s Trust Concert for Nelson Mandela last year; Springbok Nude Girls, whose upcoming rock album is one of the most eagerly awaited releases of the year.

From left: Urban Creep, M’dou, Stimela

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Continued from page 52
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From left: Urban Creep, M’dou, Stimela
\[ \text{Platinum Album Watch} \]

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\[ \text{Economic Watch} \]

Currency: Rand
Exchange rate: $1 = 4.4 Rand
GDP (1995) = $134.2 billion
Inflation rate (1994): 9%
Unemployment rate (October 1994): 82.6%

\[ \text{Sales Watch} \]

Average wholesale album price ($ U.S.) = $13-$15
Average retail album price ($ U.S.) = $20-$23
Mechanical royalty rate = 5% of retail price
Sales tax on sound recordings: 14%
Unit sales (1996): 20.3 million

\[ \text{Media Watch} \]

Radio 5 (estimated audience of 600,000)
Radio Metro (estimated audience of 800,000)
The Star, daily newspaper (170,000 circulation)
The Sunday News, daily newspaper (210,000 circulation)
Music Africa, music-industry magazine (25,000 circulation)
Top 40, pop-music magazine (75,000 circulation)

\[ \text{Retail Watch} \]

CNA (500 stores)
Shoprite Checkers (258 stores)
OK Bazaars (145 stores)
Musica (86 stores)

\[ \text{Land of Opportunity} \]

Continued from page 56

goals in 1997-98 will be the international development of South African artists, says Harvey Roberts. He also believes Brenda Fassie will lead an era of greater cooperation with artists from the rest of Africa. Her last album, "Now Is The Time," features duets with Papa Wemba on two tracks, spurring the new interest in more pan-African collaborations.

EMI will also be behind one of the most long-awaited events in South African music, this month's release of the first Juluka album in 11 years.

Says Roberts, "Juluka as a presence and almost a symbol of the fact that possibilities that exist in South African culture are still as important a force as they were 11 years ago, and the music is every bit as exciting as it ever was."

\[ \text{Touring} \]

Continued from page 52

the equation and has worked hard at taking them out of the clubs and putting them in 6,000-seat arenas to get them used to that. The B stage at Kyaik is a step toward that. There is definite scope for festivals—a massive gap, even in the black market. Some promoters think you can give the black market a list of names and they will buy it. They won't; the black market needs to be treated with the respect it deserves."

Quinn also warns that the days of a charity approach, where bands insist on lower ticket prices to attract a broader spectrum of the local population—are over unless the bands themselves are willing to cut back their demands. "If they keep their fees as high as possible and still want to sell tickets cheaply, it simply won't work," he says.

One of the most seasoned promoters in the business, Mike Fuller of Fame Tours, also sees niche markets as the solution. "I think one has to look at artists who spread their appeal to secondary markets, to more specialized audiences," says Fuller. "But the moment you go to smaller centers, there are no venues, and the popular situation is not big enough to support big concerts. Even Durban and Cape Town are no longer safe bets. The problem is, if you don't offer enough concerts to the artists, they won't take time to come to South Africa."

A Word From The Sponsors

Fuller has found that the one ingredient that makes it all come together is sponsorship. Last year, he put together the Camel Party Zone, a dance extravaganza that featured two U.S. and two European acts, including Pizzaman, which were brought out with the support of heavy sponsorship from Camel.

Hazel Feldman also feels that sponsor-ship is a key to survival in the industry. The problem, she says, is that "too much of the sponsorship in this country is tied up in sports, and there is not a sufficient number of sponsors looking toward arts and entertainment."

Louis van Wyk (Attie's brother) of Showstar Concerts, which brought out nostalgic acts like The Hollies last year, is upbeat despite negative reviews. What is key to the overall strength of the market, is that higher standards are being set and artists keep coming, he says. "Acts don't see South Africa as a third-world country anymore."
Sony Arm Spins Artists Into Brands

Lending Names To Products Leads To Big Money

BY DON KAPLAN

NEW YORK—From Michael Jackson power drinks to Celine Dion eyeliner, the products at Sony Signatures Music (SSM) are spun off into products that fit into single most identifiable consumer products in the world—brand names.

By orchestrating licensing deals between artists and merchandise manufacturers, SSM is taking recording artists’ images, logos, and even their biographical souvenirs to shelves in department and specialty stores across the globe.

These products, which range from full lines of apparel to lava lamps, represent what some merchandising executives call a tapped multimillion-dollar market.

So far, SSM’s strategy seems to be working. With 70% of the company’s licensed products being sold outside North America, industry sources say Sony Signatures, the San Francisco-based, full-service entertainment merchandising arm of Sony—and the parent of the music division—generated a volume of more than $30 million last year.

“Our goal is very simple: We have to bring more value to the artist than simply selling their merchandise at concerts,” says 47-year-old Sony Signatures CEO Dell Furano. Although the company does include tour merchandise in its licensing agreements, the company’s main focus is finding a way to develop non-tour sources of revenue.

Ultimately, the company tries to fit its clients into a mainstream entertainment licensing position—“similar to what Disney did with ‘101 Dalmatians, or similar to the licensing of the Garfield the cat character,” explains Kristine Ross, SSM’s head of licensing.

“Licensing is basically finding a manufacturer who will take your property and, for a limited time, apply that property to their product and then sell it to the market,” she explains. Ross notes that there are currently more than 40 well-known artists represented by SSM, including Ziggy Marley, Ringo Starr, The Who, Dead Kiss, Janet Jackson, Iglesias, Estefan, and Reba McEntire.

“Not only not looking at the business from an individual artist level, but also from a genre level,” Ross says. “We’re covering Latin, country, and classic rock. We’ve got Janis [Joplin], Bob Dylan, and Carlos Santana, she says. “We’re covering the contemporary rock with Ozzy Osbourne and Kiss, and then the country rock with Steve Miller and Lynyrd Skynyrd. And we’ve got pop with Michael and Janet Jackson, Celine Dion, [and] T很重要的 lyric.

Ross adds, “It’s basically going out and finding partnerships with manufacturers in products that are going to have the integrity of the artist.”

Many of SSM’s clients are not even from Sony’s record labels. “Our licensing rights are derivative of our tour merchandising rights, not necessarily our label rights,” Ross says.

The whole licensing program is geared toward SSM’s strategy. "We have a Total Integrated Music Marketing (TIMM) strategy. TIMM combines live events, retail merchandise, radio, sponsorships, and commercial endorsements that are all geared toward SSM’s goal—generating non-touring revenue. “We can get somebody who not only sponsors a concert, but also brings in a line of products we can then take to a specific retailer,” Ross says.

Sony Signatures was founded less than two years ago when Furano, an executive at Universal Studios, was approached by Sony to head the company. The industry veteran, who founded Winterland productions with Bill Graham in 1973, continues to oversee the entire Sony Signatures division. As an arm of Sony, the company also handles merchandising for all of Sony’s feature films and is involved in deals for merchandise in such sporting areas as World Cup France 1998, ATP Tennis, and the International Hockey League.

From a money standpoint, Furano says the licensing program is geared to figure out how to generate $600,000 a year in royalties for the artist, and then get that figure up to $3 million or $4 million by the end of the year. “It’s all about developing products that are sold at retail chains like Blockbuster, Suncoast, Spencer Gifts, and, with the advent of new kiosks, growing appetite for entertainment, sold in the Macy’s specialty section.”

In terms of the actual licensing deal, Furano says artists usually receive a royalty rate based on approximately 10% of the items that are manufactured and then sold at wholesale prices.

“Even though many of the company’s licensed products are sold in North America, SSM is also focusing on developing a team of overseas merchandisers. A result of this program is the Michael Jackson Mystery Drink, a caffeinated, peach-flavored power drink that is manufactured in Germany and sold in Asia.

“So far we have an agency of 23 international people working for us as well as internal people who are specialists on certain territories,” Ross says. “We’ve hired people who not only beyond their region, but also know the area’s idiosyncrasies. They are able to judge first-hand whether an artist is popular in that region.”

She adds, “We need to do this because there are a lot of variations worldwide as to which musical artists are popular and which ones aren’t.”

Still, even when there is a market for a licensed artist, finding the right product to develop can be tough. “For all the right reasons, many artists do not want to be associated with cigarettes, alcohol, or other products. We’re just finding a way to develop a non-touring revenue,” Ross notes. But outside of a few questions, the licensing merchandising possibilities are endless.

“We all know that T-shirts have been done in the past,” she says, “but let’s look at the possibility of a branded line of sportswear, sports jerseys, jackets, a line of denim jackets and denim jeans. Let’s look at anything that hasn’t been done on tour, but has the potential to be a regular licensing environment.”

She adds that apparel accessories such as backpacks, bandanas, hats, jewelry, scarves, shoelaces, umbrellas, slippers, wallets, and purses are all possibilities. In the domestics market, SSM is geared toward the specialty stores and the super-budget lines.

“Just think of any accessory in the licensing industry that’s been exploited somehow, some way, with something,” she says.

In 1994, SSM handled the merchandising for Barbra Streisand’s tour and developed between 10 and 12 retail boutiques around the U.K. for her last album (Rodgers, Nordstrom, and Macy’s). “At the end of the tour we also did a Streisand program with QVC that brought home the items of business in an hour,” Furano says.

Most recently, SSM added LeAnn Rimes to the roster. The 14-year-old country singer, who won two Grammy’s and an American Music Award this past winter, is said to be very involved in the deal. “She’s very excited about the licensing. This is her first time doing something like this,” Furano says. (Continued on next page)

Giving No Mercy. Arista recording act No Mercy signed autographs at an HMV record store in New York’s Herald Square and gave an unaccompanied acoustic performance of the song “Please Don’t Go” from its self-titled debut album. Shown in the back row, from left, are Bettina Hanks, HMV field marketing supervisor; Ken Feldman, HMV marketing manager; Jeff Davidson, GM, HMV Herald Square; and Alan McDonald, VP of marketing, HMV. In the front row, from left, are No Mercy members Ariel Hernandez, Marty Cintron, and Gabriel Hernandez.

U.K.’s Music Club Brings Its Compilations To U.S.

BY DON JEFFREY

NEW YORK—Music Club, a 6-year-old U.K.-based compilation label that releases music ranging from Charlie Parker to Gregorian chants to the Sex Pistols, has launched its line in the U.S. in the past few months with an aggressive pricing and marketing strategy.

The label is optimistic about its chances of success here, having aligned with a strong independent distributor (Koch International) and having set an attractive CD list price ($9.98). The discs generally include about 18 tracks and feature eight-page booklets with liner notes and photos.

Steve Bunyan, head of special projects for the Watford, England-based Music Club, says that the company studied the U.S. retail market and decided to follow its U.K. strategy of releasing albums at a price point between the specialty reissues and the super-budget lines.

“We made our name doing things other companies wouldn’t do at our price point,” he says. “As a U.S. company, we’re going to be aggressive with our strategy and effort involved in reissuing recordings for that market. But it was always in the back of our mind to come to America,” he says.

The company has been a lot of export business from the U.K., he says, but not to the U.S. because of the time and effort involved in reissuing recordings for that market. “It was always in the back of our mind to come to America,” he says.

The U.S. campaign began in November with the release of 16 albums. In March another six titles came out, and in May another nine are scheduled to hit the stores.

The first batch included albums by the Troggs, Parker, Charles Mingus, and Peter Green, as well as Irish folk music, tangos, Buddhist and Gregorian chants, dub tracks, film and musical soundtracks, and French accordion music.

Sales have been “pretty good” so far, according to Bunyan, acknowledging the current difficulties at music retail. “We’re only interested in stores that will buy [the product] and sell it through,” he says. “And Koch is a cautious businessman like ourselves.”

Bunyan concedes that the compilation/reissue market is not easy to crack. In the U.S., there are strong independents like Rhino, Sundazed, and Razor & Tie, and nearly all the majors have beefed up their reissue programs with well-funded marketing campaigns.

“I’ll probably take two or three years ‘til we’re known as a player in the market,” says Bunyan. “We’re a very ambitious company.”

Music Club releases 40-50 titles a year and has a catalog of about 300 albums. But not all of that library will be sold here. “Some of them wouldn’t work in the U.S., and some we wouldn’t be able to get the rights for,” says Bunyan. He estimates that about half of the catalog could ship in stores here. “We talk to retailers to see what will or will not work.”

Music Club believes in the power of spending money at retail. “All our advertising dollars go into co-op promotions with retailers,” says Bunyan. “We want to get [product] in front of people so they’ll see it.”

Last year, he says, Music Club held a promotional campaign with 200 Our Price stores in the U.K. About 100 titles were racked at each store. “It was our most successful label promotion, over $250,000 CDs sold in seven weeks,” he says. “We put a lot of marketing dollars into that campaign: radio, print, mailouts, in-store promotions.”

Listening stations are part of Music Club’s U.S. strategy, although Bunyan (Continued on page 61)
Reuters

SONY ARM SPINS ARTISTS INTO BRANDS
(Continued from preceding page)

ing potential for her," Ross said. 
"We're just starting to build our program. We kicked it off with a few assorted apparel pieces and we've also done some posters for her."

According to Ross, the client needs to play a major role in the development of the product. "The more involved they get, the better it comes out," she says, "because the product becomes more and more reflective of who and what the artist is all about."

In terms of figuring out how a product can be tied in with an artist, Ross says SSM can use one of three approaches. "First there's imagery," she says, referring to a product that features a picture of an artist in it. "Rather than a Pepsi logo, some people would like to have the image of Julio Iglesias on a beach towel," she explains.

Some products, however, such as eyewear or某些 apparel lines, are not conducive to imagery. For these, Ross says the artist's logo or signature is more appropriate. "The Grateful Dead are a good example," she notes. "If anybody sees the red and blue skull, even without the words Grateful Dead near it, everybody always associates that with the Dead."

As another example, Ross says that if SSM wanted to do a line of Tony Braxton jewelry, it would find a manufacturer to create the line so that it would "capture what she stands for—her sassiness, her appeal, her sexiness, her sophistication. But instead of saying Tony all over it, it would probably have a discreet hangtag that would say 'developed and designed for Tony Braxton.'" The executive adds, "It becomes more of a branding issue than having the product itself actually say Tony on it."

To date, one of the most lucrative deals SSM has is its agreement with Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley of Kiss. The current Kiss licensing program, inked shortly before the band's latest tour, has produced a number of Kiss products, including apparel, comic books, and Kiss action figures. "They're 6 inches tall and they look like each member of the group," Ross says. "They have giant plastic egg plates that you can take off and the funny boots."

Convincing Kiss to become involved in a licensing program, however, proved to be difficult, Furano says. The band, which over the years has found itself on the losing end of various financial deals, initially was not receptive to the licensing and royalties system. "At first Gene and Paul said, 'No, we want to make everything ourselves, sell it all, and make the lion's share of the money,'" Furano says. After explaining the difficult and sometimes confusing elements involved in manufacturing and distribution, however, the band decided to give it a try. "That's what I did with them was pull out a trade magazine that had a Warner Bros. advertisement for Batman and I showed it to them. I said, 'They have 200 manufacturers and licensees and they don't make the product themselves. I told [Kiss] that Warner Bros. owns the trademark to Batman and each one of these companies that makes a product with the Batman name on it gets to rent the trademark.'"

The rest is history. According to Ross, with 23 licensees, the Kiss program is one of the more robust accounts at SSM. She notes that in terms of royalty projections, Kiss stands to make a minimum of $3 million to $5 million from the deal. Ross adds, "The beautiful thing about licensing a musical artist is that they're not here today, gone tomorrow. You've got a four-year-old film in.

They've got track records and loyal fans. So if a product lands in the right retail environment, it could stay there forever."

SONY'S LICENSING PROGRAM IS GEARED TO GENERATE $3 MILLION OR $4 MILLION A YEAR FOR ARTISTS

At the Living Vine, Sparrow recording artist Phil Keaggy performed for more than 200 people at the Living Vine bookstore in Dallas during a promotion for his recently released album, "200." Pictured, from left, are Hank Butler, assistant store manager; Brian Woodin, store receiving manager; Keaggy, and Joe Oakley, manager, Living Vine.

EXECUTIVE TURNABOUT

DISTRIBUTION. Glen Firstenberg is appointed senior director of marketing for Universal Music & Video Distribution in Los Angeles. He was Eastern regional sales director for Warner Audio Video Entertainment. Al Jones is promoted to senior director of artist development,.bias music, for PolyGram Distribution in New York. He was director of artist development,.bias.

Barbara Kaplan is appointed West Coast regional sales manager for RED Distribution in Santa Monica, Calif. She was West Coast regional sales rep for the AEC Group.

HOME VIDEO. Robin Montgomery is appointed executive VP of home video, publishing, and new media for Bonneville Worldwide Entertainment in Salt Lake City and Los Angeles. She was a consultant to the firm.

Brian O'Shea is promoted to VP of worldwide distribution for Concord-New Horizons in Los Angeles. He was director of legal and business affairs.

Syndie D. Wilkes is appointed director of promotions for Paramount Home Video in Hollywood, Calif. She was corporate promotion planner for General Mills.

Kim Johnson is promoted to director of licensing administration for Universal Studios Home Video in Universal City, Calif. She was manager of licensing administration.

Tonya Bates is promoted to GM of VideoScan in Los Angeles. She was VP of sales and service.

Jova Robertson is appointed vice president, North Central regional sales manager for Republic Pictures in Naperville, Ill. She was regional sales manager for Turner Home Entertainment.

RERTRAK

RENTRAK projects profit from its continuing operations to exceed $1 million for the fourth fiscal quarter, which ends Monday (31). In the same period last year, it reported a loss of $4.5 million. Revenue, however, is expected to decline from a year ago due to a better selection of video titles in 1996. The improvement in profit is attributed to cost controls and better margins. Rentrak has refocused on its core business—the leasing of videocassettes to video retailers.

ATLANTIC RECORDS has teamed with Continental Airlines and 1-800 Flowers in promotions for "Mad About You—The Final Frontier," due April 15. The album is a companion to the popular TV series. The program contains 16 tracks, including a new recording of the show's theme by Atlantic artist Anita Baker. The Continental promotion includes on-package deals worth up to $125 off airline ticket.

The carrier will also feature tracks in its in-flight listening program, and the label will advertise in the in-flight magazine.

1-800-Flowers will design a "Mad About You" flower arrangement, to be promoted through on-package discount coupons, and will play the album in its shops.

AMAZON.COM, which sells books over the Internet and plans to eventually expand into music and video, has filed for an initial public offering of stock. The Seattle-based company plans to sell up to 2.9 million shares at an estimated price of $13 a share to raise $37 million. Deutsche Morgan Grenfell is the lead underwriter. Amazon.com offers 2.6 million book titles. Last year, the company reported a loss of $5.8 million on $17.5 million in sales.

RHINO RECORDS says that LiveConcerts.com will be the sponsor for the online version of its music trivia contest April 27. LiveConcerts is a joint venture between House of Blues and Progressive Networks. Other sponsors of the Rhino Musical Aptitude Test are Tower Records, L.A. Cellular, and Rolling Stone magazine. The event will begin at 3 p.m. EDT at Tower locations in New York (Lincoln Center) and Los Angeles (Sunset Strip). Winners of the 300-question test will be selected at each retail location and from the Internet.

THE RIGHT STUFF, the reissue label owned and distributed by EMI Music Distribution, is celebrating the 20th anniversary of Solar Records with yearlong releases of vintage recordings by such R&B acts as Gladys Knight, Etta James, and the Drifters.

MVP HOME ENTERTAINMENT, distributor of such reality videos as "COPS: Too Hot For TV," has launched its first independent production, "North Hollywood Shoot Out—Terror In The Streets O.F.A." The video is a documentary about a failed bank robbery in late February that led to the deaths of the armed robbers. The company says that 25% of each video sold to the Los Angeles Police Department. MVP said it had received a 30,000-unit order from a video chain.
points out that in the U.K. labels generally don’t have to pay retailers to put albums on the posts as they do here. “We’re doing titles by Naarr [Fateh Ali Khan]. We want to buy our way onto a lot of listening stations in the U.S. He’s a major artists in the U.K., and we want him in every store where it’s right.”

He realizes co-op payments square profit margins but adds, “It is the way of doing business in the U.S. If our dis- trict company thinks it’s a cost-effective way to market our product, we’ll do it. We want to be a major player, so we have to make a splash with it.”

Muddy Club then goes on to describe how about 150 record companies and putting them on compilations. Music Club is interested in acquiring catalogs. It recently hired two executives from U.K.-based catalog label Castle Communications. So far, says Banyan, we’ve bought very small catalogs.”

Muddy Club began as part of a company specializing in deleted product, or catalog, called SPA’s. Banyan says that it was Europe’s largest catalog company before its demise.

"Labels stopped making so many mistakes, and cutouts dries up,” he says. “So we moved into distributing for third parties. But the margins are very low. It dawned on us that we could put together our own products better than the labels were distributing.”

Music Club is part of Music Collection International, which includes a number of other labels—some of which sell product at budget or front-line price points—such as MCI Music, Nascente, Emporium, Showtime, and Harmless.

Music Collection is a unit of VCI plc, a public company that trades on the London Stock Exchange and markets and distributes video titles worldwide. It also has a book and software publishing arm. Its biggest recent video release is “Knievel,” of which 2 million copies have been sold in the U.K., according to VCI. A 35% annual sales are 98 million dollars ($156.8 million). Music Collection’s revenue in 14.5 million dollars for the fiscal year ending March 31.

Music Club releases in the U.S. next month include albums by Desmond Dekker, “The Original Rudeboy”; Martin Gore, “Further捶 The Tornadoes”, and The Sex Pistols, “Raw”. Others are “This Is Ska—16 Original Ska Classics,” “Jah Love—A Reggae Trista To Bob Marley” and “The Very Best Of The Tornadoes”.

The exchange rate used for this story is $1.60 to the pound.

Given the widespread reach of the media today, it’s easy to assume that fans of a particular recording act might want to buy their latest album, or at least be aware that it is out. Not necessarily, according to this study.

Reports found that only one-third of the “core fans” of 150 acts had purchased the most recent album by a favorite act. The study was done by Strategic Record Research, a joint venture between artist management companies Ledyard and Strategic Media Research. A core fan is defined as someone who says that an act mentioned by the interviewer is a favorite.

Moreover, 64% of those who did not buy a favorite artist’s new album said it was because they did not know it was available. By a wide margin, this was the most commonly given explanation. The second-ranking reason, at 49%, was that the fans “liked some songs but not enough to buy” the release.

Is this an indictment of record companies’ marketing strategies? Or is evidence that there are, in fact, information cluttering print, airwaves, and computer screens, and that it is now impossible to expect large numbers of people to be aware of any new product?

Some label executives believe the latter is true. “The results wouldn’t be different for any consumer for durability or entertainment product,” one says.

Other observers say the finding is indicative of an industry in crisis. Sales of albums are generally flat, returns are high, and there are not enough artists with a stable or growing base of fans. Moreover, when we ask labels that are not reaching music lovers, especially older people, effectively.

Mike Lane, an executive with Strategic Record Research, says, “It’s becoming increasingly difficult to sell their audience because it’s becoming so fragmented.”

The survey was done by telephone interviews of the company consisted of 10,000 responses, from consumers aged 12-54, were tallied. The interviews were conducted four times a year, the most recent in December and January.

Other reasons core fans gave for not buying a favorite artist’s new album: They heard too much of the radio (21%), they said they had heard the album before (15%), and they had never heard the album before (20%).

For those who told the researchers that they had bought a particular album recently, it’s not surprising that radio was the most frequently cited means of finding out about a new release. In fact, 62% of the fans said they heard about it on the radio.

Moreover, when we asked what we influenced them in general to buy records, the overwhelming response was hearing a song on the radio (86%).

So, despite the delirium over World Wide Web sites and the presumed domi- nance of the more old-fashioned low-tech radio, it would seem to be the right place for labels’ larges.

But Steve Kleibel, senior VP of marketing at Elektra Entertainment Group, says, “It depends on the artist you’re talking about. Some are played to death on the radio and get good videoclip exposure. But you have to realize you can’t reach everyone. For artists without the blessing of radio, it’s more diffi- cult to reach consumers.”

And he lists some of these ways of learning what’s new: word-of-mouth (19%), in-store visibility (19%), video exposure (6%), print (5%), record club listing (4%), non-video TV exposure (3%), and in-store listening (3%).

And aside from radio airplay, interviewees cited other factors that influ- enced them in general to buy records: seeing a video, the word-of-mouth on the radio, a friend (30%), in-store visibility (30%), fan loyalty (26%), sale (20%), seeing a performance on TV (23%), reading a review (15%), seeing an advertisement on TV (10%) or at the mall (9%).

The researchers broke out their findings on those who were not aware of a favorite act’s new album by demographics and came up with responses that results are often obvious but occasionally remarkable.

It is hardly surprising that older consumers (45-54) were the least in tune (73.8% not aware), or that youths (12-17 and 18-24) were the lowest on the unawareness scale (61.5% and 51.3%, respectively). But it may give pause that while the music fans are more likely to be in the dark about new albums (64.7%) than either blacks (48.6%) or Hispanics (50.8%).

Academic and career achievement do not signify a better informed consumer, either, and, in fact, seem to suggest the opposite. People with advanced degrees ranked highest in lack of awareness of new releases (67.8%), as did the highest income groups ($500,000-$750,000, 69.3%, $750,000 and up, 66.7%). Those with the lowest incomes were the most up-to-date about new albums (68.7%).

All of this means that people who live in, the results were pretty even (60.9% of city-dwelling fans were unaware of new releases, compared with 62.9% of subur- banites and 62% of rural residents).

The results are based on data from the five largest markets in the U.S.—New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco—to see if there were differences in consumer awareness of albums. They found that the greatest percentage of the clueless (68%) were in the Chicago mar- ket. The New York market did not even make the cut as a major media capital of New York, 69.6% were unaware of a favorite artist’s most recent album.

Since radio is consumers’ top tool for learning about new releases, the researchers provided data about format preferences. Fans who favor classical radio were the most unaware of new albums (79.8%), while those who listen most to R&B mainstream stations were the least likely to be informed (44.0%).
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Merchants & Marketing

NARM Finds Labels, Retail Willing To Work Together

**NOW THAT WE'RE TWO WEEKS back from the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) Convention, I had a moment to reflect on the happenings. And one of the key and welcome absences from this year's meeting was that there wasn't such an adversarial or confrontational attitude between merchants and label sales and distribution executives as in years past.**

Most seemed to be cautiously optimistic, and both sides seemed to exhibit a renewed sense of partnership in meeting the industry's challenges. Particularly heartening, from my perspective, was how BMG Distribution and Sony Music Distribution were sensitive to the concerns of accounts and responded by raising minimum-advertised-price (MAP) levels (Billboard, March 22, March 29). Executives at two of the other majors are also said to be considering a similar move. That attitude is quite a turnaround from the 1994 NARM, where pleas from merchants to strengthen MAP policies fell on deaf ears.

As the Musicland Group said on March 14 had been terminated (Billboard Bulletin, March 17). Well, Retail Track hears that those talks were revived March 19.

Other than to acknowledge that it was engaging in conversations with potential equity investors that could require a substantial offering of new shares, the Musicland Group has never cited with whom it was in discussions. I have repeatedly reported that Apollo Advisors is one of those potential equity investors, even though someone who should know tells me that I am completely off the mark. But too many others who know one or both parties tell me that the two are once again engaged in talks. Furthermore, Apollo, which is considered to be a savvy investor specializing in distressed situations, also had conversations with Alliance Entertainment Corp., those sources say.

It sounds like Apollo has targeted the music industry as a situation ripe for a turnaround and is willing to ante up so it can partake in the fruits of a reboozed Musicland.

Musicland executives declined comment at press time.

In other Musicland news, there have been some moves at the company. Archie Benike, previously VP of marketing for the mall music stores, now holds that title for all of the company's retail concepts. Tami Kozikowski, previously director of real estate for Media Play, is now VP of real estate for the company. In addition, for the first time since it decentralized four years ago, the company has centralized its advertising, marketing, buying, and distribution functions, all reporting to vice chairman Gil Wachsman.

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The following issue (March 15), I incorrectly cited Ed Franke's label affiliation. Franke is the East Coast director of sales for MCA.

MAKING TRACKS: Mike Carden, formerly with In-Tune Music Group, has joined CMC International as VP of sales/marketing... Susan Roberts, formerly national sales director for ABC House Video, has left the company and is seeking opportunities. She can be reached at 310-315-3546.

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to be held May 21-25 at the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans. The new name and logo will be utilized by the group thereafter.

The streamlined AFIM moniker will serve a couple of purposes, according to Bradley. "NAIRD stands for 'national,' and we've been moving very strongly to an international [presence]," she says. "And, with more retailers coming into the organization, we don't want a name limiting us to labels and distributors."

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Pat Martin Bradley says that the new handle has been approved by the NAIRD board and member companies. A new logo for the organization will be unveiled during NAIRD's 25th anniversary convention, to be held May 21-25 at the Fairmont Hotel in New Orleans. The new name and logo will be utilized by the group thereafter.

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Big Noise from Chi-Town: As a native of Chicago, Declarations of Independents has always had a soft spot for the pop-savvy rock acts that ruled the roost in the Midwest during the '70s and '80s. Some of these great bands are resurfacing on indie labels. We now have before the excellence of the forthcoming self-titled debut album by Rockford, Ill.'s mighty Cheap Trick (Billboard, March 20) — and applaud the imminent release of a new set on Heel, Ariz.-based Pavement Music by Chicago's Off Broadway.

In the late '70s, Off Broadway reigned in the Windy City clubs, and in 1980, the band released an Atlantic album, "On." The group specialized in a bulked-up pop sound and spawned a terrific wiry-guitarist in Mimi Betina, a one-time member of the terrific Chi-town power pop combo Pezhane.

On May 13, Off Broadway bounces back with its Pavement debut, "Fallin In." The album includes 11 new songs penned by Betina and Cliff Johnson and features the other original members of the band, Rob Harding, Mike Gorman, and Kenny Hark.

We wish our homeboys good luck, the second time around.

FLAG WAVING: If you like your roots rock as gritty as it gets, you won't miss with Fireworks' new album, "Lit Up," due May 13 from Dallas-based Last Beat Records.

The album, the third by the Dallas trio, is its first for the label, which began life as a local record outlet and has released other full-length sets by such Big D bands as Riot Squad and Spinning Jenny. Last Beat's releases have been in the punk vein, but, while Fireworks' sound draws deeply from rockabilly and blues, punk listeners will find plenty to relate to in its seething sound.

Like many another combo in the roots punk genre, Fireworks feature a two-guitar-and-drums lineup — Darin Lin Wood and James Arthur handle six-string duties, while Janet Walker pounds the timbres.

Wood — who has had experience with such like-minded combos as Memphis' '68 Comeback and Blacktop, a short-lived partnership with Nick Collins of Detroit's Gories — has been gravitating to hard-edged roots sounds since he was a kid. "Even back when I was 1, 2, 15 years old, I was still into that jangly guitar sound," Wood says. "The rockabilly stuff was what always really got me ... I went for the kids that did one-off singles — kids that picked up a guitar and didn't bother to tune it." He also acknowledges the influence of such iconic Australian bands as the Scientists and the Birthday Party.

After recording and touring in '86 with '68 Comeback, whose lineup also included drummer Peg O'Neill of the Gories, Wood got inspired to start his own band with his girlfriend Walker. "I said, 'Hell, if Peg can play drums like that, I'm sure my girlfriend could.' Wood recalls. "But [Walker] couldn't play guitar. I even stripped it down to two strings, and she still couldn't do it." So Walker became Fireworks' drummer by default.

"Lit Up," following corrosive sets on C.B. ("Set the World on Fire," 1994) and Australia's As-We-Go ("Off the Air," 1994), may be the band's most in-your-face effort to date. Harsh, hard-rocking, and often profane (radio programmers, please withhold before airplay), it's a rough-hewn but exciting example of roots punk at its most abrasive.

The genre still works at the commercial margins of the business. Wood thinks his music could be marketed, but it's probably not for everybody. "Anything could be sold to the masses if it's done right. I don't think [labels] want to because of the grabbing quality."

Fireworks, which have toured widely in recent years but have taken a long layoff, will go on the road after the release of "Lit Up." In the interim, Wood and Walker are working on another band, Cat Fur, which may include other part-time players.

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London Suede ‘Comes Up’ With 2-ECD Set

LOS ANGELES—Nude/Columbia act the London Suede is spicing up the U.S. version of its latest album, “Coming Up,” with bonus music tracks and multimedia. Approximately 30,000 double-disc limited-edition copies of the album, which came out in Europe last year, will be released April 8. It retails for $19.98.

“The basic album is exactly the same, but we lived it up with more stuff for the U.S.,” says drummer Simon Gilbert. “The extra content is like a diary of what we’ve been up to. It’s taken so long to get this record out in the States, and we wanted people to know that we haven’t just been kicking back. We’ve been working hard and touring to support the record around the world, which is documented on this release.”

The extra content may also convince some of the band’s fans who bought the import to also buy the U.S. version, says Mark Ghussein, VP of online and emerging technologies for Columbia, which markets its enhanced CDs (ECDs) under the brand name CD Extra. Though the London Suede has had sales success in most parts of the world, it has yet to break big in the U.S.

“It’s hard to say why that is,” says Gilbert. “But it does seem like there’s getting to be more acceptance in the U.S. now for British bands. It’s slightly more diverse since the last time we were here. In 1996, it was all Pearl Jam and Stone Temple Pilots. Now, there is some electronic and, of course, the Spice Girls.”

The delayed release of the London Suede’s latest album has enabled Nude/Columbia to draw from an unusually large amount of bonus material for the multimedia portion of both discs. The new content on the two-ECD set includes music videos, new audio tracks, and live performance and behind-the-scenes documentary footage, as well as secret content accessible only to consumers who purchase the band’s World Wide Web site (http://www.thelonsoundsue.com).

The delayed release of the band’s World Wide Web site (http://www.thelonsoundsue.com) will be hidden on the disc and can only be viewed when it is unlocked by entering a secret password found on the CD. Nude/Columbia will not reveal the password until at least a month after the disc is released. The U.S. version of the music video for “Trash” and the U.K. version of the clip “Beautiful Ones” are also accessible on the disc but may require a password to be viewed.

In addition, a special “All Access” area of the Web site is accessible only to consumers who purchase the CD, which contains Web browser software and one month’s free access to the Web.

“We’ve been spreading ourselves around the world and can’t spend as much time as we would like in many markets,” says Gilbert. “The Web is a tool to let us communicate with our fans directly.”

The band’s manager, Charlie Charlton, even occasionally checks out the Web to see what the fans are saying about the band.

“There have been a few postings from the band, and a lot of postings from people who claim to be in the band,” says Charlton. “I think there are several people claiming to be [drummer] Richard [Oakes]. That’s the downside to it. There’s no way of verifying who is who.”

The second bonus disc contains six unreleased audio tracks taken from live performances in Ireland, Japan, and Denmark. Video footage of two U.K. performances are also on the disc.

Much of the video footage on the ECD was shot by Charlton.

“When recording the album, we had the video camera from day one,” he says. “I was originally going to do rather straightforward interviews of the band, but I didn’t want to do something wooden. I wanted to document a viewpoint that was only possible from inside the band.”

Charlton says there is a lot of material but that did not end up on the ECD.

“Maybe that will show up some day as blackmaiI material,” says Gilbert, who adds that the band plans to be in the studio to record its next album by the end of the year.

THE LO N DON SUEDE

Warner through its Pathfinder site, are aiming to build entertainment destinations on the Internet based on their own established properties and brand names.

Although some entertainment companies may be able to maintain an impressive draw based solely on their strong brand names—Disney, for example, is hoping to attract a major audience with its family-focused Web site—most entertainment companies are trying to do too much under one corporate Web site banner.

“Entertainment companies need to link to other content developers to create a site that is complementary to the needs of the Web user, rather than the company,” says Forrester analyst Seema Chowdhury. “If you go to many music and movie sites, all you see is the equivalent of a brochure with some sound or video clips. That may serve the purpose of promoting a product, but is that really exciting to the consumer?”

Many corporations continue to question why it is they need to be on the Web in the first place. For some, a Web presence is clearly an extension of their advertising in other traditional media. However, other companies, such as Sony via its Sony Station site and Time Warner through its Pathfinder site, are aiming to build entertainment destinations on the Internet based on their own established properties and brand names.

Well-recognized brands and properties within the same corporation do not automatically belong together on the same site, according to Chowdhury.

“It ultimately confuses the consumer,” she says. “The entertainment industry might want to take notice of what is happening with the online game sites, which are not placing their bets with content that comes from a single company.”

The Internet game business still faces difficulties getting off the ground due to technology, consumer, and business roadblocks. But until 1999 will the new genre truly flourish, with an estimated $540 million in revenues. Though a few companies have gone under, others eventually emerge as a small but profitable business on the Internet. The majority of online gaming will be free to Web users and advertiser-supported, according to Chowdhury.

BRETT ATWOOD

Gaming Sites May Be Good Web Role Models

Licensed Content Boosts Browser Draw, Says Study

LOS ANGELES—Music, film, and television companies that want to establish a strong, successful World Wide Web presence might want to take a cue from the content development strategies of some online gaming sites, such as Microsoft’s Internet Gaming Zone, Mpath’s MPLayer, and SegaSoft’s HEAT—all of which rely on licensed properties from third parties for the bulk of their Internet-delivered content, according to a report by Forrester Research’s recently launched Entertainment and Technology Strategies service.

The report indicates that few Web surfers are about to squander their leisure time at Web sites that contain content springing from a single corporation.

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WAL-MART BEERS UP ITS ONLINE RETAILING

MORE WAL-MART MUSIC ONLINE: Mass merchant Wal-Mart is getting more aggressive with its electronic music retail efforts. The retailer’s World Wide Web site (http://www.walmart.com), which has only offered a few new and catalog music titles in the past, adds 7,000 more releases in mid-March. Many sell for as low as $11.88, and some include exclusive premiums. For example, those who buy the T-Bag by “The Preacher’s Wife” receive a free six-CD travel case.

Wal-Mart is also selling online its exclusive six-track Aerosmith disc, “Made In America,” for $5.96.

NEW ECD TECHNOLOGIES DEBUT: New York-based Kelly Music & Entertainment Corp. has unveiled an enhanced (ECD) technology, known as ECD-Maker, that allows record companies to create Web-linked ECDs with minimal disruption to the normal CD production process.

BITS ’N BYTES: Atlantic Records singer/songwriter Jewel is the subject of a six-part Web series running on the music site Mediadome (http://www.mediadome.com). The interactive program will focus on Jewel’s life and music using Internet video and audio technologies and will conclude with a Friday (4) Web cast of the last stop on her current concert tour in San Diego...Starwave Corp.’s entertainment site Mr. Showbiz has spun off a music-themed site for kids called Sound, at http://www.wallsofsound.com. The site contains weekly reviews of new releases, as well as music news and a large database of artist biographies...Erik Flannigan, former managing editor of the music journal Jive, is editor of the site.

Game video software sales grew 14% to $2 billion in 1996, according to a new study by the Interactive Entertainment Software Assoc. Personal computer entertainment software sales also grew 19% to $1.7 billion in 1996. The Interactive Artists & Record International has launched “Big Shot,” a Web-based game about climbing the corporate ladder in Hollywood (http://www.speccy.com/bughead).

7-Up is using Headspace’s Beatin’ software in its newly revamped Web site (http://www.7up.com). The site gives consumers a new twist on the commercial jingle “It’s An Up Thing,” including grunge, jungle, and deep house mixes...N2K, the makers of the Internet music site allstar, has acquired the MusicNet Internet music site allstar. The site will remain at its existing address (http://www.allstarmag.com), but will also be integrated into a revamped version of N2K’s rock-themed site Rocktopia, designed for debut this summer.
DVD’s Slow Entry Discussed At ITA
Rupert Murdoch Accused Of Holding Up Fox
BY SETH GOLDSTEIN
TUCSON, Ariz.—Is Rupert Murdoch the Great Delay of DVD? He appears so to Warner Home Video.
At the 27th annual seminar of the International Recording Media Ass’n (ITA), held March 19-23 here, Warner DVD director John Powers said that Murdoch was the individual responsible for keeping 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment from releasing DVD titles. Fox is one of four studios that have decided not to join Warner and Columbia TriStar in the spring launch of the format.
Murdoch has the authority, as chairman of 20th-Century Fox parent News Corp., and Powers says he has the motive: digital broadcast services (DBS). Participating on an ITA panel, Powers said that Murdoch plans to dominate Satellite-delivered DBS and will brook no competition from terrestrial digital ventures like DVD.
“He wants to be king of the sky,” Powers told Billboard afterward. “He’s trying to kill our business.”
The business is brand-new, so new that Powers and other proponents of DVD at ITA agreed that sales of players and software can’t be judged as indicative of market demand until the end of the year. By then, they hope that some or all of the studio holdouts will be on board, prompted in part by pressure from consumers, retailers, and even the trade press.
Otherwise, there’s concern that the movie-hungry format will starve to death in the midst of accelerated demand. At ITA, Jay Rosenfeld, publisher of Video magazine, a favorite of early adopters, delivered the results of a June 1996 survey in which 68% of respondents said they planned to buy a DVD player in the next two years. “It’s a very high number,” even for Video readers, Rosenfeld said.
Only 16% saw a lack of software as a purchasing obstacle. But that was then, Rosenfeld cautioned. When Video repeats the survey in June, he expects that percentage to increase significantly. Nevertheless, there’s little indication that the studio holdouts will change their minds anytime soon.
David Goldstein, retiring senior VP of operations and administration for Fox Home Entertainment and an ITA regular, said that Fox remains skeptical that DVD proponents have fully solved the problem of copy protection, which helped scuttle the 1996 launch. Goldstein shrugged off Powers’ remark about Murdoch as irrelevant. “Rupert has broad shoulders,” he responded.
Unlike Universal Studios Home Video, Fox isn’t demanding copyright legislation as well. But Goldstein was adamant during the seminar that the studio remained far from a DVD release schedule, even correcting Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Ass’n. president Gary Shapiro. During his address, Shapiro mentioned Fox as one of several companies “ready to sell the hardware and software.”
“Sure,” Universal and Paramount have similar concerns, and the likelihood voiced several weeks ago by Sony Entertainment’s executive VP Vera Foss that one or two would release DVD titles this spring is fading. Optical media consultant Geoffrey Tully thinks that companies are right to worry about copy protection.
A year ago, Hollywood and the computer industry, which generally likes software users swapping programs, were at loggerheads over DVD restrictions. Tully says that the issue still isn’t settled, although both sides came to a broad understanding late last year, the green light for the 1997 launch.
Commenting on the start, stop, and start again activities of the past 18 months, Tully observes, “DVD has developed every mistake of the previous formats and invented a few of its own. It’s chaotic.”
The current rollout can’t be stopped, but it could stall in the seven markets where Warner has shipped its first 32 titles (including MGM and New Line Home Video releases). Powers repeatedly emphasized to ITA attendees that distribution would not widen until other studios began shipping. And decisions can’t be postponed much longer. “The window is narrowing” on third-quarter introductions, Powers said. With commitments, “we’ll quickly go to national distribution.”
If the rest of the retailers stay away while demand grows, Warner would be content with those pockets of DVD prosperity. Meanwhile, Powers continued, the studio is holding plans to introduce X-12 titles a month, many of them “hot new movies” released day and date with the cassette edition.
Powers echoed what Warner Home Video president Warren Lieberfarb stated at the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers convention in Orlando.
(Continued on page 70)
MVP Short Cuts in On 'Sling Blade' Interest

SOME FOLKS CALL IT A HIT: The small movie that inspired the Academy Award-winning "Sling Blade" is pulling in some big orders for special interest vendor MVP Home Entertainment and a new independent.

Titled "Some Folks Call It A Sling Blade," the 42-minute short was created by "Sling Blade" writer, star, director, and Oscar winner Billy Bob Thornton as a way to lure investors into funding the movie. The script Thornton won the Oscar March 24 for best adapted screenplay, Miramax Films acquired distribution rights to the movie before it was completed. Blue Vail, Home Video, which will distribute "Sling Blade," a video in July, declined to comment on the short.

About half of it is an extended version of the chilling monologue delivered by the character named Carl, played by Thornton in the movie. Molly Ringwald plays the stunned newspaper reporter listening to Carl's story about how, as a youth, he killed his brother and her young lover with a sling blade. J.T. Walsh plays a fellow prison inmate. The rest of the $24,95 tape consists of behind-the-scenes footage of the filming of the short and interviews with cast and crew. It was directed by George Hickox, who also helped "Hearts Of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse." MVP got the film from video.com, a 2-year-old supplier based in Charlotte, Mich.

"It's a fanatic and like working with filmmakers I admire," says video.com president Steve Noftel, a former foreign film buyer for Blockbuster Video. (Noftel also opened Blockbuster's first store in Dallas back in 1987.)

"Some Call It A Sling Blade," as well as another 1,000 shorts, came to Starfile from Picture Start, a former Chicago video supplier turned post-production house. Starfile worked at Picture Start following its Blockbuster start.

Although video.com has distributed a number of shorts, including "Animia: For Fallen Catholcs," its "Sling Blade" is putting the company on the map.

MVP director of sales Kim Sullivan, a former colleague of Starfile's, says Blockbuster has ordered 20,000 units of the title, about four times the total for video.com's average release. "This is the first release for video.com, and it's got fewer than 100 units. Other chains picking up "Some Folks Call It A Sling Blade" include Trans World Entertainment, The Video Room, Hollywood Video, according to Starfile.

The short has been shown at more than 40 film festivals and has been airing on the Sundance Channel. About four other cable channels are interest- ing in it, and about three international channels are also looking at it. On the reality video front, MVP is also rushing out "North Hollywood Shootout: Terror in L.A." a 30-minute compilation on the Feb. 28 confrontation between the Los Angeles Police Department and two heavily armed bank robbers.

Produced by MVP, the $34.95 video includes news footage as well as interviews with eyewitnesses and officers who took part in the gun battle, Ringald says. To date, 70,000 units have been ordered, 30,000 from Blockbuster alone, she says. A 200,000-unit order will be donated to the LAPD. MVP distributed the "Cop" series before producer Barbour/Langley formed its own label.

Sullivan says MVP is hot pursuit of other reality-based productions. "Our goal is to watch for what's trendy and hot, jump on it, and put it out on tape.

PLAYMATES ON DVD: Playboy Video has signed an exclusive licensing deal with Image Entertainment to distribution Playboy product on DVD. The first title is in the May release "Hollywood Playmate Of The Year." Playboy's DVD titles will sell for $19.95.

Although most suppliers have opted not to license DVD rights to outside parties, Playboy senior VP GM Barry Leiszla says cost consideration prompted the deal. "For us, we get the best of both worlds," he says. "There's no risk for the authoring of the product, and we get to be in this at the beginning. It's like being a big fish in a small pond." Leiszla says the cost of making a DVD master can run $10,000-$20,000, as opposed to a few hundred dollars for a tape master. Image will release 30 Playboy titles a year, including "The Best Of Jenny McCarthy" and "The Best Of Pamela Anderson.

DAY IN COURT: Fox Lorber Associates continues to diversify, this time signing a partnership deal with Court TV.

Under the exclusive distribution agreement, Fox Lorber will sift through Court TV's programming and develop video releases. The tapes will be released through Fox Lorber's WinStar Home Entertainment, its newly formed reality-based label.

First up for release is Court TV's "Trial Story," a one-hour documentary highlighting a single trial. Other programs slated for home video release include "Washington Watch," "Justice Today," "Miller's Law," "Primetime Justice," and "Supreme Court rulings.

Court TV has previously released video compilations of the D.J. Simpson and Menendez brothers murder trials through MHP Video and Home Video.

Fox Lorber, best known for distributing foreign movies and classics, has branched out to take advantage of the reality trend. Meanwhile, it ended its two-year distribution relationship with Metromedia Entertainment Group, Home Video, to take sales and marketing operations back in-house.

SHELF TALK by Eileen Fitzpatrick

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A police officer. The coalition's scala: Tuanebaum says the coalition's criteria, but not as universally fun to watch as may have lesser production values. A Qualified Endorsement meets the criteria but contains material that is not heartily approved of. Wherever possible, the Kids First! directory states what is objectionable about a program. For example, following the blur synopsis of "There Goes A Police Car" is a cautionary comment: "slapstick approach to the attitude toward police officers."

"The ABC's Of Teaching ABC's," the review notes, "Parents as teachers is an important concept. The strain in the interaction between parent and child concerned viewers."

In general, the Kids First! directory is one of the best sources of information about kids' media as well as a helpful evaluation tool.

Tannenbaum says the coalition's ability to disseminate valuable information is about to expand via an upgraded World Wide Web site, which can be accessed through www.cqcm.org. Listings soon will be on a continuing basis. "We're setting up a searchable database," she adds, "so that if a parent of a 3-year-old wants to find age-appropriate dance videos, all the parent has to do is type in 'dance,' and all applicable titles will come up. And since space is unlimited online, all jurors' comments can be listed." Tannenbaum says the searchable database should be up and running "hopefully in a couple of months."

The Kids First! directory is available for a $5 donation to the coalition. The toll-free order number is 888-319-KIDS; when the operator asks for the
CHILD’S PLAY (Continued from preceding page)

A RTHUR IS KING: Random House Home Video is back in stores with the sensational new PBS animated television series “Arthur” based on the best-selling books (more than 8 million copies sold in the U.S.) by Marc Brown. The series is "Arthur’s Eyes," "Arthur's Interlude," "Arthur Writes a Story," and "Arthur Helps a Friend" as well as "Arthur’s Winter Vacation." Arthur is an aardvark who is bespectacled every day — except when attending a grade-schooler. The TV series, with its striking animation and watercolor backgrounds, perfectly captures the spirit of the books.

"In Arthur’s Eyes," the hero needs glasses but hates the idea of wearing them. "Arthur's Pet Supermarket" stresses that pet owners must assume responsibility, as Arthur attempts to start his own business. This title's second episode features Arthur’s popular kid sister, D.W., in "D.W. The Copy Cat." In "Arthur Writes A Story," the artwork gets a little carried away with the imagination when assigned a school writing project.

A national marketing campaign includes advertising in Parenting magazine and point-of-purchase materials, including poster, shelf, window clings and stickers. Random House Home Video offers a money-saving "Arthur Crazy Value Pack" of four 2-DVD sets (five programs each) for $30. Also available is "Arthur’s Eyes," "Arthur’s Interlude," "Arthur Helps a Friend" — the first three titles on one DVD — for $19.95. A fourth title, "Arthur’s Winter Vacation," is scheduled for later this year.

DO’S AND DON’TS (Continued from page 67)

Arthur Vollmer, Home Video Distributor for Calvary Chapel Church in Honolulu, has this advice to parents who want to buy home video products for their kids:

- Do keep your eyes and ears open for kids’ video offerings. Some parents think in terms of books, but a variety of options are available to children. Avid parents should be aware of what’s available for their particular child (whether girls or boys) and make sure he or she gets a good introduction to the medium by selecting a title that is tailored to that child’s interests.

- Do take the time to read and understand any back-of-the-box information, and the parents guide. In this way, you can ensure that your children aren’t exposed to inappropriate material.

- Do start small when it comes to children’s videos. Avoid giving children a weekly allowance that they can spend on videos. Instead, buy a video from time to time as a reward for good behavior. This way, you can have a closer look at each video before it goes into the family home.

- Don’t be afraid to introduce children to TV shows. While the internet is a wonderful tool, there are many TV shows that parents can enjoy with their children. This way, you can have a chance to talk about the show and its themes with your child.

- Don’t let children watch videos on their own. Instead, make sure you are present when they are viewing a video, or at least sit with them while they watch. This way, you can discuss the video’s content with your child and offer your own perspective.

- Don’t let children watch videos for too long. Instead, limit their viewing time to a maximum of 30 minutes per day. This way, you can ensure that your children are getting enough exercise and spending enough time outside.

- Don’t let children watch videos while they are eating. Instead, make sure they are eating a healthy meal before they watch a video. This way, you can ensure that your children are getting the nutrients they need.

- Don’t let children watch videos while they are in bed. Instead, make sure they are sleeping soundly before they watch a video. This way, you can ensure that your children are getting the rest they need.

- Don’t let children watch videos while they are engaged in other activities. Instead, make sure they are focused on the video they are watching. This way, you can ensure that your children are learning from the video they are watching.
**COUNTRY**

**CINDY CHURCH**

PRODUCER: Mike Wilkinson, Nathan Tinkham

Stony Plain 1235

Cindy Church has effectively become the interpretative, underated voice of sweet, vague, romantic yearnings. On this outing, she sings some very good songs penned by such writers as herself, Gillian Welch, Sunny Slyde, Ian Tyson, Paul Kenyon, and Waylon Holyfield. Duet partners include Ian Tyson, Billy Cowell, and Amos Garrett. She sings it with the overlord Billy Swan classic “Lover Please.”

**JACK INGRAM**

Lyle’l Of Dyne

Producers: Lyle’l, Todd Oldham & Ray Kennedy

Title 53046

High-seven Texas Jack Ingram may well be, as label Ken Levitan claims, the link between the college market and mainstream country. In recent years, he has turned heads as he sold thousands of his homemade CDs to his loyal college audiences. This set reflects the high-energy, rough-edged enthusiasm of his sold-out club dates. Ingram is a talented writer and singer in the Steve Earle mode, and you can also hear a lot of the young Waylon Jennings in him, but finally, he’s very much his own man. This time, he’s the ultimate anti-hit act.

**WILLIE NELSON**

Yesterday’s Wine

PRODUCER: Paul Laine

Justice 1605

This is vintage Willie, from his cosmic pre-Outlaw days when he was getting into concept albums. This 1971 RCA outing predicted and previewed his later landmark albums “Phases And Shades” and “Redheaded Stranger.” Here, he strings together such classic Nelson compositions as “Family Bible,” “Me And Paul,” and the title cut for a coherent, cohesively familiar, coherently spiritual rebirth and redemption. The spoken intro is anything but pretty heard on a country album, and, come to think of it, this is likely the only thing you’ve ever heard on a country album, and, come to think of it, this is likely the only thing you’ve ever heard on a country album. Here’s the phrase “syrupy sympathetic,”

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**LATIN**

**LA FIERA**

Amor Tejano

PRODUCER: Jean Guadagnoli

BMG/RCA 4688

Though its nice package is mostly of romantic muchacho trends on familiar musical turf, this boasts notably bridges similar synergisms of cumbia and reggae with gently soaring love song “Si Ya No Estas,” “Polo pescak” “Ley Te Amare” and “Por Mi Cartelito” are solid populist hits.

**KAHAB**

La Calle De Las Siestas

PRODUCER: Naco Ponce

Peregrino 35417

A likable debut by the attractive mixed-gender vocal sextet contains upbeat popish tunes that are all the rage in its native Mexico. The act’s singer possesses capable on such entry as titles the trio “Amanecer,” “Amanecer,” “Pero Una Noche” and “Mi Corazon”

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**CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN**

**WES KING**

Miles Wilkinson, Nathan Tinkham

Bob Day/WMG 73011

Fundamentally, gangsters are the executors of the downturns and the downturns, making money off their failings, flaws, and addictions. They build in simplicity and pseudo-respect the desperate communities they claim to represent. They promote a myth of power when in reality they are merely temporary scams (like a fly lifestyle financed with an unencumbered record deal) that they scramble to sustain. “Let the guns blow,” belows B.I.G. in this self-hating circus of death, objectification, and defeat. “Life After Death” is a hypocritical counterpart to the “Stop The Gunfight” album on which he also appears, and his prime audience includes suburban preadolescents who buy into its wealth and manipulation of kids and youths. The pre-release murder of B.I.G. seemed a premeditated sleight, i.e., a deed ordered by organized crime rather than more poisonous role-playing. A sad waste of time, this record also confirms a woeful lack of life and talent.

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COUNTRY

SUMMARY KERSHAM  Fit To Be Dead Down [1:22]
PRODUCER: Keith Stigg
WRITERS: Lawrence Gadski, Scott Stitt
PUBLISHERS: Starlight Amour Music of Los, BMI
Mercury 135a (video) (CD single)

Country's current singles are looking for a way to communicate an idea or a concept—and when Van Weeble and Creative Vision Records approached me with this theme about a man ready to commit to a relationship, Kersham's

GARY ALLAN From Where I'm Sitting [3:51]
PRODUCERS: Mark Weary, Dewayne HI
WRITERS: Brad Bynum, K. West
PUBLISHERS: Maybelle Byway, ASCAP
Decca 72002 (7" single)

As usual, the standard format and a distinctive voice are quickly distinguishing Allan from the rest of the hat pack of male performers. Particularly strong is the title cut, a song that truly captures the reality of the place. The second single from the soundtrack to "Boo Daddy/T -Boy, ASCAP; EMI

JEAN MICHEL JARRE Oxygen B [3:35]
PRODUCER: Jean-Michel Jarre
WRITERS: Jean-Michel Jarre
PUBLISHERS: Ode, CD Masters (EMI) (cassette single)

Oxygen is the second single from JARRE's new album, a softer, more caustic previous single from his last album, "Barbel Of A Gun." In fact, this is the single that led to his first major chart hit, "Do You Like My Tight Sweater?"

ALFONZO HUNTER Weekend Thang [3:41]
PRODUCERS: Dr. Easam, A. Hunter
WRITERS: Esaem Sherman, Ervinights, ASDAP
PUBLISHERS: Babydol Entertainment, ASDAP
Mercury 134996 (7" single)

Kris Tyler is best known for his well-received single "Love, Love, Love," a Top 20 dance hit for Pete Rock & CL Smooth. Perkiss is a promising, highly venerated songwriter who has seen his music used in various films, television shows, and popular culture. His voice is a perfect fit for this type of music, and his performance is excellent. The song has a catchy chorus, a strong beat, and a great melody. Her voice is as distinctive as her music is. On the back of the "hot band's" potential debut album, "Gravity, Suffering, Love & Hate."

MOLORD Fun For Me [3:41]
PRODUCERS: Wayne, K. Murphy
WRITERS: Bruce, Hollis, Smith, Easam
PUBLISHERS: After Pup, EMI

NEW \& NOTEWORTHY

Stone, subtle splashes of blues, a rush of build-up and tear-down, a call to arms, and a powerful message. The song is a call to action, a reminder that we must stand up against injustice and fight for what is right. It is a call to remember that change is possible, and that by working together, we can make a difference. The song is a testament to the power of music, and its ability to bring people together in the fight for justice.

& B

Up next from the hugely successful soundtrack to "Halloween: Part III," is an assailing groove-metal ditty with the leader of Wolfie The Zombie. The guitars are driven by a hammering bass line that is impossible to sit through. The song's cutting-edge production and co-production, which is focused on the theme of "vitality and hope for the future." The focus is on Dave Gahan's form performance and Martin Gore's sensitivity.

& F

PO-M全北 dijo (cassette single)

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& RAP

B-ROCK & THE BIZZ mbhaybaddy [3:14]
PRODUCERS: Tony McElroy, Baron "B-Boy" Age, Kaye, Aage
WRITERS: L. Age, Aage
PUBLISHERS: Paper Dope, Nk, BMI, R&B, ASCAP
Contemporary 4223 (12" 8

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WRITERS: L. Age, Aage
PUBLISHERS: Paper Dope, Nk, BMI, R&B, ASCAP
Contemporary 4223 (12" 8

Set to a sped-up sample of the Emotions’ "Be My Baby," the rhythm goes in over the catchy ditty, and the track is a perfect fit for a dancefloor. It's a fast-paced, energetic track that will surely get the crowd going. With its catchy beat and dancefloor-friendly hooks, it's sure to become a hit on the dance floor.
SELENA REMEMBERED

60 minutes. $19.98

The big-screen biopic of slain Tejano recording artist Selena, who was murdered in 1995 at age 23, is a window on her personal life, but this video is strictly business. Narrated by Edward James Olmos, who played Selena's father, Abra- ham, in the motion picture, the video documents her rise to stardom, the elevation of Latin music, and, in a broader sense, the Latino culture. Told through a series of concert and family footage, videos from many of her clips, and interviews with Selena, family members, and colleagues, the video storylines as a photo album. The walk down memory lane starts from Selena's childhood in small Texas towns and leads her to her place in the Grammy stage. Musically inspired and personally inspiring, "Selena: Remembered" is one of the best documentaries about a rising star, because it is told in large part through her own words.

CHILDREN'S ENCHANTED TALES: ANASTASIA

Story by Dona Tuisaut

48 minutes. $9.98

A Russian princess with a knock for stumbling into trouble is the protagonist in this animated story that weaves together adventure, romance, and a little bit of world history. As the daughter of Czar Nicholas, young Anastasia is haphazardly leading the life of a idle rich when her world is suddenly turned upside-down by a conquering fellow named Rasputin, who intends to befrend the royal family but is secretly planning the czar's demise. A roller coaster drama and disaster film, the film twists and turns. Story highlights include an attempted lynch mob, lovers on the run, and a evil but relatively unintimidating Rasputin. The film may be a little oversimplified for younger viewers, but kids will enjoy the story about Anastasia and her identity crisis.

HOW TO BE A BALLERINA

Story by Dona Tuisaut

45 minutes. $9.98

There have been lots of kids' videos inspired by sundry ballets that feature characters who are ballerinas. This live-action take takes a different approach, providing a literal living room dance lesson. In the same vein as most adult exercise videos, the kids "insiders" leads an onscreen class through various warm-up and dance segments while speaking to viewers at home. Originally released in the U.K. under the Carlton Home Entertainment banner, "Ballerina" provides a chance for children to learn the arts of "Sleeping Beauty" characters from the Enchanted Garden Fairy to the Songbird Fairy to the Wicked fairy and others via relatively unintimidating moves. The music is accompaniment by beautiful music.

DOCUMENTARY

SOME FOLKS CALL IT A SLING BLADE

Dir. Jeff Rytting

42 minutes. $24.95

The account of guitarist, director, and star Billy Bob Thornton has created one of film's most memorable characters with "Sling Blade." The character is a flamboyant, promiscuous showgirl who is a likable, albeit less than sophisticated, character. In one scene, Selena's sister, the drummer in her band, stops for lunch served by a young Mexican girl. The song on the radio goes back to her sister screaming, "We're No. 1, we're No. 1." But at this point, Selena hasn't been seen recording an album, and how she and her band got to the top of the charts is a mystery.

SELENA

Starring Jennifer Lopez, Edward James Olmos, Jon Seda, Constance Marie
Directed by Gregory Nava
Warner Bros.

In many ways, "Selena" treats the life of the slain Tejano singer star like a magical fairy tale full of bright smiles, laughter, and plenty of Kodak moments. What this movie is all about is the story is all style and no substance. The style in "Selena" is Jennifer Lopez, who is an artful visual presentation captures the singer's look and charisma. In a touching tribute at the end of the film featuring Selena concert footage, it's difficult to tell the two apart. Lopez clearly did her homework.

Selena's life story, meteoric career rise, and tragic death should have provided the filmmakers with plenty of material. However, director Gregory Nava has chosen to ignore most of the elements that make star biopic compelling. One of the things that Nava chose to ignore was Selena's struggle to succeed. Throughout the film, Selena never faces rejection. She also never steps foot inside a record company or radio station or record store. In one scene, Selena's sister, the drummer in her band, stops for lunch served by a young Mexican girl. The song on the radio goes back to her sister screaming, "We're No. 1, we're No. 1." But at this point, Selena hasn't been seen recording an album, and how she and her band got to the top of the charts is a mystery.

The film gives Selena's father, Abraham Quintanilla Jr., played by Edward James Olmos, credit as the driving force behind her career. (He authorized the film and also serves as an executive producer.) Because his career as a crossover singer was quashed 20 years earlier, Quintanilla decides to push Selena, her sister, and her brother into the music business after hearing Selena sing her first notes as a child. As he explains the names of the Dinero, after his failed group and opens a restaurant to give them a place to sing. He even teaches Selena to sing in Spanish so she can gain the acceptance he never found. After the restaurant fails, he sells the family's house, moves in with relatives, and at last costs keeps Selena touring.

Although exhibiting a rather gruff and controlling manner, Olmos plays Quintanilla as a caring father who was only concerned with his daughter's well-being. In return, she totally adores her father, even after a brief snub in which he forbids her to marry her guitar player, Chris Perez. On screen, Quintanilla is concerned about letting his little girl grow up, not about letting her become powerful. When Nava leaves out many important plot points, the biggest omission is Selena's relationship with Yolanda Saldivar (Lape Olni- veros), the woman convicted of killing her in 1995. She is introduced almost as an afterthought late in the film, and it is never clear how Saldivar got close to Selena. In fact, she is given fewer than five scenes.

Overall, "Selena" is a mediocre film. It didn't want to re-create the actual killing, but choosing not to give some explanation about why it happened is a fatal error. Like the rest of this flawed film, it just sort of hap- pened. Although a lot of pieces of Selena's life are missing from this bio, her fans will rejoice in seeing Lopez re-enact the best moments of her life. The soundtrack album from EMI Latin debuted at No. 20 on the Billboard 200 for the week ending March 29, proving that the memory of Selena remains a powerful force in the music industry.

ELLEN FITZPATRICK

REVIEWS & PREVIEWS

The "Sling Blade" film, the success of 1996, was a rare success in both critical and box office and has translated into the audio format by Disney. Now Simon & Schuster has followed suit with the audiobook series, "Ghosts Of Fear Street," on audiotape. Children will enjoy this live-action dramatisation in which two kids find a bottle with a genie who grants them three wishes. The kids use their wishes to get revenge on the neighborhood bullies. Not only do the wishes backfire (as expected), but the genie turns out to have some evil plans of his own. Broadway actor Tony Rizzo does a fine job as the voice of the genie, giving him a humorous, almost Jackie Mason-ish voice as he gapes about being trapped in a crampot bottle for a century.

GODDIE TO BERLIN

Billboard 205/555 Wishbone Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90025

Read By Alan Cumming
Penguin Audiobooks

2 hour unabridged. $16.95

This sharp, insightful collection of sto- ries, set in the play "I Am A Camera" and the musical "Cabaret," is an Englishman living in 1930s Berlin who is suddenly captured by the city's decadent, gaudy atmosphere, which falsely covers the increasing anti-Semitism of the time. Though Alan Cumming does a fine job portraying the colorful cast of characters, including Cabaret's main character, is an amusing and hilarious experience.

R.L. STINE'S GHOSTS OF FEAR STREET: THREE EVIL WISHE

By R. L. Stine

Performed by a half dozen actors
Simon & Schuster Audio

1 hour abridged. $7.95

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(Continued on page 76)
Casey Kasem: A Constant On An Ever-Shifting Dial

By Chuck Taylor

Undeterred by format trends and as much a presence in 1997 as 1970, Casey Kasem is an enigma in an industry where air personalities change stations, markets, formats, even their names with the wind.

Two years ago this May, the corporate-deemed “King of the Countdowns” – who originated “American Top 40” and its current weekly “Casey’s Top 40” and AC Hot AC sisters – celebrated his 25th anniversary in a business that has brought not only fame and fortune, but TV roles and more than 100 cartoon and commercial voiceovers. On a personal level, he has constructed a platform from which to devotedly serve a series of causes, from social justice to vegetarianism to the ills of smoking.

Kasem is a member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences; has a star on Hollywood Boulevard; has co-hosted Jerry Lewis’ annual Labor Day Telethon for the Muscular Dystrophy Assn. since 1981, and is a perennial air personality winner at the Billboard/Airplay Monitor Radio Awards. This year, he will host the annual awards ceremony Oct. 18 at the Orlando (Fla.) Renaissance Resort.

“I look forward to doing this probably until the day I die,” Kasem says of his signature countdown shows. “With the freshness of the music and telling the stories, you really have a new show every week. Here, I have this marvelous opportunity to speak to millions of people. I would like to think I can inspire them, educate them, and warm them, and get to know them through their words. If not, what’s my legacy to the world?”

Pro Baseball Kasem?

There was a time, of course, when Kasem’s legacy was not only unfulfilled, but uncertain. He originally dreamed of playing pro baseball, then worked successfully as a dramatic radio actor. The DJ bug, however, bit early and bit hard.

His first trips to the mike began in the late 1940s as a sportscaster with the Northwestern High School radio club in Detroit, where he grew up as Kemal Amen Kasem. That experience accelerated into an unpaid dramatic-actor intern position with WJDT, the Detroit public school system’s radio station. Kasem, while a student at Wayne State University, then worked his way up to his first paid gig in radio: as an usher for a quiz program on WXYZ Detroit. While there, he convinced the director of a number of radio shows to let him audition for character roles.

“I started out with a show called ‘Challenge Of The Yukon’ and then two or three other shows that came out in Detroit,” he recalls. “It was one of the capitals of dramatic radio for many years, going back to the 1960s.”

The Korean War then took Kasem far from home, during which he coordinat ed and acted in radio dramas on the Armed Forces Network. In 1954, he returned to radio drama in Detroit and, within two years, began his first full-time DJ gig at WJHK Detroit—which Kasem regards as the true beginning of his radio career. He followed with DJ stints in Cleveland; Buffalo, N.Y.; and, by 1962, Oakland, Calif.

Like many jocks of the day, Kasem employed a lot of comedy on the air—self-scripted bits with improvised characters and quickly paced sound effects—a far cry from the laid-back, more interpersonal vibe that has kept “Casey Kasem” a part of the nation’s vernacular for the past 25 years.

In 1963, he landed a shift in the nation’s No. 2 radio market at KRLA Los Angeles. Unfortunately, in time, his PD frowned upon his sketches. When two of his fellow on-air comic Djs were canned, pride went to battle with practicality as Kasem searched for a way to save his hide. On one hand, he knew he was being asked to be a “time, temp, and weather” man. But he also recognized that wasn’t enough for him.

One Man’s Trash ...

In a tale that has become legend, a frustrated and anxious Kasem, 30 minutes before beginning his evening air shift, flung from a trash can a magazine called “Who’s Who in Pop Music,” which contained trivia about hit music artists. He began leading into songs with his teasers then introducing records with stories about the artists and their songs. In that instant, not only was a job saved, but the engaging formula behind what would become “American Top 40” was born.

It was around this time that Kasem’s star began its high-profile ascension. As one of L.A.’s radio luminaries, he became friends with the men behind many of radio’s most enduring names.

“The magic of Casey is that he is the ultimate professional in whatever he does,” says renowned radio and TV personality Gary Owens, who met Kasem in the mid-60s. “I’ve said it before: He enlightens, he explores, he provokes, and he informs.” The pair worked together in the early 1980s for a UNICEF radio drama that aired annually on Halloween. Other acts included Orson Welles, Lynn Redgrave, and June Lockhart.

Sharing the fond regard is veteran radio personality and game-show host Mustached and permed for the ‘70s, Kasem is pictured here during the early years of his “American Top 40.”

Extraordinary Wink Martindale, who also met Kasem some 30 years ago. “He may well be one of a kind because he has always been such a stickler for details,” he says. “In those early days, before he had any staff, Casey went to great pains not to give a false fact. As a result, he really made a niche for himself, which made him famous. He really is America’s record-keeper and one of the nicest, gentlest people I’ve known in this or any other business.”

By the turn of the decade, Kasem saw a future for counting down the hits, incorporating with the songs his anecdotes and trivia about the artists. He approached Watermark Inc. (purchased by ABC in 1982), which bit so quickly that a deal was inked in two weeks. On July 4, 1970, with a half-dozen stations on board, “XT 40” and its host, Casey Kasem, began their historic four-hour weekly countdown.

“Here I was, this radio and television radio personality who had started out on dramatic shows, just waiting to explode because of all the experience I had from the time in Detroit,” he says. “It all happened beautifully.”

Now, as then, Kasem remains focused on his audience, offering at least one formidable explanation for his longevity: Since the first “XT 40,” Kasem has visualized in his mind’s eye an unchanging portrait of a sort of everyman.

(Continued on next page)
Adult Contemporary

Casey Kasem: A Constant on an Ever-Shifting Dial

As host of “America’s Top 10” during the 1980s, Kasem integrated the formals of the new video era into his renowned countdown.

If I don’t like one, I just don’t play it. There’s nothing wrong with me, because people are out there spending their dollars and buying half a million copies. A message is being delivered by some kind, and people are wanting to pay for it, let us tell them something.

Even so, Kasem acknowledged, he was “in the spotlight” when Kasem’s record company, which was owned by a group of investors, including Kasem himself, asked him to leave the program. Kasem said he was “in the spotlight” because he had recently changed his allegiance from Kasem Records to Kasem Records, Inc., which was owned by the same group of investors.

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Erasure Reasserts Its Pop Savvy In The U.S. With Its Maverick Bow, ‘Cowboy’

NEW YORK—Perhaps nothing could have been more fitting than Erasure opening its March New York appearance with the hit “A Little Respect,” a suitable mantra for the enduring British pop synth duo’s consistently spunky success in the U.S.

Over Erasure’s 12-year run, lead singer Andy Bell and keyboard composer Vince Clarke have recorded 11 albums and 24 consecutive U.K. top 20 hits on indie Mute Records, scored their first No. 1 in 1989 with a fawning take off “Take A Chance On Me,” a catchy near-global rebirth of the Swedish band’s popularity, and released their 10th studio album, “Cowboy,” in the U.K. on Mute.

But in the U.S., the pair have jumped from Sire to Elektra to Maverick in just three years, scoring three hits here: the top 20 “Chains Of Love” from 1988, “A Little Respect” in 1989, and “Cowboy,” which cracked the top 20, it quickly dropped off the finicky British single charts. The dance-oriented follow-up there, “Don’t Say Your Love Is Killing Me,” failed to chart.

Researchers from the previous spring’s phase in the U.S. is Maverick’s primary goal for its new album. Terry Anzaldo, the label’s head of promotion, says, “The fact is, these guys write great songs. We hope to build off great airplay of our wonderful live show, as well as the heritage of the band. We want to bring Erasure back where they belong.”

“In My Arms” is a brutal yet spot-on “tribute song,” Thomas Clarke, who took the vocals off of “Cowboy’s” second album, erasure appeared energized by the potential here of their latest project. “It’s quite funny, because right now I feel like such a grown-up man, and you know we’re getting more requests for radio interviews and press than we’ve seen in the last ten years,” Clarke says, and the band’s core act for the station, “I think the timing on the new album and single is really good with rhythm [music] being so popular on top 40 and modern stations. Music is more open to a rhythmic song from Erasure, whereas last year it was Pearl Jam.

“There are songs on this album that we can’t wait to get on the air,” Michaela adds. “There are at least three singles at our fingertips.”

Perhaps that’s because as Erasure approached this project, there was a cohesive mission the pair had in mind. They didn’t set out to make “Cowboy’s” “second album” or a “tribute album.” They wanted to make a real album, a song for song, and the result is a great album.

“Part of the good vibe likely came from the good clean fun both had making ‘Cowboy’,” Clarke adds. “The writing process now is the best part of the whole experience.”

The second single, “A Little Respect,” is a dance-pop song. The album’s title track, “Cowboy,” is a mix of disco and electronic music. “Cowboy” has been described as a “tribute song” by the group. The album’s lead single, “A Little Respect,” was a hit in 1989.

The album’s second single, “Cowboy,” was released in 1992. It was a hit in the U.K. and the U.S., reaching the top 10 in both countries. The album also featured the singles “A Little Respect,” “Chains Of Love,” and “Cowboy.”

Executive Turntable

UP THE LADDER. John Duncan is named PD of KLOS Los Angeles, succeeding Careyl Copeland. Formerly program director of San Diego’s KFMA, Duncan becomes WKTU’s assistant program director. Allen Shaw resurfaces as president/CEO of the new Centennial Broad- casting, formed by the merger of Gray Jr., whose family owned Summit Communications. Their first acquisition is older KQLG Las Vegas.

FORMATS. The Chicago Sun-Times reports that young-end R&B/WEJFM (100 Jams) will play black gospel tunes by WYBA. The station will become a duopoly partner to gospel WYCA, which will move more toward preaching, religious talk, etc. Simulcast partner WEJFM-AM is being sold to Douglas Broadcasting, which is also buying WEJFM’s license.

KQUE-FM Houston flips to modern country, WXTU-FM Philadelphia becomes the hip-hop sports format CROOK. Cross-town KKKK goes to Young Country. One more Alice: American Broadcasting flips country KQXN Reno, Nev., to modern AC as KLCA (Alice @100.9).

STATION SALES. WYTV/WTAE Pittsburgh and WLTQ/WSM-AM Milwaukee, from Hearst Broadcasting Group to SFX, for $38 million.

The executive producer of the film, a self-professed brand of on-air presence, the expression is that on equal stable to radio. But if not, the boys have a tough time with it. But they love, what their dedicated fans want, and what much of the world has come to own on the past decade. The recent remade version of the classic song, "Cowboy," is Clarke’s. We’re in a privileged position, and we’ve had a really good career. Whate’er we will be, will be. Hope- fully, we’ll get more people to listen to our music, but I can’t all go out to con vert the world.”

Billboard: Bitty"; Kentucky Headhunters, "Singin’ The Blues"; Tracey Byrd, "Don’t Take Her Out Tonight"; and Sammy Kershaw, "She’s Not So Beautiful.”

Meanwhile, the “tuned up” campaign hit the air January 24. At the moment, jocks are using the “tuned up” slogan between every record, although Cantrell says they may back off eventually to use it with a great deal of frequency just to get Mood’s move to Nashville made him a logical choice. "We can always use another set of ears turned our way," he says.

But while he says he has nothing against consultants, Cantrell believes that the country industry is resisting fragmentation, and that’s the pre-slogan and the logo with the musical changes has been favorable.

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The Early Years: Tracing Ackerson's Musical Growth

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—Long before Polara became one of modern rock's most talked-about bands, Ackerson's debut album as the band's bassist was already attracting attention for its unique sound and style.

Ackerson's first album, released when he was still in high school, was a garage punk outfit styled as Mr. & Mrs. After the band's success, Ackerson was asked to join the band as a full-time member.

The band's debut album, "Finn," was released on their own SuStones label. "It was a really big deal for Ackerson, who had previously worked with local bands like the Hang Ups and Wallflowers.

Although Ackerson had already achieved success with other projects, he knew Polara was something special. He describes the band's sound as "a crossover between classic pop and Garage punk, with a lot of energy and raw emotion." The band's debut album, "Hi," was released in 1987.

On the road, the band found themselves playing to sold-out crowds and gaining a dedicated following.

Early reviews of Polara's music were positive, with critics praising the band's unique sound and Ackerson's skillful bass playing.

Despite the early success, Ackerson and the band faced several challenges along the way. The band's debut album was met with mixed reviews, and the band struggled to gain widespread recognition.

Nevertheless, Ackerson remained dedicated to the band, working tirelessly to bring Polara's sound to the masses.

In the years following their debut, Polara continued to release albums and tour extensively, building a loyal fan base and gaining critical acclaim.

Ackerson's bass playing was a driving force behind Polara's sound, and his dedication to the band has helped shape it into the unique musical entity it is today.

Acknowledging the band's early struggles, Ackerson says, "It was a real learning experience for us all. We had to work hard to make sure our music reached people, but we never gave up on our dream."

In the years since, Polara has continued to evolve and experiment with different sounds and styles, always staying true to their vision.

Ackerson credits the band's success to the hard work and dedication of each member, as well as the band's ability to stay true to their musical vision.

"We've been through a lot together, but we've never given up on each other," he says. "We've always believed in our music, and that's what has kept us going."

As Polara enters their second decade, Ackerson remains committed to the band and to their musical journey. "We're not done yet," he says. "We have so much more to give, and we're excited to see where this next chapter takes us."
**AUSTRALIA'S SAVAGE GARDEN IS IN BLOOM ON COLUMBIA**

(Continued from page 9)

U.S. airplay long before product was comprised as singles; as a result, its national breakthrough was particularly dramatic.

"Like the song says, the audience wants it. We'll do it," says Frontmen Brian "Jimmet" and John "Back" released last November, reached No. 1. The recently released third single, "Truly Madly Deeply," was most-added in its first week out of the box, according to radio monitor magazine "Billboard.""The vibe's really big for the album already," reports George Davison, manager of Sound World in Newcaste. 

The debut project, recorded in Sydney last June, was produced by Charles Fischer (who worked on debuts by Rodrigo Y Gurras, 1987, and Air Supply and mixed by Los Angeles-based Chris Lord-Alge. The U.S. version will contain a couple of new songs and a few new arrangements of other tracks. "Woodruff's strategy for the home market was to keep the duo-pro-"Woodruff's strategy for the home market was to keep the duo-pro-

**LISA CORTES SUES POLYGRAM**

(Continued from page 6)

rap acts signed to Loose Cannon who still haven't been told is happening to their artists.

Cortes' lawsuit cites several instances in which she says PolyGram denied important information, access, and support. "For example, according to the suit, Cortes heard via press reports that PolyGram's digital sound data system, Poly/Gram, was being negotiated with ASCAP. Cortes says that PolyGram denied her an opportunity to speak with ASCAP, which she claims is critical to establishing fair rates for her future catalog. "We're talking about a quarter of a billion dollars of lost revenue," Cortes says. "We're not just talking about the music industry, we're talking about the company as a whole." Cortes' suit, Cortes says, is not about monetary compensation, but about obtaining fair value for her music. "We want to be able to make a living from our music," Cortes says. "We want to be able to sustain ourselves and our families." Cortes claims that PolyGram has not been transparent in its dealings with her, and that she has not been given adequate information about the company's financial health. "PolyGram has not been open and honest about its business practices," Cortes says. "We want to be able to make a fair and informed decision about our future with the company." Cortes' suit seeks unspecified compensation and punitive damages.

"Cortes' suit seeks unspecified compensation and punitive damages. According to a PolyGram spokesperson, the company is "actively working" to resolve the matter. "We take these allegations very seriously and are committed to resolving them," the spokesperson said. "We are committed to treating all of our artists fairly and with respect." Cortes counters, "At the end of the day, the most important part of this story is about the music. It's about what the music means to the fans." Cortes says that she wants to be able to continue to make music and support her family. "I want to be able to make a living from my music," Cortes says. "I want to be able to support my family and continue to make music that I'm proud of." Cortes claims that PolyGram has not been transparent in its dealings with her, and that she has not been given adequate information about the company's financial health. "PolyGram has not been open and honest about its business practices," Cortes says. "We want to be able to make a fair and informed decision about our future with the company." Cortes' suit seeks unspecified compensation and punitive damages.

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AUSTRALIA'S CD PRICING SAGA LIKELY TO HEAT UP
(Continued from page 4)

skillful lobbying by ARIA officials led the previous Labour government to change its mind on imports, such as the Prices-Supervision Authority's final report said that CDs were overpriced in Australia. That administration had proposed introducing ring-fencing rules from 1984 onward but then deferred the changes, and the following year reversed its original decision. As a result, Australian Senator, Alston called Labor's reversal "a kick to the groin for consumers" and vowed that if the conservative opposition party came to power, it "wouldn't lose its nerve. We will implement overdue recommendations regardless of party control." Such was the preoccupation of one year ago, Alston's meetings with ARIA have been described as "politics." The record companies' group has the backing of a number of ministers in the cabinet. But it has yet to convince Alston or Treasurer Peter Costello, who in 1988 rejected ARIA's original proposal for the price gap between U.S. and Australian records as a result in percentages in tax and royalty payments. Costello argues that CDs imported to Australia would attract the same level of sales tax as those manufactured in Australia. Australia and the Australian Music Retailers Assn. (AMRA) have also targeted Prime Minister John Howard. If his government deregulates the music industry, such as he did with the booksellers, it would hurt the country's 2,000 small record retailers, particularly those in the regional areas. Howard is a champion of small business. "Parallel imports will annihilate small businesses, especially family businesses," says AMRA chairman Barry Bull, who owns and operates one such business himself, Toombal Music, in Toowoomba, Queensland. However, music stores simply won't be able to create the necessary lines of communication and—more importantly—credit with [parallel import] sources overseas.

Bull adds that allowing unrestricted imports into Australia will put 5,000 people out of work in the retail sector, a fact he has stressed in his own meetings with government representatives. He further argues that this will lead to "competing against" on those occasions. The AMRA chief has also written, published, and distributed a booklet, "Small Businesses, Familiarity and the Record Retailer," which gives the prospect of pirate merchandise flooding into the country, he shares the concern of ARIA officials and others.

"How the hell are we going to tell a good one from a dud one?"

Bull does acknowledge that HMV, an AMRA member, appears to be changing its thinking on legitimate parallel imports, which sells a wider range of product to Specto-like actions. A majority of writers have not assumed the personal obligations of making their own foreign to import products, and the government to do so. Many writers also prefer to stay with a song's original publisher. Hence, the original purpose of such publishers retaining foreign publishing rights. At the weeklong hearing, testimony was given by a number of U.S. music publishing figures. Specto testified on its behalf in the Kopac copyright experts, Ed Cramer, the former president of BMI and now an independent copyright attorney, and music industry attorney Alvin Deutsch. Testifying on behalf of EMI Music Ltd., were independent publisher Helene Blue and independent publisher Peter Silver, who offered views on custom and usage per- taining to application of Paragraph 8 of the AMRA agreement. EMI Music's Beebe Bourne, who is based in New York, says, "At this point, Bourne Ltd. is still examining the documents and exercising its options, including an appeal." 

HAROLD MELVIN
(Continued from page 10)

it competed in the venue's amateur hour, winning for five straight weeks. "Standing at the piano, I sold a stink at Vanity, where the group cut "My Hero," which peaked at No. 19 on the R&B singles chart in 1969, and later with Linda Records, where it recorded "Get Out (And Let Me Cry)" in 1965. Seven years later, a retooled Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes signed with Philadelphia International and scored with "I Miss You (Part I)." The song peaked at No. 7 on the Best Selling Soul Singles chart in 1972.

Pendergrass embarked on a solo career in 1976; a year later, Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes signed with ABC Records. In 1979, they began a recording stint with Source Records. In addition to Pendergrass, Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes served as a way station for many artists, such as Sharon Paige, who gained notoriety on "Hope That We Can Be Together Song," which peaked at No. 38 in 1976. Other artists who worked with the group included Billy Paul and Bunny Sigler.

"Harold, who was a good singer himself, also had a talent for choreography," says Huff. "I'll always remember him as a fun person to be around in the studio." Melvin is survived by his wife and five children.

BIKE INKS LICENSING DEAL WITH TMLC
(Continued from page 6)

BMI president/CEO Frances Preston describes the agreement, affecting more than 1,000 TMLC stations, as "generating fees that are more in line with the growing airplay that BMI repertoire has earned on local television, while giving our customers the flexibility to choose the best license for their stations."

Dan Ehrman, co-chairman of TMLC and senior VP of Gannett Broadcasting, says, "We were able to reach a negotiated agreement that provides for favorable blanket license fees for all stations while preserving the stations' ability to control their music license fees through the per-program license." In addition to the fee agreement, BMI and TMLC have decided to conduct a joint music research study of music on local TV. Performance right group SESAC reached its first agreement with BMI in 1993. BMI and SESAC earlier this year, ASCAP had an agreement dating back 18 months.
MARKETER BRINGS MUSIC TO U.S. ETHNIC GROUPS
(Continued from page 1)

Currently, INS is using a bit of reverse psychology to sell Nofeiz's solo album, "Brotherhood Of The Stars," released Feb. 13, to the Irish market. To reach that market, INS is sending copies of the album to specialist "old-time" Irish radio shows on such stations as WPPA Pottsville, Pa. Those are the types of programs and AM stations that are never serviced by labels, Daly says, but that speak directly and forcefully to the desired demographic.

"As a label we have to make people aware of this music, but it is the hardest thing for us to do," says RCA Victor marketing manager (U.S.) Kate Winn. "What they're doing is bridging the gap and telling ethnic distributors and retailers that they have the support of BMG. They help us build credibility." INS also worked extensively with Celtic Heartbeat and Atlantic Records on "Riverdance."

"The best thing about INS is that they don't just do one aspect of a campaign," says Angel product manager Zach Hoeckelmann, who worked with the company on the Sainte-Marie album "Up Where We Belong. "They cover radio, retail, and publicity and are great foundation builders."

Daly and Poirier say it takes more than a good mailing list and multilingual staff to sell records. They also have to understand how each ethnic group conducts business.

For example, Poirier says "The Chinese are very clannish and have loyalty issues. They want to buy product from people that they've been buying from for years. Russians, however, don't want to buy from their own distributors because they want to know it's the real thing."

In dealing with international product, INS fights a constant battle with the massive amount of bootleg product that is available at cheap prices in many of the markets it tries to service.

In most advertising, it is very important to emphasize the quality of the product," says Poirier, "because so many of these communities are used to getting shit.

Different international release patterns can also come into play when preparing a statewide marketing campaign.

In one case, INS advised a label against targeting "Searching," by the London Philharmonic featuring Chinese/Mandarin vocalist Terry Lynn, to the Chinese market because it had already been served to the community through an import distributor. "It really saved the label a lot of money," says Daly.

Understanding the market also helped Angel sell an additional 7,000

(Continued on page 90)

BUycycles to keep an eye on consumers
(Continued from page 1)

The company employs four full-time staffers: one who speaks Russian, one who speaks Spanish, one who speaks French, and one who is an Irish-American. When necessary, the company will bring in hired guns of various back-grounds to work specific projects.

"We've often brought in additional people to be culturally correct for different projects," says Poirier, who spent two years in Paris working in sales for PolyGram Records. Daly also has a music background, having worked as a club DJ in New York and a music buyer for hotel nightclubs.

To date, the company's most notable achievement has been promoting Irish act the Chieftains' RCA Victor release "Santiago" to the Hispanic and Portuguese markets. The hook was playing up the performance of Nofeiz, the bagpiper featured on the album.

The album is No. 6 on the Top World Music Album chart this issue and has sold 60,000 units, according to Sound-Scan.

"Who would have thought a Spanish-speaking audience would want to listen to the Chieftains?" says Daly, "but they're buying it." Galicia is a province in northern Spain that has strong Irish ties. INS researched U.S. demographics and discovered that there are 350,000 Galicians living in the country. The company then set about targeting that population via fliers, mailings, local press, and other means. Because Galicia borders Portugal, that country's U.S. population was also targeted.

Despite the obvious language and cultural barriers, the response to the Chieftains was extensive in the Nofeiz campaign. The company has been working with the band for the past year, from hiring INS to create the plan to releasing the album.

"They're very open about what they want," says Poirier, "and the Chieftains are at the top of my dream list for INS.

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BUycycles to keep an eye on consumers
(Continued from page 1)

centage of music fans are unaware that their favorite artists have new releases available (see page 61).

Online sales, retail pricing, store preferences, listening stations, and purchasing habits based on genre are among the future topics the column will explore. TV viewing habits and media usage among active buyers will also be examined.

BuyCycles will primarily be based on market studies conducted by Strategic Record Research, a joint venture between artist management company the Left Bank Organization and Chicago-based market research firm Strategic Media Research. Strategic Media Research conducts market research for a variety of clients, including radio stations and video channels. Strategic Record Research's data are based on quarterly telephone surveys of 10,000 people ages 12-54, representing a universe of approximately 165 million people at all income levels.

The company has researched consumer buying habits for more than 100 artists since the venture was formed two years ago.

"Billboard is committed to achieving the most comprehensive reporting possible on our industry's changing retail and sales landscape," says Billboard editor in chief Timothy White. "Our readers require it to make sound decisions in a shifting environment, so it naturally becomes a Billboard necessity."

Beyond Records, is headed by Bruce Tenenbaum and will focus on compilations and soundtracks. Its first release is the soundtrack to the movie "The Devil's Own," with music by James Horner ("Braveheart"). The film opened March 26, and the soundtrack will be released Tuesday (1). Horner's score features one song by the Cranberries' Dolores O'Riordan. The label is also releasing an album called "Stone Country" featuring Rolling Stoners songs covered by country artists.

Tenenbaum also oversees the IBV promotion staff, which services the Epithaph, Beyond, and Tommy Boy labels.

Among the artists Left Bank manages are the Bee Gees, Blondie, Deana Carter, the Cranberries, Duran Duran, En Vogue, Hanson, Richard Marx, John Mellencamp, Meat Loaf,莫莉·克瑞, and Tony Toni Tone.

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ATLANTIC'S TIRELESS EFFORTS BREAK SHEIK
(Continued from page 9)
slow build explains the lack of turn on the song.
On Oct. 18, Atlantic spun off its suc-
cess by serving the single to top 40 sta-
tions. Sales were up to 190,000, with
16, Top 40 Airplay Monitor reported
80 stations playing the track.
While "Barely Breathing" appears to be
an acoustic, enganged and healthy
sheep, Shapiro says the song began
to lose its footing at the end of last
year. Shapiro, who recently met with
Atlantic's president, says in part of
the decision to continue working
the single was largely inspired by the
long-sought-after success of Jewel's
first single, which is "Foolish Games."
"We had really hit a wall and thought
we were going to lose 'Barely Breath-
ing,' " says Shapiro. We started to
think that school was going to be a
rent Run Away after the first of the
year but knew it wouldn't be right.
We had learned that in the past we
weren't going to take for no answer.
Sheik performed at a series
of radio Christmas shows and played
an acoustic set at a resort market
during November and December
while Atlantic continued to work the
song.
As a result of Atlantic's steadfast
approach, "Barely Breathing" is still
gaining spins at top 40 and is finally
beginning to show up on modern rock
playlists.
Though "Barely Breathing" ap-
peared to be DOA when it was shipped
to radio last fall, the single has
changed. With its success at top 40 and
triple-A has resuscitated the single at
the format. Such modern rock stations
as WHQT Detroit, WQPS in Philadel-
phia, and WAQZ Cincinnati are all spinning
the track in heavy rotation.
"Today, for the first time in a long
while, Atlantic plans to reserve the track
to modern rock in the next few weeks.
Though Atlantic is still working
"Barely Breathing" at radio, the album's second single, "She Runs
Another track, "Is The Absence Of
Substance," is likely to break the
soundtrack record to "The Saint."
Doug Smith, a senior buyer at
Columbia's Phoenix-based National
Mart, says the chain has sold more
copies of Sheik's album in the last two
months than it had in total up until then.
Smith, who has been a music buyer
for over 15 years, says, "It was
never possible of course there was all the holiday traf-
fic," says Smith. "Sales trailed off in
January, but in February we just
thought the momentum was too
much. I've really got to hand it to Atlantic for stick ing it out.
Smith also attributes this success to
local radio market conditions, where
the song is getting blanket exposure
in Pittsburgh from modern rock WXDX
and all markets WZQZ and WWTY.
The label also took its cue from
Jewel at retail. Following the pattern
it used with her album "Pieces Of You,
Atlantic originally priced "Duncan
Sheik" at $11.98, raising that to $15.98
once it had sold 100,000 units. When
the album finally broke, Atlantic will
raise its price to $16.98.
Though the label may be eyeing gold
now, it wasn't very long ago that Atlantic was facing down the
soundtrack to male singer/songwriters (Billboard, Jan. 18).
"Not only are male singer/songwrite-
rs relatively few and far between, now, the album's not-har-docking," says
Shapiro. "It's a more emotional and
heartfelt album.
"I think that part of the reason it
took a while to break through, adds
"We just sort of put our blinders on
and made a go of it." Shapiro,
realized that the album he had
put together was not necessarily a
perfect fit in today's soundscape.
PUENTE'S 3-CD BOXED SET ON RMM A LATIN MUSIC FIRST
(Continued from page 10)
Puente.
The celebratory, career-span ning
release of the 'Latin King of Salsa,'
Rafael "Raf" Mercado feels sure
will become one of the classic
Latin music release albums of all
time. The project, a tribute of three
records to the historic project,
"Tito Puente Merits of All," by,
Mundo.
RMM's VP/GM Bill Marin
agrees. "This is a lifetime career
boxed set that will be in catalog for
tito. RMM has released (more than 100 albums),
and some fans might have 10 or 20.
So this is really for fans to catch
up on and for a new fan to get a compre-
hsive collection."
"I'm very happy that Latin music is
now being treated with the respect
deemed, both here and overseas," Puente
says. "Especially in the last five years. They might not dig the language, but they
dig the percussion, the excitement."
The set, with extensive liner notes
and congratulatory comments from a wide
variety of stars, including James Brown
and Michael Camilo, will be
scheduled to be at $31.98 suggested retail.
An independent label, RMM is dis-
tributed under the General Music and
Video Distribution.
A special 15-track prom CD,
including two unreleased Latin-jazz
cuts, "Oye" and "Soul Of Freedom,"
under the alias "Tito L. Amado -
"Llegate," is being sent to all Univer-
sal retail accounts for in-store play; the single will also be used in a
college, public radio, jazz/AAC, and
Latin stations nationwide.
"The idea for the unreleased track
gamer to radio and retail came
from national director of promotion
Nelson Rodriguez and national direc-
tor of sales, Craig Shapiro. "This ties
into his past."
"RMM's output has been so
diversified; he's done it all—big band,
musio, salsito go we want to
participate in current market trends,
there's a complete package out there.
Candy Shannon, PD and afternoon
host at WDCU (Jazz 90) WDCU, says the
station will air not only the unreleased cuts
but others as well.
"I'm looking forward to it," she says.
"Any time we play Tito Puente, it
brightens up the afternoon. As Jelly
Roll Morton said, the 'Spanish tinge' is
very important in jazz."
RMM's release, due April
in D.C.'s Tower Records
stores, agrees that the album
will be welcome. "It's our kind of
album," says RMM, "especially on the Latin
population here and a lot of Latin
jazz fans. It's very sellable. No doubt
about it, he's king."
RMM's Mercado, who also served as
executive producer for the boxed set,
drew 50 tracks from the astounding
168 albums Puente has released
during his 57-year career, many as
independent projects.
He received permission to use
tracks from Steeeo, Tico, Fania, and
MGM as well as others from
Legacy (Columbia), GNP, EMI-Colum-
bia, Fantasy, and Concord-Picante
for the collection. Also included are
tunes from Fania's Festival, Hydroton,
and Westside.
"There was a lot of cooperation at
the other labels," he says. "The back-
and-forth negotiations took some time,
but everybody was into it."
The borrowed tracks include vocals
from such stars as Celia Cruz, Tito
Puente, and many for other...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST TITLE</th>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>LABEL &amp; NUMBER/REPRESENTATIVE LABEL</th>
<th>SUGGESTED LIST PRICE OR EQUIVALENT FOR CARTESIANS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Traveling Without Moving&quot;</td>
<td>Jimmy Buffett</td>
<td>2214</td>
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<td>&quot;Dancing in the Dark&quot;</td>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
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<td>&quot;I Might Be Wrong&quot;</td>
<td>The White Stripes</td>
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<td>&quot;You Gotta Love Me&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;You're the One&quot;</td>
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<td>15.98</td>
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<td>OneRepublic</td>
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**Top Albums**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>WEEKS</th>
<th>PEAK POSITION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Springsteen</td>
<td>&quot;The Rising&quot;</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radiohead</td>
<td>&quot;Kid A&quot;</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>U2</td>
<td>&quot;All That You Can't Leave Behind&quot;</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiohead</td>
<td>&quot;OK Computer&quot;</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pearl Jam</td>
<td>&quot;Vitalogy&quot;</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pink Floyd</td>
<td>&quot;The Dark Side of the Moon&quot;</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Rolling Stones</td>
<td>&quot;Exile on Main St.&quot;</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nirvana</td>
<td>&quot;Nevermind&quot;</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pink Floyd</td>
<td>&quot;The Wall&quot;</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Eagles</td>
<td>&quot;Hotel California&quot;</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>U2</td>
<td>&quot;The Joshua Tree&quot;</td>
<td>29</td>
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**Billboard 200 Charts**

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the 600,000 people estimated to have attended Paul Simon's 1991 free concer-

n at Park. In 82 million, Brooks is the biggest-selling solo artist in the

third week of June. The Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA).

A nearby two years of talks between Brooks and EMI-Capitol Music North America, parent compa-

ny of Brooks' label, Capitol Nashville, there was agreement to do so.

"There was never a purpose to doing the concert until [I decided to release a

new album]," he said. "I also had to get this tour underway. I was doing a lot of

shows to make sure the people were still showing up for me (before) trying something

different.

Brooks' world tour, which started in March 1996, has been a barn burner, sell-

out as many as six arena shows per week. According to Billboard and its publica-

tion Amusement Business, Brooks sold the most tickets, 1.8 mil-

lion, of any touring attraction in 1996.

"We've cut some things that are the top-selling items in country music history. "Central Park and HBO are all about

how do we release a new album with all the important marketing, something

available only to Garth?"

"The hardest thing that I'm finding in a career as you go on is making peo-

ple aware of the new stuff," Brooks says, especially when they are so attached
to such past material as his 1991 platinum "No Fences," the top-selling
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"That's really what Central Park is all about. How do we release a new album

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they don’t have a contract.”

Love filed her suit against Specter in 1986, and the complications in New York state for such actions is six years prior to the date a suit is filed, so the singer, as a result, never won the case. In 1988, after an attempt to settle the lawsuit in 1989, she took her case to the European courts. In 1990, the case was heard in the European Court of Justice, and finally in 1992, the Court ruled in William Morrow’s favor.

“Other people of my time will be able to go into court,” Love says. “The fall-from this is going to be great, I feel. For other groups that come in and say, ‘We didn’t have a contract. . . .’ If they can find any kind of piece of paper or anything that says that they did have some kind of deal with whoever their record company was, it’s as good as mine,” she says. “I’m convinced now.”

Not that she has forgotten it behind her, Love is concentratong on writing her autobiography, “Faith And Love,” which is expected to be published in the fall of 1998. The book is being co-authored by Rob Hoerberger, who wrote a memorable profile of Love for The New York Times Magazine a couple of years ago.

Love says she brings a unique perspective to her book, which will come close to 40 years of music-making. “I can look at it as a star; I can look at it also as a background singer. A lot of people who are writing books now can’t really look at it from a background point of view, and I saw a lot of things that people probably wouldn’t see, because, by being a background singer, people say, ‘Nobody is ever going to write a book about this, so we can get away with doing this.’ So I have a lot of stories to tell.

**BULGARIAN PIRATE CDS**

(Continued from page 6)

from Sofia is keeping with known pirated practices, utilizing unlicensed material into Europe’s lucrative market.

Maria Karakhanova organizes that by giving their shipments documentation suggesting that they are for delivery outside Europe, EU customs officers will not be encouraged to look carefully at what the consignment consists of.

Then, because of the open borders within the EU, once a shipment is cleared for entry into the Union, the truck carrying it has free access to every city within the 15-nation bloc.

**REAL McCoy SHOWS ITS STUFF ‘ONE MORE TIME’**

(Continued from page 4)

cuta like “Take A Look At Your Life.”

“We have changed as people and as artists, so it was important that the album reflects that,” says O-Jay, who also agrees that the set was recorded in his native Berlin and in New York. “The plan behind this album is to give people something that appeals to the more appealing twists and- curvatures and a few curvatures here and there.”

Among the more appealing twists of the project is a giddy, disco-shaped single of Massari featuring Frankie Finale, “If You’re Not In It For Love” (O-Jay & I’m Outta Here!).” “That was a controversial song for the group to record,” says O-Jay. “I think the song was really a success. We had a good time with it in the studio. Needless to say, it’s quite different from the original...”

Tying together “One More Time” is a bonus enhanced CD track produced by David Greene of San Francisco’s Creative Spark with Nathan Vogelitz and Sherri Sheridan of Minds Eye Media. Created with the input of O-Jay, the elaborate track offers biographical information, interviews, snippets of think she could tackle anything and be successful.”

Larman also notes that such recent goings-on complete the list. The author of author of the book, who was part of the project, is making a very appealing album.

There’s a very good tradition of this kind of book selling well.

“Darlene’s career continues to this day. Her and one of the record company’s best producers. Bill Bros, work hard.

The book will also take into account the various songs that were written by Darlene, the one woman of the century.

Love for the release and the treatment it received. Epic, who is the daughter of the late U.S. film actor Tyronne Power. The duo Al Bano & Romina Power has sold millions of albums in Italy and on continental Europe.

Italian-based lawyer Vittoria De Sar- tis, who is representing Sony Music in the multimillion-dollar case, points out that the decision by the Rome tribunal to suspend the injunction will have a bearing on two other cases concerning the same purported copyright in Italy.

In plagiarism, it is not a civil matter, it is also a criminal offense. Says the Rome tribunal. ‘You are not alone!”

The court, which is co-organized by the Rome magistrates in December 2004, we need not consider here whether the evidence is sufficient to support a conviction of the alleged wrongdoing. The case is based in Milan.” Therefore, parallel proceedings were initiated and are still underway in the Milan magistrates court.

Rome’s criminal courts are also con- sidering Carrisi’s charges of plagia- rum.

Elsewhere on the Jackson front in Europe, Epic Records is setting its strategy for the release of “Black or White” and “They Don’t Care About Us”.

In addition to the single, the album will contain remixes by Frankie Knuckles (the verdant Miura Tewin “If You’re Not In It For Love” / “They Don’t Care About Us”), the label has yet to confirm a release date for the album.

Assistance in preparing this story was provided by Billboard International editor Mark Solomon.

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**The Latin Music Mix: Showcases, Seminars**

The time is drawing near for the 1997 International Latin Music Conference & Awards, to be held April 28-30 at the Hotel Inter-Continental, Miami. The three-day event will feature two evenings of showcase performances, along with two days of industry panels focusing on retail, radio, Latin dance, Latin rock, and the recently added BDS panel on Billboard's Hot Latin Tracks chart. Additionally, Warner-Chappell Music and BMI will host the songwriter showcase "Writers in the Round." The exciting schedule concludes with Billboard's International Latin Music Awards, honoring the embracing environment in Latin America and throughout the year, at the Guarnier Center for the Performing Arts.

Below is a complete schedule:

**MONDAY, APRIL 28**

Opening Night Party sponsored by AmericaDisc Special interest: Mexican American rock—Jukebox, Dolby Ocean; In addition to Rayo, the event will feature artists of the year, at the Guarnier Center for the Performing Arts.

Latin Retail Gets Americanized: A panel discussion focusing primarily on relationships between Latino labels and Anglo chains and how the Hispanic record companies can maximize sales within Anglo retail environments. Moderated by Debra Villalobos, Camelot Music. Panelists include Isi Cuevas, Trans World Entertainment, Randi Mayrent, Handelman; Robert W. Smith, Borders, Inc.; and Mark Woodard, Spec's Music.


Latin Dance Showcase Party at Sticky Fingers: Performers include Angelica (Arista Latin), Car-pacho (BMP), Dr. Noé (Sony ... and others to be announced.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30**

Hot Latin Tracks—New Horizon: This roundtable panel will examine the methodology used in compiling data for Billboard's Hot Latin Tracks chart, with particular reference to the relationship among radio stations, network records, and record labels. Panelists include John Lannert and Geoff Mayfield of Billboard magazine, and a representative of Broadcast Data Systems.

Breaking Out—Dance En España: Panelists will discuss the direction of the expanding Spanish-language dance market in Latin America and in the U.S., where Latino dance tracks are routinely played by power stations and Anglo club deejays. Moderated by Mark Walker, Max Music. Panelists: Pablo Flores, Hi & Mixes Productions; Tuti Gianakis, Odi Moriel Records; Marvin Howell, Arista Dance; and Carlos Sarli Productions.

Strategic Programming Has Arrived In Spanish Radio: Gain insight on the importance of truly understanding the demographics of your audience demographic, the formulas that deliver a strong listener base, research and how to implement strategies that deliver share gains in an increasingly fragmented marketplace. Panelists: Hoz Montana, WEMA-FM; Jesus Salas, WXDJ-FM; and Scott Tonnemaker, Market Segment Research & Consulting.

Billboard's International Latin Music Awards: This year's show will feature special appearances by Latin superstars Jose Jose and Emmanuel, plus performances by Herb Alpert and Robi Rosa. Other star attractions will be announced.

Awards Show After Party: The gathering, sponsored by ASCAP at Resurrection Hall, Club Nu, will include live performances.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 29**

Keynote Address: McHenry Tche-neor Jr., chairman/president/CEO of broadcast group the New Hefet. The session will include a brunch at the Hard Rock Cafe.

**International Latin Music Conference & Awards**

*Chicago Marriott Downtown, Chicago • July 16-18, 1997*

*Fourth Annual Dance Music Summit*  

*Orlando Renaissance Hotel, Orlando • Oct. 16-18, 1997*

*19th Annual Billboard Music Video Conference & Awards*  

*The Beverly Hilton, Beverly Hills, Calif. • Nov. 20-22, 1997*

For more information, contact Maureen Ryan at 212-536-5002.

Visit our Web site at http://www.billboard.com

**At No. 1, Bassist Haden Hits High Note**

*VETERAN JAZZ BASSIST Charlie Haden has contributed his talents to a number of albums by other artists, dating back to 1958, when he first worked with Ornette Coleman. This issue, Haden collects his very first No. 1 on Billboard's Top Jazz Albums chart, as his "Beyond The Missouri Sky."* (Verve) displaces Tony Bennett from pole position. Haden, who has also worked with Carla Bley, Carlos Paredes, Alice Coltrane, Keith Jarrett, Chet Baker, Ginger Baker, and Pat Metheny, has been "one of the most skillful and adventurous bass players." Haden has had two previous top 10 albums on the jazz chart. "Quarter West" peaked at No. 4 in 1987, and "Steal Away" went to No. 6 in 1966. With his 69th birthday coming up in August, it's fitting that Haden has finally reached the top of the chart in his own right. And the best news is that after all these years in the business, Haden is not jaded. He was thrilled to learn of his album achieving No. 1 status.

**BILLBOARD JUMP**

The debut of the Notorious B.I.G.'s "Life After Death" (Bad Boy) due to street-date violations (see Between the Bulletin, page 9) means that the slain rapper will not have a posthumous entrance on No. 1 on The Billboard 200. However, if the two-CD set takes its expected jump to the top next issue, it will make the biggest leap to No. 1 in chart history. The 175-1 rise of Pearl Jam's "Vitalogy" in December 1994.

**Un-Break Up To Make Up**

Tom Braxton will not be moved. At least, not from the top of the Adult Contemporary chart, where "Un-Break My Heart" rules for a 14th week. That makes the LaFace single the second-longest running A.C. chart-topper in history. This issue it will tie with the previous top of the chart, which Braxton hit her 13th week, she was tied with Mariah Carey and Boyz II Men's "One Sweet Day," as mentioned last issue, as well as Eric Clapton's "Change The World," according to Gary Komrok of Boston.

Lomker notes that Dion is the artist who knocked "One Sweet Day" and "Change The World" out of the No. 1 position, and she may go it again, as "All By Myself" is poised to replace "Un-Break My Heart." That makes Dion a "giant-killer on the A.C. chart," in Lomker's estimation.

He also notes that "Change The World" has logged a record-setting 41st consecutive week in the AC top 10, a real "phenomenon."

**DOUBTFULL**

Neil Stutt of Nashville, N.C., says there is "no doubt" in his mind that a record has been set on the Hot 100 Airplay chart. "Don't Speak" by No Doubt logging its 16th week at No. 1, it has easily bested the previous record-holder, Celine Dion's "Because You Loved Me," which reigned for 14 weeks.

Unlike the Dion song, "Don't Speak" is an album track, not available as a domestic single, leading Stutt to ask, "Could 'Don't Speak' also be the most popular [album] track of the rock era?"

**MELLOW YELLOW**

Their first album debuted on The Billboard 200 in December 1990 and peaked at No. 3. But they didn't rush back into the studio to record a followup, maybe it's because they've been too busy filming their seven Un-Uns successful TV series. But the long wait is over, as the Simp-sons return with their sophomore disc, "Songs In The Key Of Springfield." The Rhino release debuts at No. 115.

**RAP: SURE**

Sixteen years ago this week, Blondie's "Rapture" was No. 1 on the Hot 100. This issue it returns in a new form as KRS-One debuts at No. 56 with "Step Into A World (Rapture's Delight)" on Jay, with appropri-ate writing credits for Debbie Harry and Chris Stein.

**MARKET WATCH WEEKLY NATIONAL SALES REPORT**

**YEAR-TO-DATE OVERALL UNIT SALES 1996 1997**

| TOTAL | 148,357,000 | 162,300,000 | UP 9.4% |
| ALBUMS | 125,530,000 | 134,916,000 | UP 7.5% |
| SINGLES | 27,822,000 | 37,884,000 | UP 20% |

**CD**

| YEAR-TO-DATE | 69,407,000 | 102,463,000 | UP 41.6% |

**CASSETTE**

| YEAR-TO-DATE | 35,712,000 | 32,183,000 | DN 9.9% |

**OTHER**

| YEAR-TO-DATE | 411,000 | 297,000 | DN 27.7% |

**OVERALL UNIT SALES THIS WEEK**

| CD | 13,601,000 | 10,891,000 |
| LAST WEEK | 13,820,000 | 11,164,000 |
| CHANGE | DOWN 1.6% | DOWN 2.5% |

**ALBUM SALES THIS WEEK**

| UP 3.4% | UP 1.1% |

**CHANGE**

| UP 2% | UP 13% |

**CHANGE**

| CHANGE | CHANGE |

**COUNTRY**

| CHANGE | CHART BEAT | By Fred Bronson |
ARISTA’S ’97 GRAMMY GALA:

Aretha Franklin, Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds and Martha Stewart.

Antonio “LA” Reid, Clive Davis and Grammy Winner Tony Rich.

Whitney Houston and Faith Evans.

Tionne “T-Boz” Watkins and Lisa “Left-Eye” Lopes of TLC.

Clive Davis with Ahmet and Mica Ertegun.

Gwen Stefani of No Doubt.

Rudi Gassner, Brooke Wallace, Michael Dornemann and Mary Ann Hagel.

Strauss Zelnick, Wendy Belzberg, Pete Jones and Clive Calder.

Robert Daly and Carole Bayer Sager.

A special moment as Aretha Franklin, Clive Davis, Whitney Houston, Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds and Deborah Schindler (film’s Producer) receive plaques commemorating the record-breaking twelve Grammy nominations for the Waiting To Exhale Soundtrack.

Puff Daddy performs his #1 platinum hit, “Can’t Nobody Hold Me Down.”

Former Take That award-winning singer/songwriter Gary Barlow wows the crowd with a song from his forthcoming solo debut album.

A.J. Yet thrills the room with their latest smash, “Hard To Say I’m Sorry.”

Robert and Blaine Trump, Ronald Perelman, Arnold Scaasi, Pat Kluge and Bobby Zarem.

Sarah McLachlan, Terry McBride and Roy Lott.

Seymour Stein and Freddy DeMann.

Ted Field, Charles Koppelman and Gary Gersh.

Grammy-nominated Country music’s new stars BR5-49.

Polly Anthony, Joe Galante and Sandy Gallin.

Andre Harrell and Chris Rock.

Keith Naftaly, Diane Warren and Walter Afanasieff.

Mr. and Mrs. Burt Bacharach.

Richard Palmese and Jonas Cash.

Quincy Jones, Grammy Winner Herbie Hancock and Russell Simmons.

Paul Anka and Robin Leach.

Forest Whitaker.

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Their last studio album, *Songs of Faith and Devotion*, sold 4.5 million copies and brought their total album sales to over 30 million. The new album hits stores April 15 preceded by "It's No Good" at radio and in clubs. And this spring, they make their American television debut (check your local listings). Yes, we're talking about:

Depeche Mode

Featuring "It's No Good" (715-40522)