Hong Kong Biz Mulls Future Chinese Censors Could Target Music

BY THOM DUFFY and GEOFF BURPEE

HONG KONG—The creative goal of the emerging record business in China, says one of its executives, is to "let one hundred voices ring and one hundred flowers blossom." But as Hong Kong returns to China's rule at the end of this month, music industry leaders are asking whether artistic freedom here will be pulled up by its roots.

From an economic perspective, the outlook for the music industry in Hong Kong is bullish, as companies anticipate greater access to the huge and developing Chinese market. The Basic Law that will govern Hong Kong following its handover from the British to Chinese sovereignty at midnight June 30 says economic self-regulation and civil liberties will be guaranteed for the next 50 years. However, concerns about freedom of expression in the media and the arts in Hong Kong have already emerged.

"We don't expect censorship in the next 18 months or so, but we do not know what will happen after that," says J.C. Giouw, Southeast Asian regional director of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, the recording industry's worldwide trade group. If the months following the handover bring an increase in recordings in Hong Kong with "provocative" messages, most likely from smaller independent record labels, Giouw says, "we fear the authorities will start looking..."

Music Acts As Healing Force in The Balkans

BY ADRIAN HIGGS

ISTANBUL—Music is everywhere in this chaotic city. With its massive shantytowns and population of 12 million, Istanbul is swelling by more than 400,000 people per year and is more akin to Bombay than Europe. Arabesque and Turkish pop blares from the shops, street-corner kioskas, burrows of record sellers, and late-night shop doorways in main thoroughfares colonized by moonlighters selling pirated cassettes.

And while aspects of the Turkish record industry, which is centered on this ancient city, may still seem primitive by other countries' standards, with no unbreakable chart system and a low-ranking retail infrastructure, several developments are combining to suggest that Turkey's music business is becoming more sophisticated.

Among the promising signs are widespread local activity among major labels; a healthy batch of...
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**Music Biz Gets Full Day To Address Concerns To EU Body**

By DOMINIC PRIDE and JEFF CLARK-MEADS

BRUSSELS—The music industry is to be given a full day to present its views to Europe's highest elected body later this month.

Senior executive, publishers, representatives, and artists will be given unprecedented access to the European Parliament on June 18 when it is to hold an all-day session to hear concerns over copyright, creativity, culture, and commerce.

The Parliament includes elected representatives from all European Union nations and its role is to oversee pan-European legislation and monitor the work of the EU's governmental culture, the European Commission.

The all-day Parliament sitting has been instigated by the body's Culture Committee, a prominent figure on the committee is Nana Mouskouri, a Mercury recording artist and one of Greece's members of Parliament.

Mouskouri has been a prime mover in the momentum for the parliamentary session, compelled to do so with discussions with executives from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) at the Platinum Europe Awards in February and by contacts with the European Music Office (EMO), which represents artists and the creative community.

Some 50 representatives from the artistic and music business are being invited to speak at the session, which is intended give Parliament a better ability to shape the European Commission's strategies on music.

The commission is considering such issues as the harmonization throughout the EU of增值税 (VAT) on records—and is under pressure from all areas of the music industry to remove VAT from music completely—broadcasting quotas, educational standards, and a new pan-European copyright law for the digital era.

Among those provisionally booked to address the parliamentary session are Rupert Perry, European president of EMI Music; Rick Dobbs, president of PolyGram Continental Europe; Patrick Zelnik, president of French labels' organization SNEP; Nic Garrett, general manager of IFPI; Jean-Loup Tournier, director general of French authors' body SACEM; and president of Europe's authors' group BIEM; Teddy Bautista, president of Spanish authors' rights society SGAE; and musician Vangelis.

It is the first time that the music industry will get the chance to make a thorough presentation to cafes on the future of music in Europe.

(Continued on page 10)

**DVD Audio Standard Due By December**

**Music Titles Could Be Out Within Two Years**

By PAUL Verna

NEW YORK—After a year of negotiations, representatives of the global recording and electronics industries have agreed to establish a standard for DVD audio by December 1997, paving the way for a second-generation digital sound carrier to succeed the compact disc. The timetable allows for the completion of the first audio of recording quality music titles within two years, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA).

In a May 17 meeting, the International Steering Committee (ISC)—comprising members of the RIAA, its Japanese counterpart (RIAA), the Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), and the six major global music companies—pledged to “have a final draft specification for a DVD music disc” by the end of the year, according to an RIAA statement. The ISC is working in conjunction with the DVD Audio Working Group, a subcommittee of the DVD Alliance consisting of representatives from Hitachi, JVC, Mitsubishi, Philips, Pioneer, Thomson Multimedial, Sony, Time Warner, and Toshiba.

President Hilary Rosen says the standard established last year for the audio portion of DVD video is not sufficient for a stand-alone product. “In our announcements, we’re making it clear that we don’t view the audio spec in video DVD as a satisfactory system for a music disc,” she says.

In its effort to establish a music-only music disc, the ISC plans to conduct listening tests of various proposed DVD formats for recording professionals in studies in New York, Los Angeles, London, Berlin, and Tokyo.

“The idea is to see whether there’s a uniform consensus on the sound quality of DVD audio,” says Rosen, “there’s a support for uniformity and a uniform agreement upon system with regard to sound quality, that’s where we want to be.”

Rinaldo Sertiti, VP of technology at David Stebbings Video Ltd., adds, “Our purpose is to see a top ‘golden ears’ people worldwide in their own test labs. We’ll take a reference system to calibrate everyone’s ears, and then we’ll test various proposed [DVD] systems.”

At press time, neither the test systems nor their target audience had been identified, according to Rosen.

While the listening sessions will focus on the sound quality of DVD, other criteria will be considered in the effort to establish a music DVD standard, according to the RIAA statement. Among these are full compatibility with the existing CD format, which would allow current CDs to be played on DVD players and DVD titles to be played on standard CD hardware; the new disc’s ability to deliver high-quality, multichannel sound “equal to or superior to current CDs”; and the capability to encode DVDs with copyright identification information and anti-piracy technology.

Commenting on the CD compatibility issue, Rosen says, “The key thing for us as we go forward with manufacturing this new product is that we continue to transition with compatible CD systems. We’re very conscious of the average consumer who is satisfied with the level of digital sound and technology of new technologies.

“On things like watermarking and encryption,” adds Rosen, “it’d be useful to have true standards for audio and video, but we’re not weeded to compete systems.”

Blathbarm confirms widespread industry speculation that the ISC is considering a flexible standard to allow different levels of audio resolution to be allocated to different channels in a surround-sound mix. For instance, a processor could be used to enhance the high-end spatial quality for the front channels while assigning lesser resolution values to the rear channels.

Although it’s too early to predict the ultimate level of audio resolution music titles will offer, Stebbings confirms speculation that the ISC and DVD Audio Working Group are considering a configuration ceiling of 24 bits and a maximum sampling rate of 96 kilohertz. By contrast, the current CD has a fixed standard of 16 bits at a sampling rate of 44.1 kHz.

(Continued on page 9)
**FCC Chairman Reed Hundt Steps Down**

**Successor, Commission’s New Direction Uncertain**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.—Closing the door on a term funded by lucrative telecommunications deals and changes and controversial policy mandates, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Reed Hundt May 27 resignation signals an urgent agenda for the future of the agency and its impact on radio and television interests.**

Insiders say that a Democratic successor would probably keep on the rocky course that Democrat appointee Hundt set in trying to balance public interest requirements with deregulatory marketplace decisions.

In a press conference here, Hundt, 49, said that he has tendered his resignation to President Clinton—who nominated him almost four years ago—and is leaving to spend more time with his family. "Alabama, Nathaniel, and Sara are growing up, and I cannot remain any more of their childhood," Hundt said. He added that he will remain until a replacement is found.

Hundt was an irritant to several congresional committees, the House Commerce Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and the FCC itself. His departure was dogged his feet over implementation of the deregulatory-minded Telecommunications Act, passed in February 1996.

He also negotiated broadcasters with his insistence on strengthening public interest standards, even as many regulations governing telecommunications industries were being relaxed.

Specifically, radio wrestled with Hundt over the tender topic of prohibitions or limits on beer, wine, and hard liquor ads and proposed increases in public affairs programming, while TV has been unhappy because of Hundt’s support of V-chip legislation and his interpretation of new digital TV spectrum rules. Both industries frown upon his support of free political advertising over the airwaves.

The direct impact of his exit on the FCC and industry remains unclear when coupled with the previously announced departures of commissioners James Quello and Rachel Chong. Meanwhile, Susan Ness fills a fourth seat, while the fifth, once occupied by Andrew Barrett, has remained empty for well over a year.

Thus, with three members of the four-seat commission soon changing, there is little doubt a formidable set of priorities will arrive at an agency already in need of leadership.

Last week, President Clinton nominated Republican Harold Furchtgott-Roth, the House Commerce Committee’s economist, to fill Barrett’s vacant seat. Other nominees include FCC General Counsel William Kennard to fill Quello’s soon-to-be vacant seat. One Republican seat remains open, which one insider says the administration will use as political ammunition.

There was no comment when Hundt’s successor. There is talk that Nuss may be elevated to the chairman seat, which would not require Senate confirmation.

In any case, a highly placed telecommunications industry player predicts that the next-generation FCC—because it is beginning its term after having weathered a deregulatory mind-set—“This current commission grew to their present stature in a regulatory framework,” this industry head said. “If each person has been through each administration, there have been gradual changes over years. It will probably continue to be that way.”

“Broadcasting record by industry players has, not surprisingly, been polite and complimentary, despite past grumblings. National Association of Broadcasters president Ed O. Fritts, who often publicly bumbled heads with the chairman, operates, ‘While we always haven’t agreed with chairman Hundt, we felt there was compensation for the robust debate that he engendered by bringing a full marketplace of ideas to the table.’

House Telecommunications Committee chairman Bill Tauzin, R-La., said in a press conference (Continued on page 9)

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**COMMENTARY**

**Music Biz Mustn’t Be Hypocritical In China**

**BY ERIN POTTS**

Consider this: A man, Tibetan by birth, educated in the United States, returns to his homeland to record and maintain the musical heritage of his culture. He is arrested, charged with espionage, and sentenced to 18 years in a Chinese prison. His name is Ngawang Choephel, and he is in prison, in his own country, for attempting to hold a concert to promote his traditional music. His story offers an enlightening reminder of China’s appreciation for the artist.

Yet another: This man, Ho Bieljan, born in Taiwan in 1956, records a hit song that changes the face of Chinese popular music. On June 2, 1989, he fell to a hunger strike during pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square. In June 1996, Chinese authorities put him on a Taiwan fishing boat and force him to return to Taiwan, where he was given seven months in prison for illegal entry.

The music industry is just as eager as everyone else to make a buck from the emerging Chinese market. It is difficult to argue with economists and capitalists when attempting to continue to do business with such potential as China. Ever on the lookout for something new, something untried, China has emerged within the last several years as a most desirable business partner. It is the newest, and most popular, kid on the block. As a result, the global community is most interested in discordant China’s record of human rights abuses in the name of continued trade relations.

Billboard reported last month in a story headlined, "China’s New Vera- let/Liaison Offices Offer Domestic Link" (Billboard, April 19) that BMG, Sony, EMI, and a few other international music companies have begun to form business by posting representatives and liaisons in Hong Kong.

Many what people have chosen to ignore is the apparent conflict of interest in attempting to expand the business of music into one of the most restrictive and censored societies in the world. Throughout its history, the music industry has repeatedly taken a stand for the rights of individuals and has, in the United States, championed people’s right to freedom of expression. When artists have come under attack for lyrics that offended the sensibilities of the status quo, the music industry has been there to defend them. The concern for everyone’s right to free expression has been a hallmark of this business for years.

What, then, will be the industry’s rule in the country like China, which has a fully censored press and no regard for individual freedoms?

*It would be highly hypocritical for our industry to be willing to participate in censorship abroad.*

Erin Potts is the executive director and co-founder of the B records and the Beasties of the Milipede Fund, a tax-exempt profit organization working for a free Tibet.

How will the industry deal with songwriters and performers who have worked been described as politically sensitive” or “splitists”? As China develops into a major economic power, it is not enough for us to sit back and wait for those freedoms that we enjoy in America to simply become part of Chinese society. We must take every opportunity we can to encourage these freedoms. This is not simply the business of politicians. It is the responsibility of corporations as well—particularly those that have stood for these rights in the past.

Therefore, if global record companies can act in a responsible manner and encourage a climate more conducive to freedom of expression in China, they then should proceed with their expansion. If the values that have been lost by the backbench of the industry for years can be translated into a society whose present government has no regard for human rights, the industry will indeed play a positive role in China.

But if the industry’s role is simply to make money or to expand free trade, then it must continue to suffer, then careful consideration should be given. It would be highly hypocritical and diametrically opposed to the values of free expression here in America and, at the same time, willingly participate in censorship abroad.

Consumers and musicians have begun to announced themselves on the political landscape. As young people across the country have risen up to participate in social activism, there is a growing number of conscientious record buyers who have not forgotten that the vitality of music is the freedom of expression; that it is a right. It is not a luxury.

They have heard, through music, stories of people forbidden the freedoms that we take for granted. And they have begun to do something about it. They are being involved in their communities. They are registering to vote. And they have come to understand that it means to be a responsible member of our society and are encouraging others to do the same. The rewards of responsibly doing business and of acknowledging the initiative and drive of these young people have increased the credibility of the music business and will demonstrate the industry’s loyalty and responsibility.

Fortunately, it’s very early in the game. Despite the seductive powers of profit, the music industry should not forget what is at stake. China is a market that is open, and the opportunity arises to make decisions in which this vitality is a factor, it should be the guiding factor. As record buyers continually find themselves at a loss for good news, let them say that their music is pure, and that this, at least, is still true.
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Fans Shower Taylor With Love Via ‘Hogglass’ Sales

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

NEW YORK—As if there were any doubt, James Taylor can rest assured—he’s got more than enough fans.

The enduring solo artist’s latest effort on Columbia Records, “Hogglass”—his first album since 1990’s “(Live)—blasts onto The Billboard 200 at No. 9 this issue. According to SoundScan, the album has moved 261,000 copies in its first week on the racks.

“It’s a terrific debut and encouraging to hear such a quality record from a classic veteran,” says Peter Kapp, rock buyer for Nobody Beats the Wiz’s 59 music outlets. “In many ways, it compares to the new Bee Gees record [Billboard, May 24] in that it’s selling without the benefit of a hit single. We’ve found that many of the albums that seem to be hanging on these days are just such adult albums.”

The top 10 triumph represents the latest in Taylor’s legacy as that rare artist who has recorded more than 25 years and maintains status as a platinum-selling act. His last 10 albums, going back to 1975, have all been best sellers: three of them gold, five platinum, and two double platinum. His top 10 albums from 1976’s “Greatest Hits,” moved 11 million copies. Even so, “Hogglass” represents its first top 10 album since “That Loves His Work” 16 years ago.

Such success should further quell the oft-cited belief that 35-plus buyers—logically representing Taylor’s core—aren’t steady music consumers. The Recording Industry Assn. of America reports that 35-plus buying has increased 11.6% over the past decade, to 35.3% of the total record-buying public.

According to Cathy Kerr, VP with PAM Artist Management and Taylor’s manager, “I think people were ready for a new James Taylor record.

“The fans he’s had for 30 years-plus will love this as much as ‘Sweet Baby James,’” his breakthrough album in 1970. “But I also think those who might have lost touch over the years will rediscover him on this one. He’s sort of a new artist again.”

Taylor agrees that the timing felt right for this album, which he regards as a labor of love. “I have an audience that is one of the hottest of my life. (Continued on page 97)

Aussie Indie Shock Expands In U.S., Japan

At Home, Label Beef’s Up Its Dance Music Division

BY CHRISTIE ELIZEB

MELBOURNE, Australia—Leading independent Shock Records is increasing its presence in the U.S. and Japan and is restructuring its dance division for the domestic market.


Shock co-managing director David Williams says, “Over the years we have had a stream of releases in the States through various distributors and have found it difficult to ensure communica-
tions with our partners is as strong as it should be. As a result, we’ve probably lost out on a few opportunities.”

“We’re currently attracting a lot of U.S. interest in our signed acts, so the timing feels right,” Lewis, who has worked with inde-

pendent booking agents and college radio and was manager of the group Red House Painters, reports to Williams. Up to four staffers are expected to be added in San Francisco in the next few years.

(Continued on page 15)

Gary Kurfirst, Universal Bow Radiouniverse Label

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—The creation of Radiouniverse, an imprint spawned by Radioactive chairperson Irving Azoff and Universal Records, will give Kurfirst a new channel to expose his signings to the Universal Music Group’s New York-based label.

The announcement comes after weeks of speculation that Kurfirst would be looking on expanded responsibilities within the Universal Music Group (UMG) (Billboard Bulletin, Jan 29).

UMG’s dealings with Kurfirst have already proved successful. Radioactive Records, the executive’s joint venture with MCA Records, is the home to platinum-selling rock act Live.

UMG vice chairman/COO (U.S.) Mel Lewinter says that Kurfirst and UMG chairman/CEO (U.S.) Doug Morris have “a good musical and personal relationship.”

According to Kurfirst, his recent concert, adding that Radiouniverse’s New York home base will give him more opportunities to work closely with Morris.

Kurfirst also chairmen of the major companies, he is the one guy that I feel comfortable walking in and playing music to,” he says. “I get the feeling that he gets it.”

As part of the deal, which Lewinter describes as a “hybrid” incorporating elements of a joint-venture pact and a royalty deal, Universal Records will market, promote, and sell Radiouniverse titles. “Universal needed someone on what I can do for the label and someone to help me put out my records,” Kurfirst says.

There are no immediate announcements regarding staffing for Radiouniverse, which Kurfirst says will start small and grow as needed.

Kurfirst adds that the formation of Radiouniverse will give Kurfirst an “outlet to expand his creativity. The best way to describe Gary is a soulful record man who really takes the part of his artists. I’ve never seen a person as reflective of an artist’s needs as he is.”

The first release from Radiouniverse will be the Tiny Wasp’s “Radioactive” (U.S.), a St. Louis-based pop act that previously issued an EP on Radioactive.

According over from the Radioactive roster to Radiouniverse is Dig. Other Radiouniverse acts include former Capitol Records group the Devlins, who are expected to have a new album in the fall, and an Irish band called Tyde Fly.

Music Clip Creators Seek Protections

BY BRETT ATWOOD

LOS ANGELES—Controversy surrounding the rights of music video directors and producers is building up, as some executives are calling for new standards that would protect ideas for clips, and production companies from having to absorb out-of-pocket expenses.

Some of those concerns are apparent in a May 22 lawsuit filed by veteran music video director Marty Calner and his production company, Cream Cheese Films Inc., against Aerosmith and its manager, Wendy Laister of Music Without Tears, for breach of contract and fraud.

The suit, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court, seeks reimbursement for pre-production expenses, legal costs, and undetermined damages, following a terminated oral agreement to produce two clips for the band’s “Hide In My Soul,” which is taken from Aerosmith’s Columbia album “Nine Lives.”

After numerous meetings and the outlining of various concepts, which were subsequently amended by the band and Laister, the suit alleges that the management terminated the agreement just days before shooting was to commence and failed to reimburse Cream Cheese Films for its production costs.

The suit also alleges that Laister engaged in conduct designed to sabotage [the] plaintiff’s relationship with Aerosmith.

In response to the suit, Laister issued a statement, which reads, “If Marty had come up with an acceptable video concept both the band, the label

and I would have been thrilled to work with him, because he’s made some classy short film videos in the past. Unfortunately, however, despite a number of discussions with Marty and his submission of ideas, ultimately none of them were appropriate for this particular song, and so the band was forced to go elsewhere.”

According to security guard at Aerosmith and Calner, who has directed 13 videos for the rock act, including “Livin’ On The Edge,” “Cryin’,” and “Amazing.”

Though the lawsuit likely represents a “worst-case scenario” of what can happen without a specific legal advice, many industry insiders say that the legal action by Calner and company signifies a need for more standardization.

(Continued on page 89)
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Artists & Music

Mahal’s ‘Señor Blues’ Go Public On Private Music

BY TERRI HORAK

NEW YORK—With the June 17 release of his latest Private Music album, “Señor Blues,” the lead single from the album, “I Am The Moon”—a samba influenced by the music of Tito Puente—the self-titled quartet of New Orleans’ senior VP of Field Marketing, Quigley Design, Packaging, and Annotation, is enjoying a career high.

“I’ve always been a fan of jazz and blues,” says Mahal, whose music is heavily influenced by New Orleans’ music scene. “I love the feeling you get when you just let the music take over and let it flow. It’s like a journey, you know? You start out with one idea, and then you end up somewhere completely different. That’s what I love about it.”

With 4 Wins, Rounder Records Dominates NARF’s Indie Awards

BY CHRIS MORRIS

NEW ORLEANS—Perennial champ Rounder Records took home four awards from the 1992 Indie Awards ceremony, held May 24 at the National Assn. of Independent Record Distributors & Manufacturers (NARF) convention’s closing banquet at the Fairmont Hotel here.

Rounder collected India’s trophies in the adult contemporary and bluegrass categories, while its distributed imprint Upstart triumphed in the Americanas and Latin categories, respectively.

Six other labels brought in two awards apiece: Rykodisc, Shanachie, Arabesque, Malaco, Fantasy, and Tommy Boy.

For the first time, NARF distributed a CD of Indie Awards ceremony, featuring a cut of the 30th anniversary. This year’s award show was emceed by Billy Corgan, lead singer of the Smashing Pumpkins, and video categories, as well as three music award recipients.

Hosted by Rounder GM Duncan Browne and New Orleans R&B diva Irma Thomas, the awards show was highlighted by a samba-influenced performance by the SeaFood Aquatic Band, which included singing and dancing with Slick Rick.

The ceremony’s highlight was a surprise visit from Slick Rick, who took the stage with the band to perform his hit “The Rhythm of the Bass.”

“With the new album ‘Tommy Boy,’ we’re excited to have Slick Rick on board,” says Rounder marketing director Michael Canfield. “He’s a great addition to our roster, and we’re looking forward to working with him on future projects.”

Folkways Return To The Studio: Folkways Issues Old-Time Album

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—Everything old is new again, now that Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is reissues the studio album in 23 years from legendary old-time music group the New Lost City Ramblers.

“I have my sales rep saying that people can’t wait,” says Brenda Dunlap, marketing director for the Koch-distributed label. “People are excited! Nobody knows where the band’s been or what they’ve been doing, so the new album is bringing them to prominence again.”

Titled “There Ain’t No Way Out,” the album was released on July 14 by the Ramblers since 1970’s “On The Great Divide”—and their 16th for Folkways since founders Mike Seeger and John Cohen started playing banjo and fiddle tunes in a New York loft in 1958. A live album, “30th Anniversary Concert,” came out on Flying Fish in 1978. After the Smithsonian Institution acquired the label in 1987, it issued two compilations, “Out Standing In Their Field” and “The Early Years,” and maintains on cassette the Ramblers’ earlier albums along with the entire Folkways catalog.

Additionally, the label has released solo albums by the members of the Ramblers, the third member of which is Tracy Schwartz—like his bandmates, a multi-instrumentalist.

“We took a five-year break from

E X E C U T I V E  T U R N T A B L E

Legacy in New York appoints Todd Bisson national director of promotion, East Coast, in Atlanta, and Jeanette Rosen specialty show and promotion coordinator in Los Angeles. They were, respectively, national alternative director at EMI. National alternative director at Atlantic Records, and promotion assistant at Discograph Records.

Robert Brissette is promoted to VP of event marketing at EMCI in Stanford, Conn. He was director of event marketing.

PUBLISHING. Barry Kolsky is appointed creative director of Famous Music Publishing in Los Angeles. He was creative director at All Nations Music. Keith Minges is appointed senior VP of distribution and collections for the National Music Publishers’ Assn. and the Harry Fox Agency in New York. He was funds transfer product manager with the Swiss Bank Corp. CMA Music Publishing promotes Caroline Friol to controller, financing, and Lisa McCormack to accounting manager, finance. They were, respectively, assistant controller and senior financial analyst.

RELATED FIELDS. David May and Steven Cagan have been named, respectively, director of film scoring and director of TV scoring for Zombie Screen Music in West Hollywood, Calif. May was an entertainment attorney, and Cagan was manager of film and TV marketing for Zomba Music Services.

Robert Brissette is promoted to VP of event marketing at EMCI in Stamford, Conn. He was director of event marketing.

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7. Have You Ever Really Loved A Woman Michael Kamen
8. Missing Tracey Thorn and Ben Watt (Everything But The Girl)
9. One Sweet Day Mariah Carey
10. Sitting Up In My Room Babyface
11. Take A Bow Babyface
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Artists & Music

Primal Scream's Primal Sound Back
Techno-Flavored 'Vanishing Point' On Reprise

BY STEVE KNOPPER

Primal Scream's detour into Black Crowes-style southern funk-rock has ended—to the great relief of the band's Reprise Records and lead singer Bobby Gillespie. Whereas 1994's "Give Out But Don't Go Out" continued music to make listeners think they were?not the cover, "Vanishing Point," due July 15, is a more diverse combination of fast-paced soul and hypnotic techno dance music.

The Glasgow, Scotland, quintet's fifth full-length album, named for 1971 movie about a drugged-up ex-racer driving from Denver to San Francisco, sounds like the delayed follow-up to 1990's "Screamadelica." That previous acclaimed album, which broke Primal Scream into dancehalls and the still-young rave-party scene, used horns, gospel choirs, and other tribal soul techniques to spice up the electronic beats.

With electronic music gaining media attention and a foothold at MTV, Reprise officials say "Vanishing Point" will be much easier to sell than the 1994 album. The new record still draws from Gillespie's interest in Sly Stone's early-'70s soul and Parliament's bouncy funk, but it mixes those styles with druggy

Rehearsal room. "We made the album sound too lifeless and too clean. For this album, we felt we had to record quickly and capture the moment and keep it rough and ready and raw. That's what we learned: Capture the moment. The notes aren't perfect, but this time we wanted to get the feeling," Gillespie continues. "Perfect music's about feeling. We fucked up last time by forgetting that." Gillespie tells us he's heard that Primal Scream dismisses its previous albums in the past. "It's funny, because they do that all the time—they diss-

(Continued on page 55)

Wide Mouth Mason Opens Its Bluesy Bow On Atlantic

BY LARRY LEBLANC

Toronto—Vicki Germaine, senior VP of Atlantic Records (U.S.), is still swooning over the May 21 New York showcase by Wide Mouth Mason. Atlantic will release the self-titled debut by the Canadian roots-based trio July 8.

"They are the most extraordinary band I've ever seen," exclaims Germaine. "Twenty seconds into their set, I fought my way through the crowd and stood there with my jaw dropping. I could have stood there for the rest of my life. [Atlantic executives] were on the phone the next morning saying, 'We didn't know we had them.'"

From playing to a handful of drunk line-dancers in a rural western Canadian town to a sold-out show at the legendary Massey Hall in Toronto, the Wide Mouth Mason are not a pure blues act.

"Two labels we're steering clear of (in promoting the album) are 'blues' and 'Canadian.' We call it 'world music.' We know that being a blues band means in 1997: Great players, no songs. This band has great songs. Being Canadian or American radio programmers and media have heard over and over again, so it's not a selling point.

While the band, whose members' average age is 21, is unquestionably bluesy, its album shows that the group—singer/guitarist Shaun Ver- reault, drummer Saturn, bassist Paul-Earl Pereira—has also been

Influenced by such R&B and roots acts as Funkadelic, the Band, Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, the Black Crowes, and fellow Canadian guitarist Colin James (who plays dobro on album track "The Preacherman's Song"). "Everytime we listen to it, we're going to have to listen to our own original music," says Verreault.

Despite Verreault first being influenced by the playing of the late Texas guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan and later by American blues masters John Lee Hooker, Albert King, B.B. King, Muddy Waters, and Buddy Guy, he also emphasizes that his trio isn't a blues act.

"We still get the blues tag a lot, but it's not like we're playing 'Sweet Home Chicago.' I like the original [blues artists], but those people sounded the way they did because they played the way they were trained.

"I asked how the band's bluesy style evolved, Verreault says, "When we were out on tour and playing what we had to, from top 40 to the older. [Rolling] Stones, we always had the best times in blues clubs. Audiences there, who are also fans of Eric Clap-ton and Jimi Hendrix, were into all our

(Continued on page 56)

Dan Fogelberg Compiles A Boxed 'Portrait'; D'Agostino Out At EMI

SOUVENIRS: In 1974, Dan Fogelberg sang, "When faced with the past, the strongest man cries." In 1997, that chant will be amended to "When faced with the past, the strongest man puts out a boxed set." That's exactly what Fogelberg has done with "Portrait: The Music Of Dan Fogelberg" (1972 - 1997: Epic/Legacy). The two-volume set released on Epic/Legacy on Tuesday (3). Five songs in the collection have never been released before, including the uplifting ballad "Don't Lose Heart," which will be worked to AC radio.

For Fogelberg, compiling the project was a somewhat daunting task. When asked if he was awed by his work over the past quarter-century, he burst into laughter, replying, "Oh, good God, no. I was awed by the verobosity of it and the length of it. It's a lot of words and a lot of notes. You finish one [project] and you're onto the next and continue working, so I've never seen it as a whole body of work before, but for the most part, I came away feeling pretty good about it.

The four-CD set is packaged in a handsome slipcover and includes an impressive 70-page booklet with an essay detailing Fogelberg's musical history, as well as an enjoyable, informative song-by-song annotation of "Portrait: The Music Of Dan Fogelberg." In a nod to the disc titles in Jimmy Buffett's fine 1992 boxed set, "Beaches, Boats, Bars, Ballads," the discs on Fogelberg's two sets are tagged "Hits," "Ballads, "Rock & Roll," and "Tales & Travels." "Timmy did his that way, and it was a great idea," says Fogelberg, "so I just took that approach. I think the audience will enjoy it, especially the ballads. If you're going to have a makeout session, put that side on. If you want to barbecue, put on the rock side. I personally like the "Tales & Travels" best, as a songwriter and a producer. Those songs are the most adventurous, they're all like shaking up the long, and they go in different places. They're not that personal."

And for Fogelberg, mining sources other than his own love songs for material has come as welcome relief. "I got especially tired of reading personal stuff at the end of the '80s. When you look at my oeuvre in the 1990s, it really has been political and spiritual and philosophical. I haven't said a lot about my personal life in the last 20 years. I've really kind of covered that."

However, as Fogelberg discovered as he reviewed his material over the years, there was a lesson to be learned. "I always had some very strange thing about my music, and I've never understood it. It seems like I almost write prophetically. It's scary," he says. "I remember writing the song 'Wild At Heart' after I broke marriage back in 1976. I'd never even been married, right? But somehow, this song came to me, as did 'Always The Last To Know,' another song that was dealing with divorce and a family coming apart, and I'd never had any experience about that. But years later, I've been through it. I hate to say this, I suppose, but after listening to [1987's] 'Exiles,' I'm in the middle of another deal. That's rough, and I'm faced 'My God, it's the same damn thing.' " He wryly adds, "These days, I'll either use my music [as a forecasting device] or I'll refuse to write anything but fluff.

Fogelberg is currently without a label: He left Epic after 1996's "River Of Souls" and subsequently recorded 1995's "No Reverence Whatsoever," a sequel to 1978's "Twin Sons Of Different Mothers," for Giant. "I'm just going to see what happens," he says. "I'm working with Sony again on this package. We've always had a good working relationship. It wasn't a troublesome parting. I'm not sure what I'm going to do next. I think I still have a future in recording."

But first, Fogelberg will undertake a summer theater tour. He admits to feeling a renewed vigor toward playing live after he had to cancel dates last year following a finger injury. "I couldn't play guitar or piano for like six months. I'm approaching this tour with a whole new enthusiasm," he says. "It's great, you don't miss your water until the well runs dry."

the BEAT

by Melinda Newman

STUFF: Following the reorganization at EMI Capitol Music Group North America, VP of corporate communications Sue D'Agostino is looking for new opportunities. She can be reached at 201-301-0682 ... Capricorn Records and Paul Westerberg continue to hammer out a deal to bring the former Replacement to the label, although no contract has been signed ... Rykodisc is in talks with MGM/UA Pictures involving soundtrack rights to films released by United Artists Pictures. A representative for Sulam, Mass.-based Rykodisc confirms the negotiations but would not specify whether they involve a distribution deal or outright acquisition of the United Artists master recordings.

The Spin Doctors have won a decision and undisclosed settlement against Miller Brewing Co. for the brewery's unlawful use of the band's 1992 hit "Two Princes." A ruling handed down May 19 in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles found the brewery guilty of plagiarizing the song's melody. The Spin Doctors parted ways with Epic Records last year and are looking for a new deal (Billboard Bulletin, May 23) ... Jeff Buckley has begun recording his new album in Memphis, co-producing with Andy Wallace. The set is being projected as an early '98 release.

UB40 will launch a U.S. tour July 10 at the Lodi Amphitheater in Pittsburg, Calif. ... MrShelldNEGOCIOlo has signed bassist on "I'm Not A Saint," on the new Rolling Stones album, which will be out later this year ... Former Judas Priest front man Rob Halford has signed with Nothing, Trent Reznor and John Malm's label ... Earache has signed English Dogs, a U.K.-based band led by the Prodigy's guitarist, Gizz But.

WIDE MOUTH MASON

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Work Works
Maypole’s
1st ‘Product’

NEW YORK—As the band’s name suggests, Maypole fronts a strong work ethic.

The L.A.-based rock quintet, whose debut album, “Product,” will be released July 8 by Clean Slate/Work, took the Maypole moniker to commemorate the Russian workers’ May Day celebration and is furthering the theme with its own commitment to work the record.

“They have a great attitude and are ready to work,” notes Barbara Bausman, marketing director for the Sony-distributed Work Group. “It’s kind of funny that they’re called Maypole, and they’re on Work and the album’s called ‘Product.’ It all ties in together, and it’s now just a matter of time before we get them in a van and out on the road.”

Heavy roadwork is forthcoming and will likely benefit from another key Maypole tie-in: the band’s relationship with the Wallflowers. Maypole guitarist Tobi Miller, who produced and engineered “Product,” served five years previously in the Wallflowers.

“He decided he wanted to get out before they sold millions of records,” says guitarist/vocalist Hans Hitner, tongue obviously in cheek. “I want to keep him here as long as possible—so I tell him everything’s terrible!”

After leaving the Wallflowers, Miller formed an instrumental group called Slue Foot Sue with bassist Miiko Watanabe, drummer Hugh Mangum, and lap steel player Chris Frankfort. A mutual friend hooked Miller up with Hitner, an Arizona punk/hardcore veteran who moved from Tucson to L.A. to join what became Maypole.

HK Management’s Andy Slater manages Maypole, as well as the Wallflowers and Fiona Apple. Slater also owns Clean Slate, for which the Maypole album is the label’s second offering following Apple’s “Tidal.”

Hitner also writes the band’s songs. “The paradox is that I’m a complete dictator,” says Hitner, who finds further irony in “Product’s” title. “Obviously that’s what record companies call records, but on the other side, numerous artists take themselves so seriously about their art, which really boils down to something that you make. We want to sell records, too, but we’re not making them because we think we’re so fucking artistic.”

Hitner’s lyrics, however, do have a somewhat serious bent. “I don’t like to get on a soapbox or spell everything out, but I am interested in the politics of everyday living, particularly the

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AKI KANEKO

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EN VOGUE, MINUS 1, RETURNS
(Continued from page 6)

Being away from the recording scene for more than three years can prove fatal for many recording acts—particularly in R&B, where consumers are notoriously fickle. "The musical landscape has definitely changed since our last album," says Ellis, who recorded her EastWest solo debut, "Southern Gal," in 1985. "We had to be aware of the creative changes in the business, but at the same time, we remained true to ourselves. So we didn't change a lot, style-wise."

The loss of a group member and its time away from consumers has done little to diminish En Vogue's five-year-old, my-nominated act's appeal. "They've been gone for a while, but the fan base is definitely still interested," says Sonya Askew, buyer for 51-store, North Canton, Ohio-based Camelot Music. "We anticipate significant sales of their album when it's released."

Label executives point to the success of the album's "Don't Let Go (Love)," which was a single from the "Set It Off" soundtrack, as a barometer for the album's anticipated success. The single peaked at No. 2 on the Hot 100 and was No. 1 on the Hot R&B Singles chart.

To mark En Vogue's return and officially launch the act's marketing campaign for "EV3" to consumers, the act performed "Don't Let Go (Love)" in February at the Soul Train Awards.

Elektra marketing director U.S. Jayson Jackson says that "Don't Let Go (Love)" was the most influential element of our setup and a prime indicator of what to expect from the album.

The label has complete confidence in En Vogue's musical abilities, and executives are aggressively marketing the trio in an effort to differentiate it from the plethora of female groups currently in the market.

"Whatever," the first single, was serviced May 13 to R&B, top 40 rhythm/crossover, top 40, and jazz/AC stations. It received 3,119 detections on 210 stations for the week ending May 26, according to Broadcast Data Systems.

Written and produced by Babyface, "Whatever" is slated for retail release in May.

The single is accompanied by a powerfully visual video that was directed by longtime En Vogue collaborator Matthew Balaton. The clip was serviced May 14 to local and national outlets. It depicts the trio in a surreal plastic surgeon's office, clad in eye-catching gowns and accessories—all of which makes for an intentional parody of make-over overkill.

Jackson says that although the clip is a departure from the act's glamorous, high-fashion model image, it has spurred significant conversation around the industry and among consumers.

"Reaction to the video has been mixed, but the common thing is that people talk about it and want to see it again," he says.

Discussions concerning the merits of the clip have kept phones ringing. Says KKBT Los Angeles (Love)," says

TINA TURNER

"The single received rave reviews from the press, enhancing our setup for the plethora of female groups currently in the market.

"Whatever," the first single, was serviced May 13 to R&B, top 40 rhythm/crossover, top 40, and jazz/AC stations. It received 3,119 detections on 210 stations for the week ending May 26, according to Broadcast Data Systems.

Written and produced by Babyface, "Whatever," and its accompanying clip, executives have booked a string of television dates for En Vogue. The trio has already appeared on "The Rosie O'Donnell Show" and "Saturday Night Live." Future appearances include "The MTV Movie Awards" on June 12 and "The Tonight Show Starring Jay Leno," on June 25. In addition, the O'Donnell appearance will be repeated the week of the album's release.

On June 18, the trio—which is managed by the Left Bank Organization, based in Los Angeles—will be featured in ad spot wraparounds for the WB Network's prime-time programs.

On-air appearances will be backed by an extensive print advertising campaign that will surround the album's release. En Vogue ads are slated to appear in Time, People, Vibe, and Jet.

The label plans to send the act on a nonpromotional performance tour of radio and retail beginning June 16 in New York. The tour is scheduled to stop in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

An En Vogue tour, which will be booked through William Morris, is likely to follow, but there were no firm plans at press time.

The label sent En Vogue on an international promotional tour May 18 that ran until Sunday (1).

Says Jackson, "Don't Let Go (Love)" has laid the groundwork for their new album in international territories, just like it's doing here. We're backing that up with radio and television appearances as they travel abroad.

AUSsIE INDIE SHOCK EXPANDS IN U.S., JAPAN
(Continued from page 6)

Aussie Indie shock expands in U.S., Japan

Shock's move into the U.S. market comes in the wake of success for Bodyjar and Pearly Gatesheers in Japan and Southeast Asia. In May, Big Heavy Stuff became the first Shock act to be licensed to Japan's Quatro Label. The Sydney band performs in Japan this year after dates through Southeast Asia territories. The act is released in Singapore on Pony Canyon and in the Philippines on the Universal label. (The Philippines Universal is not connected with Universal/MCA.)

Williams says he expects more Shock acts will be licensed through Quatro in the future.

In recent months, Shock has taken on Australian distribution for U.K. dance labels Good Looking, XL, and Ore and Germany's Studio K7 and Edel. Dance has domestically proven its biggest growth area. According to dance manager Nick Dunshane, it constitutes 35%-40% of Shock's business.

Since mid-1995, international licensing agreements have seen the indie group gain charting spins in (Nicki French's "Total Eclipse Of The Heart" and Hocus Pocus' "Here's Johnny") and a No. 2 (Triple X's "Theme From X-Files") on the Australian Music Report. All three went platinum (100,000 units).

"Altogether we've had 12 singles go into the top 60 of the mainstream charts," says Dunshane. "Plus, huge sales for compilations like 'Pure Adrenaline,' 'Central Hits-FM,' and 'Central Energy' have underlined Shock's position as the major independent force in dance music distribution in Australia."

During May, the company expanded its dance A&R and promotion person-
Artists & Music

EDITED BY CATHERINE APPLEFLED OLSON

Sony Sets The Stage For Soundtrack Growth
New Entity, Under Brunman, To Serve As Umbrella Label

BY TERRI HORAK

NEW YORK—In an effort to capitalize on the booming soundtrack business, Sony has formed Sony Music Soundtrax, to serve as an umbrella label for soundtrack releases from the Sony Music Entertainment family of labels. Epic Soundtrax senior VP Glen Brunman has been named executive VP of the new entity, which will issue releases from more than 20 individual Sony labels (Billboard, May 31).

“Glen’s performance with Epic was so outstanding that it made sense to consolidate and have one voice for the whole company. His responsibilities are second to none,” says Thomas D. Mote, COO of Sony Music Entertainment.

Brunman, who is based in Sony’s Santa Monica, Calif., office, says the plan was a deliberate decision to match the music to the film, but also to create an album of summer music, a reggae compilation that would stand on its own,” says Nancy Berry, executive VP ofVirgin Music Group worldwide.

Among the five emphasis tracks are UB40’s “Tell Me I’m True,” which also is the first single on the band’s next album, due June 30, and Shagg’s “My Dream,” which will be included on his next album, due in July. Ironically, “My Dream” was the song Shaggy originally wanted to include on the album. His first choice was the single goes to “Speed,” because it is being used in the forthcoming Joplin biopic.

Happy with his second choice, Shaggy says that “Speed” 2 is the perfect move to take up momentum for his solo tour and up his upcoming solo project. “Soundtracks are great, because they really get people into the music and help get songs recognized,” he says. “Everything is a blessing in disguise. Piece Of My Heart was already recognized, and now ‘My Dream’ will get recognized, too.”

Also groovin’ to a reggae beat was Mark Mancina, who scored the first “Speed” and wrote several new reggae tunes for the sequel that served as aural glue between various action scenes. Whereas Manzini elicited the help of actual chimpanzees to create the metallic percussion sound in the original movie, for the sequel he went for a Jamaican/Latin feel that was realized via a band that included 15 steel drums. “There’s a lot of music in this movie overall and a lot of working together,” he says. “It was like mixing the music while the studio was mixing the final version of the movie.”

Mancina found himself doing double duty on the scoring front for summer action flicks. He also co-wrote the score for “Con Air” with longtime pal Trevor Rabin. “Con Air” is due from Hollywood Records Friday (6).

New from ESPN and Tommy Boy Records is “X-Games—The Soundtrack Album,” a pulse-elevating potpourri of new and existing alternative, metal, and hip-hop material, and includes Hot Chilli Peppers, Fishbone, Public Enemy, Goldfinger, and Helmet.

Although it’s not a CD-ROM, “The Lost World: Jurassic Park” soundtrack, out May 20 from MCA Records, is a true multimedia experience of the most primordial kind. The CD sleeve folds out into a four-panel prehistoric jungle scene that features pop-up cutouts of T-Rex and three of his dino pals.
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www.americanradiohistory.com
PROMISE KEPT: When Capitol Nashville laid out its promotion plan for baby act the Ranch early this year, there was one portion of its formula that was conspicuously absent: country radio.

Why would Capitol shy away from radio when the only two new artists it introduced in 1996—Trace Atkins and Deana Carter—became huge successes in the format?

According to Capitol Nashville VP of publicity Lorie Lytle, it was a matter of following up on a promise made to country radio last year by label president Scott Hendricks.

"Scott told programmers that we would only bring them two new artists a year, and we were determined to follow up on that promise," says Lytle. "There is just so much coming out, and we decided we didn't want to add to the burden.

According to Capitol, the Ranch, while still unknown here, has had success in Australia, where two of the band's three members were reared. Its self-titled debut bowed in the U.S. April 22.

In lieu of approaching radio, Capitol has formulated a mainly non-radio plan for the act, which the label signed after already working to market, new acts River Road and Dean Miller at radio.

Included in the plan will be a grass-roots approach borrows from a page in the rock 'n' roll text book.

Multiple visits to tour markets with an emphasis on local press and retail are aimed at taking advantage of the act's charisma and marketable stage presence.

Capitol Nashville VP of sales John Rose says the label has aggressively handed out sampler cassettes at clubs and retail. One Musicland promotion gave away a Ranch sampler along with the purchase of any album, while another allowed movie patrons to exchange their ticket stub at a local retailer for a sampler.

Still another promotion called for placing tent cards in venues where the act would be playing. Those cards, which were filled out and exchanged for a sampler cassette, have helped Capitol Nashville build a healthy database for the band, says Rose.

The label will also work the act heavily at video channels. On May 23, Capitol Nashville serviced a clip for "Walk In The Country," to CMT and TNM and will follow with a video for "Chuterbility" later this summer.

While Lytle admits that the band, which already wears its rock influences on its sleeve, could be a somewhat non-traditional fit at country radio, she is confident that the act will eventually break through. "Yes, they're a little different sounding, but if you look at artists like Big House, you'll see that there are a lot of bands that are stretching the boundaries but still fitting through the eye of the needle, and we feel the Ranch does just that."

ROADWORK: The captivating and curious Kinetics will play June 18 at the Jupiter in Berkeley, Calif., in support of their self-titled EP on Mad Lang Records. -- Hannah bluemans, Mem Shannon, whose latest set, "Mem Shannon's 2nd Blues Album," was released in April, plays Friday (6) at Alleyway 97 in Longview, Texas. -- Minty Fresh's Papas Frias begin their summer tour June 12 at New York's Mercury Lounge. Their latest album, "Helloiself," was released May 6.
Big Bub Goes Solo Route Again
Producer/Songwriter Readies Kedar Debut

BY SHAWNEE SMITH

NEW YORK—After writing and producing hits for Mary J. Blige, Bobby Brown, Boy George, Keith Sweat, and BLACKstreet over the past 10 years, Lee "Big Bub" Drakeford is turning his focus to solo work, a solo comeback with "Timeless." The debut Kedar Entertainment set, due in mid-August, Big Bub gained notoriety in the late '80s as a member of Motown act Today, one of the progenitors of new jack swing. The group's self-titled debut album sold 21,000 units, according to SoundScan, and spawned the hit singles "Here I Go Again" and "Girl I Got My Eyes On You," which peaked at No. 3 and No. 1, respectively, on the Hot R&B Singles chart. BIG BUB

It's Payday. Payday's O.C., right, stands with producer DJ Premiere following a recent performance by the artist at Tramps in New York. Premiere produced three tracks on "Jewelz," O.C.'s album, which is due Aug. 5.

Tradition Is Watchword For Debut Acts: Lambert Back On Label Tip With Babylon

CHANGE IN THE AIR: Fertile summer and fall R&B releases by promising new artists, such as A&M's Billy Porter, Epic's Simone Hines, and Yab Yum's Laurna, signal R&B's return to a more traditional song style.

Increasing attention to socially relevant and less-graphic hip-hop love lyrics, along with solid song construction (in addition to the prerequisite soul beats and rhythms), is appearing with greater frequency on artist debuts. This renaissance soul movement should facilitate an easier acceptance of quality recording acts whose previous releases did not garner commerical success, such as Virgin's Brigitte McWilliams, Mecca Dan's Michael Speaks, and Elektra's Family Stand—all of whom have sets slated for the next quarter.

While these metier acts stand to gain an increased position with programmers because of their music's growing popularity, the more trendy hip-hop/R&B acts also continue to remain viable in label pipelines.

Rap also seems to be adjusting its thematic course. More thought-provoking lyrical content is apparent from such hip-hop acts as Craig Mack and Boogie Monsters (Billboard, May 10). There have been other telling barometers. Dr. Dre's segue from Death Row to his own Aftermath label, where he will focus on a broader spectrum of R&B acts, and the very public lullabies of Puffy Combs and Snoop Doggy Dogg, which have done much to help quell perceived East Coast/West Coast tensions.

Another and more subtle indication that the rap climate is changing is rapper-turned-actor Will Smith's move back to recording. He has two songs on Columbia's "Men In Black—The Album" soundtrack, due July 1. He also stars in the film.

Smith, who is recording under his given name, raps on the soundtrack's title track/first single and "Cruisin'." According to Columbia sources, the artist is expected to ink an album deal with the label.

Smith's move to record again is interesting given that, as the Fresh Prince, he and Jazzy Jeff recorded fun rap songs—a style that in recent years has been out of step with prevailing consumer tastes.

The direction of Smith's debut Columbia seems uncertain, but it's unlikely he'd come with a hardcore ditty—"it would be suicide for his multimillion dollar American image," says a source. "The tone of the set is likely to be in a less-serious vein, supporting the notion that hip-hop consumers are in the mood for something different."

BAD IS GOOD: Ten-time Grammy-nominated songwriter/producer Dennis Lambert, who's worked with such artists as the Four Tops, Smokey Robinson, Berry Butler, Tavares, and the Temptations, has begun rolling out the first projects on his recently formed Babylon Records:

"It was about a six-month setup, and I kind of backed into it," he says. Lambert says that the industry's difficult sales climate was a factor in opening up shop with Babylon, which is independently distributed through M.S. Distributing. "In the '70s, I had another label called Haven," he says. "It was a catch-all label for everything that I was writing and producing. The time was right to start the label, because everyone was looking for something different, creatively. But [the label] didn't have the marketing and promotion resources that I would have liked."

This time around, Lambert assembled a group of investment bankers and a lawyer with whom he's worked. He says that after raising the start-up money, finding the right kind of acts became the battle. "I've reached a point in my career where I want the things I get involved with to be on a positive and upbeat tip. At the same time, I want to continue being part of something new and fresh."

Despite possessing a diverse musical background—since he began his career in the mid-'60s, he's written for and produced artists including the Doobie Brothers, Santana, Kenny Loggins, and Glen Campbell—Lambert will focus on R&B. "The roster may get more diverse as time goes on, but urban is where I've spent most of my creative time," he says.

The label has three acts signed. On May 20, it released "Moonlight Pop (Raise The Roof)," the first single from bass artist DJ Spank, which Lambert says has been receiving early spins on mix shows. The label is focusing on 17 market kits as it prepares to release Spank's set, "Let's Go Party," July 8.

At the end of June, Babylon will release the yet-to-be-determined first single from New York rapper Hit Hard. Lambert plans to attack the underground hip-hop community hard and promises that the artist's set will be interesting. "He's a tough kid, and he records reality rap, but it's positive and has a hopeful tone to it," Lambert says.

Babylon plans to release the debut project by Los Angeles-based R&B songwriter/ vocalist Rob Boldt in the fall.

Once it's up and running, Lambert plans for Babylon to have a roster of about six to eight artists, releasing four to six albums per year.
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**“WELL, THEY SHOULD CALL US A MAJOR LABEL”**

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**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER: MASTER P**

**No Limit Records**

[www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com)
R&B &  

Bubbling Under \ Hot R&B Singles

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CRITIQUE RECORDS AND DAMAGE SALUTE BLACK MUSIC MONTH

FEATURING THE HIT SONGS

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Recorded with the greatest sales guides. © 1997 Billboard/P. Communications and SoundScan, Inc.
GET IT TOGETHER
"STEEL" GOLD
"GET IT TOGETHER" GOLD
ALBUM "NO DOUBT"
APPROACHING GOLD
IN STORES NOW

TARAL
SINGLE "DISTANT LOVER"
IN STORES JULY
ALBUM "THIS TIME"
IN STORES AUGUST

RONNIE HENSON
"WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?"
SINGLE IN STORES JUNE
ALBUM IN STORES JULY
IT CAN'T GET ANY HOTTER THAN 98° INVISIBLE MAN SINGLE IN STORES JUNE SELF-TITLED ALBUM IN STORES JULY

MARIO WINANS SINGLE "DON'T KNOW" ALBUM "STORY OF MY HEART" IN STORES JUNE

SHADES "SERENADE" SINGLE IN STORES MAY SELF-TITLED ALBUM IN STORES JULY

JASON WEAVER ALBUM IN STORES SEPTEMBER

MOTOWN THE SOUND OF YOUNG AMERICA
The current state of R&B music is promising. R&B combined with rap make black music the second-largest specialized music form in America. In 1996, it accounted for an impressive 21% of records shipped, according to the Recording Industry Association of America. That’s $2.63 billion.

Leading the economic charge is independent R&B retail, which is coming into its own as shop owners take a more progressive business approach to their enterprise. According to leaders in that community, an increasing number of indie stores are embracing SoundScan—once viewed by many as an enemy to smaller stores. Retail's record attendance at Impact's Super Summit XI in Miami in April sent a strong message to the rest of the industry concerning that business sector's growing importance and recognition of the economic clout that it always possessed.

With the continuing proliferation of the various independent retail coalitions that began springing up about five years ago nationwide, the political clout that these urban cartels carry in the music industry will no doubt continue to swell.

LABELS' COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS
As with the independent retailers, supportive relationships among R&B senior record executives is on the rise, with label leaders engaging in ongoing dialogue concerning shared problems. The collaborative efforts appear to be driven by executives' understanding that no man in this business is an island and that, given the proper circumstances (read: no hit records), everyone is expendable—especially black executives, who in many quarters are apparently viewed as disposable goods.

The sprouting peer camaraderie among colleagues seems greatest in New York, where it is logistically easier to come together, as opposed to in Los Angeles, where geographical distance creates problems with time—a commodity that all executives find in short supply.

CREATIVE COMMITMENT
More than ever in recent years, musical creativity on the R&B side is on the rise, with artists such as Lauryn Hill, Phaya and Adriana Evans leading the crop of talented young acts. At the same time, more tenured acts such as Patti LaBelle, Jody Watley and BeBe Winans continue to toe the line.

At the A&R level, there has been a renewed commitment to signing, developing and producing acts that are more than just visually appealing. Many acts being signed are multi-talented, offering writing, singing and live performing skills, in addition to good looks.

These acts are coming from a wide variety of places creatively—from rap acts bearing jungle beats and artists favoring contemporary hip-hop to those partial to traditional R&B and renaissance soul—all of which offer consumers rhythm alternatives when shopping for albums.

DARING DURING DAYPARTS
On the radio front, despite the looming shadow of black-owned stations being snapped up by hungry corporations, programmers are stepping out in greater numbers to play songs that have new and different sounds. Although constantly on guard against their competitors, many stations, such as KJLH Los Angeles and KPRS Kansas City, are leading the charge to broaden playlists that include nontraditional music (relatively speaking) such as gospel, jazz, and blues, during all dayparts.

These promising moves could ultimately lead to a return to the days when black radio was a community beacon, with DJs voicing influential opinions concerning social and political issues affecting urban communities. Such an "innovative" concept as air personalities could prove beneficial to independent R&B stations in their continuing air war with crossover outlets.

Continued on page 42
The roots of our music lead to one place

Know where you came from
Know where you're going

Atlantic Group
Want to know how we build the chart recaps for this issue's Spotlight? This is how we do it.

The singles and album lists are based on performance on, respectively, the Hot R&B Singles and Top R&B Albums charts, from the start of the chart year (which began with the Dec. 7, 1996, chart year) through the May 17 issue. Both lists represent the accumulated chart points earned by each title for each week spent on the applicable chart.

The weekly chart points for Hot R&B Singles are based on audience impressions as calculated by Broadcast Data Systems, sales units provided by SoundScan and radio points from playlist reports made by stations in smaller markets.

The recaps were assembled by chart manager Datu Faison, with assistance from Anthony Colombo, Michael Cusson and Alex Vitoulis.

Top R&B Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LIFE AFTER DEATH</td>
<td>The Notorious B.I.G.</td>
<td>Bad Boy</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>THE DON KILLUMINATION: THE 7 DAY THEORY</td>
<td>Makaveli</td>
<td>Death Row</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>BADUZIM</td>
<td>Erykah Badu</td>
<td>H-Dog</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ILL NA MA</td>
<td>Foy Brown, Violator/Def Jam</td>
<td>ILL NA MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ANOTHER LEVEL</td>
<td>BLACKstreet</td>
<td>Interscope</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ONE IN A MILLION</td>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
<td>Blackground</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SECRETS</td>
<td>Toni Braxton</td>
<td>LaFace</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>THE PREACHER'S WIFE</td>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>Arista</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SPACE JAM</td>
<td>Soundtrack</td>
<td>Warner/Atlantic</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>HARD CORE</td>
<td>Lil' Kim</td>
<td>Undead/Big Beat</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>THE UNTOUCHABLES</td>
<td>Scarface</td>
<td>Rep-A-Lot/Kool Tyke</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>THA DOGGFATHER</td>
<td>Snoop Doggy Dogg</td>
<td>Death Row</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>MUDDY WATERS</td>
<td>Redman</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>DRU HILL</td>
<td>Dru Hill</td>
<td>Island</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>KEITH SWAT</td>
<td>Hitman</td>
<td>Swagga</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>HOUSE OF MUSIC</td>
<td>Tony Toni Toné!</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>HELL ON EARTH</td>
<td>Incubus</td>
<td>Loud</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>THE DAY</td>
<td>Babyface</td>
<td>Epic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>TRU 2 DA GAME</td>
<td>Tha Dogg Pound</td>
<td>No Limit</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>BOW DOWN</td>
<td>Westside Connection</td>
<td>Lench Mob</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>MAXWELL'S URBAN HANG SUITE</td>
<td>Maxwell</td>
<td>Columbia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>GINuwine</td>
<td>The Bachelor</td>
<td>Ginuwine</td>
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In their quest to increase market share, many domestic labels have seen the light within the world market and are sending their R&B acts into international territories in greater numbers. However, as they attempt to wade deeper into international waters, are the relationships in place to allow R&B acts to stay afloat? Or will many U.S.-based soul groups find themselves at the bottom of a sea of world releases?

BMG International A&R/marketing senior VP Heinz Henn says the level of interaction between domestic and international label executives varies from company to company. "At our company, there's a lot of synergy," he notes. "At the distribution level, it's my job to do whatever it takes to make a local artist into a regional artist and a regional artist into a global artist."

CREEPING TO THE U.K.

George Levendis, marketing manager for Arista Records U.K., says that he and the label's head of R&B repertoire, Mensyn Lyn, do an enormous amount of liaising, "probably 15 calls a day," with their opposite numbers in the U.S.—both at Arista and affiliated U.S. labels such as LaFace and Bad Boy. Adds Lyn, "The people I deal with are going to be my voice when they go back to their respective companies, and hopefully the synergy we have is enough to bypass any cultural differences." The two executives feel that Arista's U.K. operation, and those of its BMG sister companies throughout Europe, have won the respect of their American colleagues by demonstrating the idiosyncrasies of their market. In January 1996, when Lyn received TLC's "Creek" (a U.S hit that only reached No. 22 in the U.K. when it originally debuted a year earlier), he recalls raised eyebrows. "They were a little bit puzzled, to be honest," Lyn says. "At first, it was 'Why would you re-release this record when radio here wouldn't play it [the first time]? But they gave us the opportunity to do what was right for this market.' The point was proved with a No. 6 U.K. peak for the reissue.

In the case of Toni Braxton's "Un-break My Heart," Arista U.K. had huge success, not only with the ballad but with the song's dance mix. "So with Toni's latest single, 'I Don't Want To,'" says Levendis, "we insisted that we wanted another [dance] mix on the single. That's another example of how the two sides have come together.

CULTURAL CUSTOM TAILORING

According to PolyGram International senior VP Jay Durgan, a lot of pressures influence the outcome of domestic projects being worked internationally. Among the challenges that domestic and international executives face in working together are issues of product packaging, presentation and the remaking of original tracks to suit specific markets. Says Durgan, "The biggest conflict is usually over the time that an act has to work in the international marketplace."

Durgan says compromise is important in order for an act to receive the best chance to become a success internationally. "The person who coined the phrase, 'the world is getting smaller' obviously was not a touring artist," he says. Dean Gillard, A&R manager at Universal Music U.K., is another London executive whose channels to his U.S. counterparts are constantly open. "I speak to them every night," he says, noting that the dialogue takes place across all Universal's labels on East and West Coasts.

In the recent U.K. success story of BLACKstreet, Gillard often consulted directly with band leader Teddy Riley, with whom he has a long-term relationship dating back to the days of MCA signings Wreck-N-Effect and Guy. "I've been doing A&R for our American product for the last three and a half years," says Gillard, "and at the beginning of that time, the R&B material we were putting out wasn't as widely accepted (in the U.K.) as it is now. Sometimes (his transatlantic colleagues couldn't understand why we had to do house mixes on things. [For example] dealing with Uptown on Jodeci and Mary J. Blige was difficult. Then when we started having hits, they began to understand. Our relationship with them is excellent," he continues, "and going backwards and forwards to the States as I have, we are actually consulted now about what will work in our market, and being involved from the demo stage on records."

FRANCE DIGS R&B

Olivier LeFebvre, junior label manager for Motown at PolyGram France, says sometimes there can be a communication gap between the U.S. and his market, at management level: "I have often noticed, when talking to American managers," he says, "that they don't realize how important the R&B market is in France."

LeFebvre recalls the label compilation "Motown New Flavas," released in France in February. The set included remixes of material by Boyz II Men, Queen Latifah and Zhane by French DJ Couteau. "We had 'carte blanche' from the mother label," says LeFebvre, "and we sold 15,000 copies with no promotion other than DJ and R&B parties, as there is no specialized press nor radio devoted to the genre." Obtaining airplay seems to be a universal consideration in breaking acts. Lyn says that, having built the transatlantic relationship with positive results, continued on page 34

This article was prepared by J.R. Reynolds in Los Angeles, Paul Sexton in London, Thessa Mouf in Amsterdam and Cecile Tenevrey in Paris.
The New Heart & Soul of Rhythm and Blues

def soul

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HANDS ACROSS THE OCEAN
Continued from page 32
"It’s now such that we do get pressure from the U.S., and they are disappointed when we don’t get results on a record”—as in the recent case of the American No. 1, “Can’t Nobody Hold Me Down” by Puff Daddy, which failed to attract any substantial U.K. airplay and peaked outside the top 20.

Says Lyn, "The American office is wise enough to realize that radio is an integral part of breaking a record in the U.K.”

BIG AT HOME, BIG ABROAD
Another factor that affects the careers of R&B acts is the position held by most American label executives that an act that crosses over in the U.S. has a better chance of performing well internationally.

"It’s a lot easier to generate interest abroad when you have a song that hits the pop charts," says Arista GM/executive VP Roy Lott. "It gives international affiliates more ammo to work with when marketing the acts there."

By example, Lott cites Arista act Whitney Houston and Arista-distributed LaFace acts Toni Braxton, Tony Rich and TLC as examples of R&B acts that had big crossover numbers in the States before going on to similar success in international territories. He further stresses that the domestic crossover strategy is a litmus test for all genres.

Lott agrees with Lott’s assessment of "If you want to get the really big [sales] numbers, some [international] territory executives will say, ‘Give me the Billboard [mainstream] charts.’ However, Durgan is quick to add that sometimes the “home-run” numbers are not an immediate consideration, and discussion of goals regarding acts has to be held among domestic and international executives. The bottom line, according to Durgan, is that domestic executives should remember to not compare their methods and numbers at the international level. ‘Leave the U.S. yardstick behind,’ he says.

PARTICIPATORY PROMOTION
Epic international senior VP Steve Barnett suggests that participation—whether in the international promoting and marketing process—as opposed to crossing over domestically—is the paramount factor in breaking American R&B acts internationally.

Citing artist Babyface as an example, Barnett says, "The Day," the artist’s current album, has so far sold 1 million units internationally, representing a 500% increase over the lifetime of his previous set, 1993’s "For The Cool In You."

On the 1993 album, the label based the level of commitment of its international marketing campaign on the success that was occurring on the pop charts in the U.S. The delay resulted in anemic non-U.S. sales compared to the current set’s international numbers. "With ‘The Day,’ the label employed immediate proactive interaction with Sony’s regional offices to plan and promote new projects to target regions," Barnett says. "Praising Babyface and his manager for committing a significant amount of time to the international market.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
Epic’s efforts to break developing R&B artists internationally are just as important as those for its more established acts. Epic international marketing senior director Scott Greer says long-term planning and communication have been key in setting up debut Yab Yum vocalist Laurnea, slated for international release in June. "It’s all about artist development," says Greer. "We began working with everybody on this project [in January]. In February, we took advance CDs, four-color visuals and initial marketing to a big meeting with our counterparts from international territories. Our common goal is for her to become more than just a singles artist. Columbia-Holland product manager Jeroen van der Meer has been working closely with Columbia’s international office in London and with his New York counterparts on two of the label’s international R&B priorities, Maxwell and Puff Johnson.

"The London office coordinates European promotion schedules," says Van der Meer, "but when I need to discuss the details of an ongoing, specific Dutch project—like the radio taping of Maxwell’s Amsterdam show—I go directly to the source, which is Columbia U.S.

"Occasionally, Columbia U.S. contacts us for more detailed feedback," Van der Meer continues. "For instance, the international product manager for DJ Muggs called me to discuss the best way to handle the marketing in Holland. Sometimes, this kind of direct contact can be very helpful. It’s very important that Columbia U.S. provides us with the latest information on artists and marketing campaigns; it all appears in an international database, where you can see which territory is doing what. If I see that France is giving away 12-inch singles with every Maxwell album, I might be interested in doing the same in Holland." According to Van der Meer, cultural barriers or communication problems between Columbia U.S. and Columbia Holland are nonexistent. "When R&B became bigger in Holland last year, the Columbia U.S. artists were available for touring and promotion. Maxwell and Puff Johnson were in Holland at the right time, when their singles were doing well at radio and sales-wise. These artists and their management are committed to tour [in Europe]," he says.

PARENTAL ADVISORY
Although many smaller domestic labels have less influence in the marketing plans of their acts once they’re licensed into foreign hands, many label executives in non-U.S. territories still seek the advice of an act’s parent label.

"We’ve had particular success in working with [Japanese-based] Blue Dolphin, which has licensed our bass artist DJ Trans, whose album ‘Da Tour’ was released in Japan in January," says Attitude Records president Jeff Cohen. "They’ve asked us to assist them in '['marketing our act] and have been receptive to our suggestions concerning remix selections."

Pan Disc president Bo Crane shares a similar experience with Japanese label Avex. "Bass music has been catching on over there, and they came to us to do some deals," says Crane. "In the beginning, we were working one project at a time, then they got more serious."

Pan Disc albums recently released in Japan through Avex include "Techno Bass Phase II" by Beat Dominator (the last quarter of 1996) and "Recognized," by the Puppies, which was released by Avex in April. Crane credits his label’s own enthusiasm in working with artists as key to their increasing interest in Pan Disc product. "We’re readily assisted people they’ve sent over here to research how the bass culture ticks," says Crane. "We’ve learned a lot about how the Japanese market their music, and we now try to make our records with more of a world view."

ANGRY SAMOAAN ALMAGAM
Kent Entertainment Group president Morey Alexander says working with counterparts in non-U.S. territories is "something of a challenge for his group Boo-Yaa T.R.I.B.E., whose "Angry Samoans" album was released internationally May 20.

"They’re a hit overseas, as a result of their music and an extensive tour through six countries, where they performed in concert and conducted television interviews," says Alexander, who describes the act’s current set as an amalgam of metal, rap and funk.

The executive lauds European executives for being "open-minded, creative. "The guys in Europe do a nice job," he continues. "There’s not a lot of suits walking around, and they’re really into the music, as opposed to when [Boo-Yaa] had their deal [in the U.S.]."

Boo-Yaa T.R.I.B.E. also conducted a promotional tour of five countries April 20 to 28, participating in radio and press interviews as well as "promotional fairs" for the various international label executives, "we’ve selected appropriate singles and videos, and coordinated the act’s participation in various music festivals in Europe," says Alexander.
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IN THE POST-ARSENIO WORLD, EXPOSURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARTISTS ARE NOT WHAT THEY USED TO BE. A NEW FALL LINEUP MAY CHANGE ALL THAT.

Though musical artist-driven shows are increasing—Queen Latifah's "Living Single," Brandy's "Moesha," L.L. Cool J's "In The House" and, more recently, Jason Weaver's "Smart Guy"—the opportunities for mainstream exposure on network television hasn't been the same for R&B acts since the cancellation of "The Arsenio Hall Show" in May 1994.

"Not since [Arsenio] have we had a ratio of [R&B] artists perform on TV equivalent to their success on the pop charts," says Diana Baron, senior VP of publicity at A&M (U.S.), who handles Barry White, CeCe Peniston, Mint Condition and Sounds Of Blackness.

According to Baron, Hall's show was more interested in turning audiences onto all types of music, whereas late-night shows like David Letterman's, Jay Leno's and Conan O'Brien's cater to a much older demographic and don't want to risk turning audiences off with music or artists their demos may not like. "The whole world is watching [them], so it's important what goes on in the first 55 minutes of the show; no one really looks at what goes on in the last five minutes, which is when the acts usually perform, unless it's a big star."

For Darryl Williams, senior VP of A&R and publicity at Elektra (U.S.) and executive producer of Brandy and brother Ray J's debut albums, the late-night shows are an option only for established artists.

"By the time an artist gets to Leno and Letterman, they have sold well over gold and close to platinum, but for breaking new artists, the only vehicle out there is really 'Soul Train.' The next best way is an awards show like the 'Soul Train' or NAACP Image Awards," says Williams. "'New York Undercover' helps a lot, 'Natalie's' is great, but I still don't think it gives you the same type of exposure you had with Arsenio."

Natalie's, the club segment featured at the end of the FoxContinued on page 42
the streets will never be the same

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CRAIG MACK
“Operation: Get Down”
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Lumiz
Dru Down,
Phalos,
Go Mack, Kausion,
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- "Someone" featuring Puff Daddy is the next hit from SWV’s forthcoming LP, CAN WE, impacts June 10th. New album features performances by Snoop and all of today’s hottest rappers. SWV is definitely taking it back to the streets in ’97.

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**Ericka Yancey**

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Ericka Yancey, 18-year-old R&B sensation, is primed for success with her first single and video “So Good.” On BET and THE BOX. Album this summer.

Be on the lookout this summer for Vanessa Rubin and Elusion.

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**Robyn**

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- 17-year-old Swedish star Robyn is ready for major U.S. action. First single “Do You Know (What It Takes)” is the fastest breaking single at crossover this year. Major press and TV blitz to follow. Album coming June 24th.

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GLOBAL R&B PULSE
LOCAL NOISE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL QUARTER

LONDON—Traditionally, on the British R&B scene, it’s been female artists—Eternal, Lisa Stansfield, Dina Carroll, Michelle Gayle and Gabrielle—who have enjoyed sustained pop success. Among the new male artists emerging behind the scene is DJ Mark Morrison, members of the young quintet Damage have made the greatest strides in pushing British R&B from the speciality market to the mainstream. The vocal group consisting of Ras, Noel, Jade, Core and Andre was formed in 1991. Signed by Big Life Records in 1994 and releasing just one single in 1995 for the R&B label around the group has concentrated on vocal training and live performances, honing its act and recording its debut album. Damage’s first official single, “anything,” edged into the lower half of the U.K. singles chart last summer. “Love Me,” hit No. 12, and the ballad “Forever” reached No. 6 last Christmas and stayed on the chart for weeks. That helped dispel the tag of Jodeci wannabes. “We knew in our head what we were Damage and we weren’t following this group or that group,” says Core.

Another top 10 hit, “Love Guaranteed,” in March preceded the April release of the “Forever” album, which debuted at No. 13. The BMG-distributed Critique label signed the group for the U.S. with plans to release “Forever” in the States next month. “I look up to Damage, even though I’m in Damage,” says Andre, “because they’re doing something. This album is hot.” —KWAKU

STOCKHOLM—One of Sweden’s most high-profile R&B artists this year is not Swedish at all. Voted best Swedish newcomer at the recent ZTV Dance Music Awards held here April 7, Lutricia McNeal first came to Sweden in 1989 on vacation. McNeal, who hails from Oklahoma, is signed to Warner Music Sweden on the XM/Metronome imprint. Although an American citizen, she calls both Stockholm and Dallas home, although the majority of her time is spent in the latter city. Previously known as the female front figure for Swedish act Rob ‘N’ Ray in the early ’90s, McNeal was brought in as a “temporary” replacement for then lead figure Leila K and was chosen to record on the vocals of two back-to-back hit singles, “Clubhopping” and “In Command.” Her breakthrough came last autumn with the release of a cover version of Barry White’s ’70s hit “Ain’t That Just The Way,” which made it to No. 1 on the Swedish singles chart.

The remaining tracks on the subsequent debut album, titled “My Side Of Town,” are co-written by McNeal and the Swedish writing/production team EZ Productions. The second single, which bears the same name as the album, was a radio favorite and made McNeal personally much a household name. Her album is currently being released in other European territories. When asked about her award and the phenomenal success of her album, McNeal commented, “I feel blessed. This is a tough business, and it takes lots of hard work to succeed. You have to have a lot of faith, too, because you never know how things will go.” —KEN NEPTUNE

MELBOURNE—Beginning her career by singing in Sydney’s wine bars when she was only 16, Renee Geyer won acclaim through the ’70s as Australia’s top R&B singer, with five chart singles and three hit albums on RCA and Mushroom. A nine-year stint in Los Angeles brought deals with EMI Music and A&M Records (1988’s “Five Easy Pieces,” featuring Neil Larsen and Average White Band alumni), recording and touring experience with Joe Cocker, and session work, including backing vocals on Sting’s “We’ll Be Together.” Now based in Melbourne, Geyer returns intermittently to L.A. for projects. It’s a measure of the respect the two commands here that when her last album, “Difficult Woman” (Larrkin, 1998), failed to get radio airplay, Australian music fans flocked to get her back into the spotlight.

Acclaimed writer Paul Kelly, who was moved to tears by her earlier version of his “Foggy Highway,” wrote three songs and produced the new album, “Renee.” Joe Camilleri of the Black Sorrows funded the record. The cream of local players—bluesmen to post-punkers—lined up to get involved.

“Without sounding glib, this is simply the best album I’ve made, and the most fun I’ve had,” says the 43-year-old Geyer. “My voice sounds better than ever, and I’m more discerning about my music.” While some Aussie labels have expressed interest in “Renee,” Geyer has her eye on re-entering the U.S. market. “It’d be wonderful for me to get my first release in Europe all at this time,” she says. —CHRISTIE ELIZER

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Brigette McWilliams  fire

The #1 most added at Urban Adult Contemporary first week out
The first single and video from her forthcoming album Too Much Woman

Produced and arranged by Steve Harvey for Portknockie Productions
R&B & TV

Continued from page 36

network's cop show, "New York Undercover," offers new and vintage R&B acts the opportunity to perform classic R&B songs live.

"I had the idea to bring in classic acts like B.B. King and Bobby Womack, because the concept of urban adult music has been destroyed," says James Mtume, composer for the series. "Then I got the idea to bring in younger acts to do a classic song, like 'Wild Flower' was done by Silk, and Erkah Badu just did 'Stay' by Chaka Khan. (Booking) is predicated on who's hot, not so much on who has a hot single, so that way we can have somebody who had a hit, like six or seven months ago.

Though the acts don't go to perform their latest singles at Natalie's, Mtume attempts to weave at least three current singles into the show's story line, usually during the opening teaser.

ACTING OPPORTUNITIES

While "New York Undercover" offers live spots, shows like "Moesha," "Martin" and "Living Single" sometimes give artists an opportunity to act and perform, with special recurring roles and rare "performance" episodes.

Heavy D had a recurring role on the now-syndicated "Roc" and "Living Single," Yo-Yo could be found on "Martin" every so often—the show occasionally featured different R&B and rap artists like Brian McKnight and The Notorious B.I.G. And RuPaul has acted and performed on L.L. Cool J's "In the House," and a concert episode of "Moesha" featured 112, MC Lyte, A-O-A, Yo-Yo and BLACKstreet.

Opportunities like these, however, are rare, considering the number of groups in the market. The programs mostly serve to further the star artist's career—not the musical guest's.

"It gives [the artist] the opportunity to sell their music to a broader based group," says Kelly Haley, senior VP of publicity and media relations at Motown. Queen Latifah's label.

"Musically, Latifah's core audience is hip-hop, and her show reaches beyond that audience to a broader black demo; and I'm sure there's a white audience who watches too. But at the end of the day, it's gotta be a great song. If it's a great record, it's gonna sell, regardless." Haley is, however, looking forward to using "Living Single" to cross-promote Latifah's upcoming album.

"I can't be the same for artists like Brandy, Jason Weaver and Ray J, soon to be joined by "In The House's" Maia Campbell and "Family Matters" Darius McCrary, who began their careers on television first but have experienced big success as they start in their recording careers.

"I think it's a lot harder [to make the TV-to-music transition] if you're really successful on television and people identify you with your character like Jasmine Guy," says Elektra's Williams. "She came out [musically] with something so different [from her TV character], and she was just known for being [Whitley] on 'A Different World.'"

NO GUARANTEES OF A HIT

"I think a lot of people are starting to accept [artists as actors] more, because there's a bunch of people doing it now," says Weaver, who stars alongside Brandy on "Thea." "But having a show doesn't always guarantee hit records. People buy records because the album has good songs. If Brandy came out with a wack album, people would say the records wack but still probably watch the show."

But series featuring musical artists still are not the norm. A majority of R&B acts must fight with the graph of musical artists for spots on the talk/variety/entertainment show, like "The Rosie O'Donnell Show," which recently featured Mint Condition; "Fox After Breakfast," which guested 702; and the various late-night venues.

HOPE FOR A NEW SEASON

Yet the new fall lineup, however, may once again change the musical face of TV, with three new late-night talk/variety/entertainment shows on tap: the Kevin & Ervin "The Moe & B industry professionals on" Show, a Vibe magazine program and a talk-show hosted by former L.A. Lakers player, Evrin "Magic" Johnson.

"A lot of shows [like to try to use music in an attraction] don't really think about how to use it, and the artists stand out like sore thumbs," says Waysans, citing Mary J. Blige's recent performance on Letterman, whose camera couldn't keep up with Blige or her dancers' movements. "The [late-night studies] just are not set up for music artists to give them the opportunity to do what they really do. In addition, for R&B and hip-hop artists, you don't really get the sense that they are comfortable performing for the [demographics of the] studio audience.

Waysans' show, produced in conjunction with Buena Vista Television, is slated to air this August and will include "everything from classic R&B to hip-hop," he says. "I want to create an extensive concert. I'm going to tell the bands, do for us what you would do for a concert.

"Vibe," co-executive produced by Quincy Jones, whose TV/music track record includes "The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air" and "In The House," is slated to be an outlet for all types of music, according to Keith Clinescales, magazine president/CEO and co-executive producer of the show.

"It's going to be a 360-degree diversification of music," Clinescales says. "We're going to make sure that the broad-band has the same sensibility, passion and energy that made Vibe magazine so successful.

Hosted by comedian/actor Chris Spencer, "Vibe" is slated to fill the 11 p.m. to 12 Central time slot. The show's premiere had not been decided at press time.

The format for the "Magic Johnson Show" was still being decided at press time but is also expected to include musical guests.

In their effort to "keep it real," performers have instead kept it negative. Incredible problems do exist within our inner cities, but there is also a wealth of inspiring treasures to be found there. In most working communities, the negative portrayal of African-Americans is all that is seen. Can they be blamed for buying into such ludicrous depictions if all they see are these images and all they hear is our children denigrating each other with such historically ugly terms as "nigga," "wack but still probably watch the show."

"Art managers, black music executives, radio programmers and retailers all have the power to curtail this perpetuating cycle of self-hatred. We all have a responsibility to educate and inform artists of their influenc- ing actions. To paraphrase an observation made by a well-known rapper, "The African-American community is in a state of emer- gency." Yet on many levels, our actions do not reflect a pro-active approach to over- coming this critical condition.

The tightening of fiscal belts, horrendous layoffs, record buyouts and the limiting of performance options for the acts, have left many R&B industry professionals on the same page in many ways. In order to sur- vive, knowing one's job, securing information and being innovative are marching orders of the late 90s. But in addition to the money-making aspect of black music, we also always remem- ber the cultural impact we are making."

This economic empowering trend is also evident among up- and-coming labels, such as Roc-A-Fella Records, ByStorm and Dr. Dre's promising Aftermath. Such fresh blood is vital, espe- cially in light of the woes of Death Row, which, despite its dub- ious reputation, provided an entrepreneurial role model for blacks eager to obtain a share of the American dream.

With the worst of the departmental downsizing apparently behind them, personnel at major labels are again able to focus on doing their work rather than just keeping their jobs.

RCA black music senior VP Kevin Evans, one of the few real musical minds heading any division—poor or otherwise—has overcome the seeming curse of RCA's R&B arm and again made it a profitable concern.

Sony's Columbia and Epic imprints have been mainstays in R&B's top-10, positioning their roster as viable domestic commodities while aggressively seeking the golden fleece across international waters.

ALTERNATIVE MARKETING

Although many domestic international-department executives say it's the R&B crossover acts that have the best chance of making it outside the U.S., a growing number of progressive-thinking executives challenge that notion: they are convinced that some top R&B artists who don't cross to Billboard's big charts can have viable international careers. In addition to exposure, the greater artist presence and alternative marketing methods for increased sales internationally, executives envision R&B artists making money via touring, product endorsement and other nontraditional means.

On the touring front, many acts are taking to the road with greater frequency, despite the fact that there are fewer than ever venues through which developing acts can practice their performing craft with any measure of profitability.

In an effort to combat the lack of true performance venues, acts are forced to rely heavily on clubs, which rarely offer the acoustics, sound systems and ambiance required for a show to go smoothly.

INDUSTRY ACCOUNTABILITY

Although the record business is a business, the African-American community's culture is innately bound to its music. As a result, every African-American involved in its creation has a de facto responsibility for its preservation and must be held accountable for the genre's creative content—above and beyond the limits of what traditionally is considered proper business standards and ethics.

Unlike other ethnic communities, which do not bear worldwide unfavorable stereotyping to the same degree, African-Americans must be vigilant in preventing these negative perceptions.

Black music community leaders have an innate responsibility to guard against images, lyrics and overall content that depicts an unbalanced portrayal of African-Americans. Too often, black sounds and images reinforce to the world a ridiculous depiction of what it means to be black in America's inner cities. "Gangsters" and "hoes" have too long been the code words by which we have allowed our immature youth to portray themselves.

PERSPECTIVE

Continued from page 30

MANIFEST DESTINY

Self-sufficiency is a missing element that is key to the con- tinued prosperity of R&B music. Too many of R&B's brightest veteran executives have been put to pasture and now operate on the fringes of the business in various capacities. These minds should be at the forefront, guiding the younger executives in their bid to become successful.

Island black music senior VP Hiriam Hicks is to be commended for being a younger executive who has surrounded him- self with several old-school execs who have channelized his inspirational vision to fiscal reality, with such diverse suc- cesses as Dru Hill and the Isley Bros.

Although the exit of tenured professionals in many ways is an unfortunate loss at major labels, their continued contributions at an independent level create opportunities to increase the often-neglected economic base within the African-American community.

Adriana Evans

In her "PERSPECTIVE" column, "Music Consultant" journalist and researcher Adriana Evans has a track record of accurately interpreting the music business and the future of black entertainment. She is the author of "In Search of a Nation," a study of the African-American media industry. Evans lives in Los Angeles and can be reached at 310-397-1692. Her e-mail address is derek-evans@msn.com.
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Adriana Evans

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“So Good”
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Davina

“Relax & Party”
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"The songs are indeed the sittings of centuries . . . the child sang it to his children and they to their children's children, and so two hundred years it has traveled down to us and we sing it to our children . . ."

—W.E.B. Du Bois
Pondering Some Of Clubland’s Lingering Issues

by Larry Flick

Growth and experimentation are cool and highly encouraged, but public denouncements of your history is not. It also makes the eventual back-to-your-roots “comeback” single far less convincing.

And while it’s fantastic to see the choice, though we think the ascending slow jam “I’m Leaving” has the potential to become a mega multiformat smash like “Toni Braxton’s Un-Break My Heart.”

Finally, Arista makes a highly controversial move by soliciting Razor-n-lime’s “Fading” for a selection of “The Problems” by The Notorious B.I.G. into a hands-in-da-air house anthem. Can’t help but wonder how the late rapper’s die-hard hip-hop following will respond. Regardless, we’re betting that the wiggling beat and clever use of the original track’s sample of “I’m Coming Out” by Diana Ross will reverse this one of the biggest records of the summer.

SWINGIN’ SINGLES: Pop/reggae mainstays Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers continue to work club-land with "Protect Ya Neck (How We做的)" the first single from their cute new Elektra album, “Familia Babylon.” R.H. Factor (aka Michael Rosenman and Michael Hacker) earns high marks for injecting the requisite tribal-house flavor without eliminating the original version’s dubby/rocker tone. In fact, the pair prove how compatible the two genres are by weaving island-inspired electric-guitar/bass riffs into a scorching mix. Smart spinners will reach for this one when they want to throw peak-hour punters a festive curve ball.

The refreshing rhythm perspective of R.H. Factor can also be heard on the Barry W Brownstone single, “Five Miles To Empty,” on MJM Music/Work Group. In this case, the team underlines the female trio’s smooth harmonies, giving way to a single that will puncture with a memory recalling their old First Choice hits channeled by Jimmy Somerville loyalists should visit their trusty import dealer for a copy of “Safe,” a twinky revision of a tune heard nearly two years ago on his underappreciated (and woefully underpromoted) London album “Dare To Love.” Produced by Chuck Norcross and Gary Wilmot, the song’s Latin-kissed groove warmly cradles Somerville’s romantic words. Todd Terry moves the song up with a subtle and soulful remixes that are reminiscent of his work with Everything But The Girl, while DJ Tonka toasts in some hot, Euro-style persuasion into a dubby version that gives it a feisty feel. Somerville’s label situation in the States is cloudy at the moment, so grab this gem on Germany’s Heavy/SPV Records.

Escape Has Its Babes. Some of Chicago’s finest gathered at the offices of Escape Records to celebrate the signing of Charlie ‘Babie’ Rosario to an exclusive production-agreement. The first result of this deal is “Found Love,” a slammed new single by Natalie Hagan that features mixes by Rosario and house music legend Maurice Joshua. The studio touch of Rosario is also felt on “Sweet Holiday” by dance ingénue Donna Lori. Pictured standing, from left, are Larry Sturm, A&R; Escape; David Bloom, business affairs, Escape; Joshud; and Rosario. Seated, from left, are Conne Vanvitati, Joshua’s manager, 200-Proof Productions; Erik Bradley, music director, WBBM Chicago; Bill Kanatas, marketing/promotion; Escape and Mark Ellenbein, label manager, Beast Records.

from our view of the room, few of those star-studded “froks are generat-

ning the hits or industry action to jus-
tify a pose that would make Madon-
na jealous. In fact, several of ‘em have never been commercially commercially.

Now that the dance genre has, at long last, been acknowledged with a Grammy category (Billboard, May 31), why are we not surprised to witness countless club citizens shift from moaning about a lack of mainstream recognition to complaining in advance over a predicted absence of under-
ground-savy nominations? Will our community ever take a moment to bask in the glow of victory, instead of whining over the work that still lies ahead.

Is anyone else noticing that the so-
called dance music explosion at radio and retail is mostly benefitting white “alternative” acts that aren’t allowed to be molded and marketed in the image of rock bands? It’s probably just as well, since many of the major house music stars to recently make the tran-
sition into popville have completely shed their roots in order to go R&B.

HOT BREAKOUTS

JUNE 7, 1997

R&B/POP

1. SOMETHING ON MY MIND-THERE’S BEEN A TURMOIL DIONNE KAASEN
2. CRUSH ZAHNE 11/02NN
3. RUNNING ON SUNSHINE-DANNY ROBINS 8/02NN
4. LA LA LA-NICK AND LILY 8/02NN
5. DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT TAKES-RICHARD BURTON

MAXI-SONGST RALLY

1. WE TRYING TO STAY ALIVE WYCLEF JEAN FEAT. GREG BURKE 9/02NN
2. CRUSH ZAHNE 11/02NN
3. RUNNING ON SUNSHINE-DANNY ROBINS 8/02NN
4. BURTON, RICHARD DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT TAKES-RICHARD BURTON

Billboard’s: Times with future chart potential, based on club play or sales reported this week.

Vinyl Accessories: Record bags, sleeves, cleaners, Starmaker records, manufacturers, dealers, and distributors.

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there was Meat Beat Manifesto bravely helping to form a path of acceptance for groove-omysters who didn’t subscribe to house or hi-NRG music. In fact, a sharp ear can hear the influence of Meat Beat maestro Jack Dangers in countless current electronic dance recordings. Well, like the band, all things come full circle like the real thing. And the real thing is back in action with “Original Fire,” an aptly titled EP on Nothing Records. This is intense stuff that is as engaging to the brain as it might be to the booty: A fine precursor to the band’s full-length, titled EP, released later this year.

It’s easy to take a reliable source of information and good music for granted—especially when the source delivers the goods with the deceptive ease that Prvnny-Only does. Based in Cas- selbury, Fla., Prvnny-Only has become the best place to monitor the key club, pop, and R&B singles in the biz. Each month, the company issues CD samplers featuring key new singles to programmers, DJs, and journalists. It’s an invaluable, often overlooked point package that has only gotten better with the launch of the new “Underground” and “Import” discs. Here’s where the savvy ears of Promowo Only hosts Pete Werner and Jim Robinson are put to best use. This month, for example, they are exposing music samplers as “Ripe” by Project Agents, “Dos Piratas” by Soraisa, and “My Spirit” by Tilt— all of which might not normally find widespread attention. Props to Wern- er and Robinson for a job well done. Ministry of Sound continues to affirm its status as one of clubland’s strongest and most diverse entities with the launch of an ac-set-untitled youth lifestyle magazine. The publication will be spearheaded in the UK by James Bethell. There’s no word yet on whether the States will be factored into the mix just yet.

On the industry executive front, Guy Ornadel has ended a six-year tenure with the Disco Mix Club (DMC) in London, during which he played a variety of key creative roles. Among his recent duties was acting as the manager of the company’s label, which has had success with its “Unit- ed DJs Of America” compilation series. He has also been instrumental in the management of Brothers In Rhythm. There’s no word yet on a replacement at DMC. Meanwhile Ornadel is dividing his time between mulling several offers and planning for a late-summer jaunt on the hotly touted Cream Club tour of the States. We can’t wait to see where this shrewd and talented lad will land next.

DANCE TRAX (Continued from preceding page)
Brought To You By Martha White. For the second straight year, Martha White Foods (a division of Pillsbury) is sponsoring Alson Krauss & Union Station’s tour. Shown in the back row, from left, are Pillsbury’s Doug Rowan and band members Ron Block, Barry Beas, Adam Steffey, and Dan Tyminski. In front row are the Grand Ole Opry’s Bob Whittaker, Pillsbury’s Neil Smith, Rounder Records’ Brad Paul, Krauss, and Pillsbury’s Jay Spencian.

Doug Johnson Takes On Giant Task; Trisha, LeAnn Locked In Ballad Battle

LABEL WATCH: Doug Johnson, who moved to Giant Nashville as president May 27 (see story, page 6), says there will be new signings at the label, but not immedi-
ately. Johnson, who until last week was senior VP at Epic Records, says his first priority is settling in.

"I'm in a position to get to know the artists here and their management," Johnson tells Nashville Scene. "I'm coming in here as a team player, and I want to find out what their vision is. I want to make sure every artist has the best chance of reaching their potential. Then, obvi-
ously, I need to get to know the staff here. So, I'm coming in here with a lot of questions. What we're going to do here is not about quantity, it's about quality.

"I'm a believer in the music. The music has got to drive what we do here, and it's going to take a while to assess where we are. It will take a while to bring in new music to this company. I want to create an environ-
ment at Giant Records that is a safe place for creative people where they will be respected and where the integrity of their music will be respected.

"Regarding the fiercely competitive marketplace that Nashville has become, Johnson says labels have to get better. "There's never been a time when good music could be lost as easily as it could be today, but everyone's hungry for great music, and it will rise to the top," he says. "Today, the elevator is full, so you better be good enough to pull somebody off the elevator because that elevator is going to continue to go up. Every opportunity is still there. A lot of people talk about whether country is going left or right or traditional. I think our focus will be up—raising the standards. Our focus is the higher ground."

Johnson is optimistic about Giant's small but active roster. "Clay Walker will soon celebrate his fourth platinum album," he says, "and I want to hear Daryle Singletary Friday night at the Wildhorse, and I didn't realize what a great singer he is until I heard him live." The roster also includes Regina Regina, Rebekah Del Rio, and Terry McGinn, who has recorded a gospel album. "I'm a huge fan of Terry's anyway," he says, "and it's a very fun, soulful gospel record." With such a project, Johnson says, the label won't worry about defini-
tions of country music.

"Maybe sometimes we put up our own boundaries," he says. "And we should be thinking, This is great music, and based on the tools we have to work with, can we make it work?" When I fell in love with music, I didn't know there were so many boundaries. We should all be looking for ways to expose great music rather than worrying about what supposedly can't be done. We have to be realistic, but we also have to realize that we're in the business of artists' dreams and visions. I will not sleep well if I know our artists are not sleeping well."

Johnson says Giant chief Irving Azoff is mandate to him when he accepted the job was "ultimately having the greatest record company we can have. It's not about how quick we can do it. To me, that means that I'd be subtly urgent.

ON THE ROW: In the wake of the "Butterfly Kisses" wars (Billboard, May 31), Trisha Yearwood and LeAnn Rimes have faced off in a ballad battle, and Yearwood appears to have gotten the best of the affair. Both singles went to radio May 23 and have recorded and released versions of songwriter Diane Warren's "You Say It's Love." Rimes originally recorded the song for the soundtrack to the Touch-
a down movie "Con Air," due for release Friday (9), but Disney, the film's pro-
ducer, decided to pass on the Rimes version. Curb Records, meanwhile, re-
leased the song as a single with an accompanying video.

In the meantime, MCA was approached by Disney for Yearwood to record the song for the movie. She did so and also timed a video. Both singles went to CMT the same day. The channel began airing both versions May 28 on the program "CMT Delivery Room" and posted a telephone number for viewers to phone in their preferences.

Results of the phone poll were to be released by CMT Tuesday (4). In a local newspaper poll, Yearwood garnered three times as many votes as Rimes. MCA and Curb were already dueling over cover versions of "Butterfly Kisses," with MCA releasing the Raybon Bros. version and Curb and with Jeff Carson's.

Toby Keith has recorded a duet with Sting of the latter's composition "I'm So Happy I Can't Stop Crying" for Keith's forthcoming album, "Dream Walkin' ." Bill Velez signs a multiyear contract with CRC, as president/COO SESAC co-chairman/CEO Stephen C. Swid notes that since Velez joined SESAC in 1994, the company's income has more than doubled. Meanwhile, Wayne Hickerson has been named SESAC International chairman ... The summer series of Tuesday night blue-
glass shows at the Ryman Auditorium begins Tuesday (3) with the Nashville Bluegrass Band and Claire Lynch & the Front Porch String Band. Chevrolet sponsors the series, which ends Aug. 26.

Expectations High For Peterson

Warner/Reprise Primes Seasoned Singer/Songwriter

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Word around Music Row for the past several months has been that Michael Peterson is the new artist to watch in country music. He created a stir with his performance on the Warner/Reprise show during the Country Radio Seminar (CRS) in March, and expectations for his debut single were high. With the release of "Drink, Swear, Steal & Lie," Peterson's is meeting and exceeding expectations.

"Phenomenal" is how Warner/Reprise senior VP of national promotion Bill May describes the single, which is No. 35 on Hot Country Singles & Tracks this issue. "The response from radio has just been overwhelming about this guy. We did the standard setup, but I definitely attribute it to him as the first single and who Michael is second. He did the radio tour. He also performed on the CRS show, and people have been bug-
ging us about making them wait so long before we put the first single out. So far the response has been great, absolutely overwhelming."

"We added it a couple weeks ago. I'm not one of the swelling, I swear it's doing well," says Larry Daniels, PD at KNIX-FM Phoenix. "I came away from CRS thinking this was the one individual who stood out among the new acts. I was really impressed, then spent some time talk-
ing to him and became even more impressed.

"Then he came by the radio station a couple weeks ago and did a little thing in front of our staff—sang for everybody and wowed the entire staff. He's for real. He's got a great personality, and he's got all the tools."

Paige Levya, Warner/Reprise senior VP of A&R, signed the singer/song-
writer to the label and is also quick to sing his praises.

"Michael came in as an already seasoned entertainer," she says. "He'd been on the road for 10 years prior to this. He has a great sense of himself. He's an accomplished songwriter. He's been writing for 10 years and has already learned the craft of how you need to write for country radio. So I felt like the package was already there—amaz-
ing songs, a great voice, and a smile that would knock you over."

Like Mayne, Levya is pleased with the singer's acceptance. "I think you can hear personality in it," she says. "I think Michael's personality jumps out in that song. You can hear the way he sings with so much emotion, especially in the chorus."

Peterson is a native of Tucson, Ariz. After his family moved to the eastern part of Washington state, he grew up dividing his time between his two pas-
sions—football and music. His formu-
lar years were spent listening to a variety of music, from Cole Porter and Hoagy Carmichael to Roger Miller and Willie Nelson. Peterson earned scholarships for both music and football, and it was football that led to his first break in the music business. Teammate Brad Word, tering ended up becoming a producer for Denice Williams and assisting his buddy Peterson to contribute songs to Williams' R&B and gospel albums. Peterson also had a song cut by the Imperials that became a hit in the con-
temporary Christian market.

He began commuting from Wash-
ington to Nashville to co-write with Music Row writers, and like many other aspiring country talents, he finally
made the move to Nashville. He says it was his songwriting that first began opening doors on Music Row.

"It seems like songs just showed up when I needed them to," Peterson says. "A song I wrote called 'That's What They Said About The Buffalo' created a little bit of a buzz, and then about the time that died away, 'Drink, Swear, Steal & Lie' showed up, and about the time it died away, 'When The Bar-
tender Cries' showed up."

"It was interesting to me how impor-
tant the song was . . . To see songs appear and make a way for you gave me greater appreciation for the song. And out of that came my publishing deal and then my record deal."

Peterson signed with Warner-Chap-
pell Music in December 1998. Though he'd had several cuts recorded, it was his first time signing exclusively with a publisher. Peterson says he's enjoyed the support and creative atmosphere at Warner/Chappell. Songwriting is a priority with him, and he's already writing material for the next album.

ASCAP Meets: Members of ASCAP gathered at Loew's Vanderbilt Plaza Hotel in Nashville for the society's annual membership meeting. Pictured, from left, are ASCAP VP Connie Bradley, Warner Bros. singer/songwriter Victoria Shaw, ASCAP president chairman of the board Marilyn Bergman, and Warner Bros. singer/songwriter Vanessa Hill.
**COUNTRY ARTISTS & MUSIC**

**COUNTRY SINGLES A-Z PUBLISHERS/PERFORMANCE RIGHTS/SHEET MUSIC**

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**EXPECTATIONS HIGH FOR PETERSON**

(Continued from page 9)

"John Bettis [a fellow songwriter] and I were talking one day, and he said, 'You know, you can either write songs or you can write records.'" Peterson recalls. "When he gave me that delineation, I realized what I've always wanted to do is write songs. And country music had become my life — I thought melodically and the sentiments that move me."

Meanwhile, with an increase of 8,600 pieces, the retail activity for McGraw's single mirrors the action on the radio, as "It's Your Love" moves 86,000 units during the tracking week. Those units help McGraw defend his No. 1 crown on Top Country Singles Sales and fuel a 13-9 jump on the Hot 100. It isn't often that a country single swims in top 10 territory on the pop chart, and at this point, it does so exclusively on sales points, as country airplay is not a factor on the Hot 100. You go, boy.

**STAY A LITTLE LONGER:** In just five weeks on the chart, "It's Your Love" becomes Tim McGraw's fifth title to peak at No. 1 on Billboard's Hot Country Singles & Tracks, and his 469-6 spin is the largest of any song appearing in the top 25. This title's rapid ascent has all eyes watching chart-watchers and industry insiders. No. 1 on a grand scale, McGraw's "It's Your Love" cutin position for only one week, since all of his prior No. 1s have dominated for at least two weeks. Of these four titles, three reigned for two weeks, and his No. 1 song, "Like It," controlled the chart for five straight weeks.

"Obviously, we're optimistic about the possibility of spending several weeks at No. 1, but we're so pleased with the impact [so far], we don't expect disappointed regardless of what happens next week," says Curb promotion VP John Brown. "While it would be unfair to compare the two artists, we're encouraged by George Strait's recent five-week run at No. 1, and it feels great to have these monster records in the format."

Meaningless, with an increase of 8,600 pieces, the retail activity for McGraw's single mirrors the action on the radio, as "It's Your Love" moves 86,000 units during the tracking week. Those units help McGraw defend his No. 1 crown on Top Country Singles Sales and fuel a 13-9 jump on the Hot 100. It isn't often that a country single swims in top 10 territory on the pop chart, and at this point, it does so exclusively on sales points, as country airplay is not a factor on the Hot 100. You go, boy.

**TURBO-TWANG:** "I wouldn't go pop with a mouthful of firecrackers" was a popular saying among country performers of a generation ago, but there's some evidence that it could be resurrected or at least dusted off. New traditionalist Ann Lee Womack's self-titled debut set rooms to No. 1 on our Heatseekers list at bowing at No. 2 in the last issue and swoops down along the way to snatch Greatest Gainer honors on Top Country Albums (13-9), Womack's increase of more than 1,000 units bumps that title 115-106 on the Billboard 200, while still flavoring its main selling points to an extent on the pop chart, and at this point, it does so exclusively on sales points, as country airplay is not a factor on the Hot 100. You go, boy.

**KEEP AN EYE ON THE RADIO:** Our lone Airpower title on Hot Country Singles & Tracks is "Places I've Never Been" by Mark Wills (21-16). That title reaches the 3,200 detection benchmark in its 15th week, and Norbert Nix, VP of national promotion and artist development at Mercury Nashville, says it's no coincidence that Wills' album is also gaining ground. Wills' self-titled set moves 2,500 units and rises 57-50 on Top Country Albums.

"Mark has been playing a lot of smaller venues by design," says Nix. "We focused that album, 'Back to Love,' on a broader, more soulful style of music that was really germinating during his time in that club. And we've also been fortunate to have steady airplay support for 'Places,' and our research-driven stations are telling us we have a legitimate hit."

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**To Windswept**. Songwriter Chris Farren, who also is producing a project for Pam Tillis and has produced records for Deana Carter and Kevin Sharp, has signed a publishing agreement with Windswept Pacific Entertainment. Shown standing, from left, are Windswept president Evan Medow and business and legal affairs VP Jeff Sacharow. Shown seated, from left, are Farren and Windswept GM/VP Jonathan Stone.

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**Starr Huddie**. Giant Records duo Regina Regina got together with Naomi Judd at a taping of "After Midnight With Blair Garner." Shown, from left, are Regina Nicks, Judi, and Regina Leigh.
### Top Country Albums

**June 7, 1997**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Label &amp; Distributor</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
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<tr>
<td>RCA</td>
<td>PURE COUNTRY SOUNDTRACK</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
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<td>WARNER BROS.</td>
<td>GAMES REDNECKS PLAY</td>
<td>TRAVIS TRITT</td>
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<td>GREATEST HITS VOLUME TWO</td>
<td>VINCE GILL</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
<td>CARRYING YOUR LOVE WITH ME</td>
<td>GEORGE STRAIT</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCA</td>
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<td>WARNER BROS.</td>
<td>THE GIRL</td>
<td>TRACY LAWRENCE</td>
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<td>WARNER BROS.</td>
<td>THAT'S ENOUGH</td>
<td>JEFF FOXWORTHY</td>
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**Notes:**
- Albums with the greatest gains this week are:
  - Billboard Top Country Albums: Of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 units.
  - ARIA certification for sales of 1 million units, with multi-platinum levels indicated by a numeral following the symbol.

**Learn more:** [www.americanradiohistory.com](http://www.americanradiohistory.com)
Cuba's Caribe Hooks Up With EMI

CUBA GOES GLOBAL: The furious rush by multinational companies to cut deals with the Cuban music industry continues unabated. The latest accord involves a worldwide publishing pact between EMI Music Publishing and Caribe, Cuba's lone non-government label/publishing firm, which is home to prominent acts Los Van Van, Manolo, Ng La Banda, and Rokitás.

Speaking ahead the deal, which calls for four Caribe albums to be released this year on EMI in Europe and South America through the EMI Nueva York office of Rafael Gil, president of EMI Music South America.

Among other labels distributing product by Cuban acts are Qbadás, Messidor, Milán Latino, Bembe, and Universal.

SEX, DRUGS, AND ... SAFETY: An accident that occurred during Deep Purple's performance Feb. 27 at the Estadio Santa Laura in Santiago, Chile, has prompted city authorities to tighten guidelines for shows in Santiago.

Concert promoters wishing to stage gigs in Santiago for an audience larger than 5,000 must submit specific information regarding the show to Santiago's police and medical departments 20 days before the event. The promoter's plan must include complete data regarding the venue, the number of security staffers working the show, and the number of available tickets. If the municipal government deems the safety measures insufficient, it could postpone or indefinitely suspend the show.

Dozens of spectators were injured during the Deep Purple show, during which a tower housing sound and lighting equipment fell on the crowd. No one was seriously hurt, and the concert resumed after a 30-minute delay.

MILLIE'S BR. PUSH: EMI Latin's on-the-rise vocalist Millie has inked an enhanced marketing and promotion pact with San Juan, Puerto Rico, television station WAPA-TV. Under terms of the one-year deal, Millie's latest album, "Emociones," will be promoted extensively on the station through high-profile ad campaigns for the album and its singles, such as the lead single, "Emociones," and its follow-up, "Amame."

A one-hour TV special centered on the release of the album will be taped and aired at WAPA in Puerto Rico. The label's plan is to release a disc by the duo in Japan, although the album's content has not been determined.

The upcoming "Viva Noel," a triple CD tribute package by Ivan Lins to composer Noel Rosa, who is recognized by many in Israel as the father of samba. Two of the three CDs were shipped in May. A third album, to be released in 1996, features a sonically updated track with Lins and Rosa titled "Cordias Saudade.

STATE BRIEFS: The Recording Industry Assn. of America has certified as platinum "Vivir" (Fonovisa) by Enrique Iglesias and "Tangos" (EMI) by Enrique's father, Julio.

Among WEA Latina's upcoming releases, the second release in the year will be produced by Luis Miguel and Maná (third quarter) and Ricardo Montaner, Alejandro Sanz, La Ley, and Miguel Ríos (fourth quarter). Luis Miguel's forthcoming disc apparently will be another "yawn" romance album.

(Continued on next page)
PITZNER ASCENDANT: Conductor Thielemann's latest Deutsche Grammophon (DG) release (May 18), featuring the music of Hans Pfitzner and Richard Strauss, debuted on Billboard's Top Classical Albums chart at No. 25. After a little informal research, Brian Drutman, director of publicity for DG, claims that this is the first time a German composer has appeared on a Billboard chart.

Pfitzner (1869-1949) is something of an enigma. This man, who established himself and his U.S. devotees will be able to experience a Pfitzner orgy in July, when New York's Lincoln Center Festival brings an mammoth opera "Palaestina" in its Royal Opera production. Pfitzner chamber music will complement this offering.

Thielemann has become a contemporary Pfitzner champion. "Palaestina" was his calling card at two opera houses for which he has been music director, Nuremberg and Deutsche Oper Berlin, with his brother-in-law. He led the Royal Opera production at Covent Garden and will now bring it to New York. "I fell in love with it on stage," he says. "I love the sound of the orchestra, the dark colors, a full red wine. It is an extremely interesting score, with a huge 'Elektra' orchestra. If you know the style a little bit, you will say, 'What's that?' It's not bad, but not really great. As you do more and more they say, 'My god, it's a world.'"

In an era when living conductors do not command the attention and loyalty they once did, DG is hoping Thielemann, 37, will break the pattern. He will be even more recording standard repertoire: his dark and bristly one critic called them "difficult but exciting." The first rehearsals with orchestras, they always say, 'What is that?' It's not bad, but not really great. As you do more and more they say, 'My god, it's a world.'"

MTV Latin America has named Gayle De Poli executive vice president of production. An independent technical director, technical producer, and video engineer who has worked for a number of networks (CBS, Fox, and the National Sports, NBC), De Poli has won an Emmy Award as the technical director of the "NFL Today" show and a Peabody Award for the "MTV Unplugged" series. The U.S. Department of State has granted Miami Latino/CUBA's Cuban group Los Van Van permission to perform at the 19th annual Playboy Jazz Festival, June 14-15 at the Hollywood (Calif.) Bowl.

Latin American Roundup: Puerto Rican record label Tapes has launched a consumer music-driven entertainment magazine titled MiBube. The premiere issue is scheduled to be published in August. Argentinian record industry organization CAPIF announced that customs officials seized and destroyed 522,000 counterfeit copies during a raid in late January in the northern state of Misiones. A handful of confirmed and CAPIF officials were on hand for the proceedings. No other details were released by CAPIF. Spanish indie Manzana Records has sold a label-cum-label title: "Viva la Vida" (on DG Archiv).

MEETING OF THE MINDS: Top gospel executives from around the country—including Gospel Centric CEO Vicki Mack-Latallade and husband Claude Latallade (Right), Milton Biggum (Middle), Jerry Mannery (Malcom), Larry Blackwell (Central South Gospel), Al Hobbs (Aleho), Chuck Myricks (Word), Brian Spears (Crystal Rose), Maple Ridge (Neeke), Barnett Williams (Born Again), and Telis Stinson (Muscle Shoals)—gathered May 26-27 in Las Vegas for the second Executive Record Label Retreat. The retreat was hosted by Dr. Bobbi Jones, who produces and hosts a weekly TV show, "The Bobby Jones Gospel Hour," on BET. He reported that "with the advent of new presentations of gospel, it's a concern of majors, corporate shake-ups, and increases in the way we do business, it's imperative that we come together.

"Let's be about the business of making our business better," urged Biggum in one of four sessions tied to industry concerns. Workshops focused on the phenomenal growth and changes in the presentation of gospel. Topics ranged from ownership and distribution networks to SoundScan updates and award shows. "This is a critical and important opportunity for us to find ways that we can work together and make a difference in this industry," noted Myricks.

The event is one of two symposiums Jones has geared toward industry players for the round-table discussion of issues affecting gospel. A second, for artists, is held in December. The fact that this meeting targeted executives didn't stop a handful of artists—including Dorothy Norwood, Albertina Walker, Craig Hayes, and Kurt Carr—from attending. Jones has a new album, "Bobby Jones & The Nashville Super Choir," slated for release from Gospel Centric in September.

Absent from the retreat was Blackberry president Doug Williams, who was in New Orleans for post-production work on the video concept of 11 tracks from "Standing," the newest release from the Williams Brothers. Stevie Wonder joins the group on the lead single, "I'm Too Close," while the Rev. L.W. Bolton is featured on another track, "For All You Done." They project, which is shipped to retail May 13, features vintage Williams Brothers sound.

"A lot of our fans want us to go back and give them a little more of the traditional sound," Doug Williams says. "They said, 'We like the new stuff, but we like the old stuff a little better.'" Williams is more than satisfied with the results. An initial shipment of 45,000 units reflects the biggest block of pre-orders in the group's 25-year career. A concept video with Wonder is set for early June.

BRIEFLY:

Malaco execs are adding final touches to "It Ain't Over Til God Says It's Over," the newest album from Jamison & Nature. Included is a release from Marlee Records announces the appointment of Jackie Ward to president/CEO. New releases from the now Miami-based record label include a debut album from the Rev. Melvin Dawson & the Genesis Ensemble, titled "Rooted And Grounded." The album features horns," dubbing "The Hitters," recorded its 25th album on Memorial Day at the Apollo Theater in New York. The silver recording will be released on Vector later this year.

PRIMAL SCREAM'S PRIMAL SOUNDBACK (Continued from page 12)

"The influence is still there, and we had the Memphis Horns play stuff," he says. "If you take a song like 'Star,' you know it's pretty much influenced that much by the lead Gibson—Bob Marley, Sly Stone, Curtis Mayfield, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye.

One of the album's overriding inspirations—particular of the band's "Kowalski"—is the speed-frek hyper-tension of the 1971 Richard Sarafian film. New bassist Gary "Mani" Mounfield, who left the band Technotronic, joins the band Stone Roses to form Primal Scream last October, borrow rhythms from the band's bassist, and Mounfield's funk grooves repeat endlessly, allowing guitarist Andrew Innes' alternating punk and soul riffs—or the Memphis Horns' familiar bleats—to punctuate Gillespie's smooth vocals.

"Kowalski" is slow and stretched-out, with parts from the movie's narrator rubbing against Gillespie's repetitive chants of "soul on ice." Its attention-getting video, scripted by "Trainspotting" author Irvine Welsh, stars supermodel Kate Moss as a killer who leads Primal Scream members on a car chase through London.

Nan, raving about the video, says Reprise will distribute "Kowalski" as a "Pop up single: Marketers will use it to heavily to college radio, MTV's 'Top 100 Minutes,' and many key modern rock stations. Then we'll go into more aggressive fashion with our next single," she says, which will be either opening track "Morning Wheel," a laid-back, psyche-delic organ groove, or the slower, more traditional "There is a soul ballad "Star." Reprise also plans to ship a CD-5, with new versions of "96 Tears" and "You Know Your Rights," to college radio stations and some modern rock outlets.

Well-known dub producer Adrian Sherwood plans to remix the entire album, and Nan says the new versions will also be available in this fall's form. This new album also includes a still-metallic, but more clearly "Trainspotting," the longest eight-minute instrumental from last year's release, "Screamadelica," and "Motorhead's" "Motorhead" and "Trainspotting," the lodgey eight-minute instrumental from last year's release, "Screamadelica," and "Motorhead's" "Motorhead" and "Trainspotting," the lodgey eight-minute instrumental from last year's release, "Screamadelica," and "Motorhead's" "Motorhead" and "Trainspotting," the lodgey eight-minute instrumental from last year's release, "Screamadelica," and "Motorhead's" "Motorhead" and "Trainspotting," the lodgey eight-minute instrumental from last year's release, "Screamadelica," and "Motorhead's" "Motorhead." Nan says, was an important transition from the band's soul-man phase to the more spacey "Vanishing Point" music. She emphasizes, though, that Primal Scream has been regularly dabbling in electronic rave-party music throughout the '90s.

"The Dust Brothers mixed 'Badlair,' from the last album, for God's sake! Even before it was cool or happening or percolating, they were already dialed into it," Nan says. "That is something that we have to take into account, I think. It's not like jumping on the bandwagon for these guys. They've been riding it for a while. They're always experimenting. Even though their stuff has been pursued as retro, they're always straddling the line of time."

Says Gillespie: "I think you've got to be just honest about your work. If you're doing everything you do is going to be good. You get people who think everything they've done is good—their ego gets in the way,... I think we've freed ourselves again, but we've learned from the mistakes we made last time. I think we've come out of the styles and the technology.

"The last record," he says, "it was a mess. But fuck— you're allowed to make mistakes."
KISSES AND KUDOS: God bless Olive Calder's ears. The Zoobies chairman of the board obviously knows a hit when he hears one. And he and his staff should be congratulated for putting the Jive muscle behind "Butterfly Kisses" that is taking Bob Carlisle's song to unprecedented success. Of original artists, if we started playing such a great tune, and then Diadem chief George King recognizing the song's potential and talking Carlisle into including it on the album, it's great to see companies get behind a song and artist the way Jive and the Ben- son Music Group have done (Billboard, May 31).

"It comes down to the sound of the song," says Jive senior VP/PGM Tom Carrabba. "Jars Of Clay's ['Flood'] is [another] record we crossed over [over], and pretty much the same questions were asked when we tried to exploit that in the mainstream—How do you guys do it, and what hurdles were in your way?" Just listen to the record. We succeeded with that, and we had experience. We knew with the right- sounding record, we could cross it. The same thing came to mind when we heard Carlisle's "Kisses," a song that crosses all forms. A great song is a great song.

Jive president Barry Weiss adds, "I thought this was going to be a hit record for us, but I would be lying if I sat here and said we were playing it and exploiting the kind of rabid, ridiculous, out-of-control, immediate, bombastic explosion that we've received on this record.

Jive jumped to meet the demand quickly and moved up the release of Bob Carlisle's album, leaving it until then would only be sold in Christian bookstores. What a great opportu

N E W S:

QUESTIONS: Congratulations to Elsa Elder on her new post as VP/GM of Word Records. She's one hardworking lady, and it's great to see that recognized. Elder succeeds Lynn Keesee, who is leaving to pursue other opportunities. Best of luck to Keesee in his new endeavors. His presence at World will be missed.

Changes are also taking place at EMI Christian Music Group's Sparrow label. Jokes says "Butterfly Kisses" is "a plus because "it almost..."

"We plucked them out of the company, going to be a nessesies for years."

"It's a plus because "it almost..."

"Deborah Evans Price

W I D E M O U N T H M O S A I C O P E N S I T S B L E S S Y B O W O N A T L A N T I C

(Wide Mounth Mosaic opens its Blessy Bow on Atlantic

(Continued from page 19)

original songs. [Audiences in the heavy metal rooms liked our heavier original songs, but if we started playing anything acoustically, they'd get passed over."

Co-produced by the band with Joel Van Dyke at Greenhouse Studios in Vancouver, "Wide Mouth Mosaic is a recontexted version of the group's 1996 independent album, "The Nazarene." It features two new tunes, "This Mourn- ing" and "The River Song," as well as new arrangements of the act's road-tested songs.

"We had played for almost a year straight since 'The Nazarene' came out, and the songs had grown, and we just played them out of the air one day."

Atlantic is shipping the album's lead single, "Midnight Rain," to U.S. album rock radio stations June 13 and to U.S. alternative radio outlets a couple weeks after that, according to Germaine.

"The group have been established as a college marketing priority," she says. "The regions we're going for initially are Virginia, North Carolina, and Texas. We're going to do a lot of listing posts, a major attack on instrument stores, and listing parties covering their original record retail (in those areas).

"We also want to find creative tour- ing things for the band," continues Germaine, "to get them in front of youth-oriented active audiences."

The video for "Midnight Rain" ships to CMT and local and regional video. It shows June 9. [The video] is important, particularly the live video," Germaine says. "We'll be hea-
vily pursuing television appearances beyond MTV and going for special programming and performances slots there.

The link to Atlantic began in early 1996, when the band's co-manager, Norm Sharp, sent a sound-board tape of the trio's live performance to Kim Cooke, VP of A&R at Warner Music Canada, which distributes Atlantic in Canada. The group signed with War- ner Music Canada last summer.

In Canada, the album, released May 25, has sold 10,000 units, accord- ing to a number of additional millions, according to a number of additional millions. The group has re- ceived radio airplay on stations including the CBC and others.

"For such a young band, they sound great on the air," says Rob Robson, music director of album rock CFOX Vancouver.

"Midnight Rain" was formed in 1995. Verreault and Jette met in ele-

mphant, and Verreault and Pereira played together in several bands while in high school together. In late 1995, once Pereira and Jette had completed college, they started re-

hersalizing their parent's backings. "We started playing originals early on, including (the album's) "Corn Rows,"" recalls Verreault. "That's probably the first song we went. Back then we'd make up a lot of music, so a lot of the musical ideas (on the album) are from that time period."
REVITALIZED: Yoshi's, the Bay Area's longstanding jazz club, has moved to a new address, a block from the waterfront in Oakland, Calif.'s Jack London Square. Keith Jarrett's Standards Trio was scheduled to open the club, but the pianist canceled. So the first act to christen the new space turned out to be pianist George Shearing May 9, followed quickly by the all-star ensemble of Herbie Hancock, Jack DeJohnette, and Dave Holland May 10, and John Lee Hooker May 11. That kind of diversity is part of what has made Yoshi's a musical rep- tation. The personal- ity of the club's offerings varies, allowing room for main-stream, progres- sive, and old-school jazz and blues. "As long as the music has integrity, we'll try it out," says artistic director Jason Olaine.

The new space holds about 200, 50 more than the previous address. "The other room was fine, but this one is great," says Olaine. "It really sets the standard for jazz clubs." Some have called the new room a mini-amphitheater, with slight elevations and tiered graduations for eight lines. The sound system is a super-bred setup designed by the Meyers company.

Yoshi's move was made easier by the investment of public dollars. The city of Oakland, along with the Oakland Port Authority, helped finance the trek to the new location. "It was a political thing," says Olaine. "Part of the city's reasoning was that it had been trying to develop Jack London Square into a social destination for some time, and only within the last two years has it begun to pick up momentum." A multi-plex cinema, a Barnes & Noble, and other stores and restaurants have begun to populate the neighborhood. "Two years ago, you could shoot a cannonball through the square and not hit anybody," Olaine says.

Now the Japanese restaurant that's part of the Yoshi's complex has a waiting list of more than 30 people, and the initial numbers at the club itself have been superb. Jazz as good neighbor and vialble magnet for consumer green- backs? Of course. Future Yoshi's book- ing will feature the Joe Henderson Big Band June 3-8 and Dianne Reeves June 10-15. Olaine is particularly juiced about an ultra-rare one-nighter by Cuban ensemble Los Van Van June 26.

STAR SEARCH: BET on Jazz has unified with the BMG Jazz Club on "A Jazz Discovery Showcase." The 12-track compilation indexes several regional tal- ents, all of whom have won weekly compe- titions on "A Jazz Discovery." "That's 'Jazz Discovery.' Basically it offers some exposure to any performer with a video. They send it in, and we choose which tapes will be on; a deal," Lee says.

"From the start, we wanted to have something on the channel that would allow the average jazz player to have access to us," says Jefferi K. Lee, president of BET on Jazz. "That's 'Jazz Discovery.'" The show is seamless, and the sound music holds up in allowing us," Lee says. Artists on the disc include vocalists Sunny Sweeney from Washington, D.C., and contemporary jazz ensemble Three Of Worlds from Marin County, Calif., and trumpeter Joey Martin from Charleston, S.C. Troy Johnson, who manages Three Of Worlds, says, "BET giving us a chance to be exposed will only bring about positive things. Hopefully people will know us, it opens doors to new audiences."

On tour
June 6 Morristown NJ
13 Louisville KY
14 Henderson KY
18 Washington DC
20 Providence RI
21 Minasquan Beach RI
North South Carolina
27 Denver CO
28 Aspen CO
29 Beaver Creek CO
July 3 Portland OR
5 Seattle WA
6 Eugene OR
9 Long Beach CA
29 Laketon CT
August 9 Turin NY
13 Edgartown MA
14 Groton CT
16 Stratton VT
22 Chicago IL
September 20 Monterey CA
27 Cooperstown NY

Duke Robillard
Dangerous Place
"Chock full of breakup, sneaking behind lines and sliding, sliding guitar licks. Duke Robillard's Dangerous Place is jump blues at its finest. Look for this one - each and every cut is a winner." E-Pulse

"Name a style and Robillard plays it - Texas single-note eerie, West Coast swing, Kansas City jump blues and aggressive Chicago burn. confirms Robillard's status as one of the pre-eminent modern blues guitarists." Outside Magazine

TOP BLUES ALBUMS.

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Writers Thrive At Patrick Joseph
Small Nashville Co. Capitalizes On Diversity

**BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE**

NASHVILLE—For songwriters who don’t feel comfortable in the stable of a big, conglomerate, yet desire a smaller company large enough to provide the services they want, president Pat Highgood and his staff at Patrick Joseph Music are happy to provide that middle ground.

Since founding the company in 1989, Highgood has cultivated a creative roster that has produced numerous hits, including Deana Carter’s “Strawberry Wine,” Trisha Yearwood’s “Everybody Knows,” and Patty Loveless’ “You Can Feel Bad.”

The Patrick Joseph roster currently includes Matraca Berg and Gary Harrison (the two writers who penned “Strawberry Wine”), Kim Carnes, Tim Menny, Vince Melamed, Bill Miller, Christy Seaman, and Troy Verges.

“I think there is a feeling here of the publishing company being a unit,” says Menny, who has written songs recently cut by Tracy Lawrence, Neal McCoy, Clay Walker, David Kersh, Daryle Singletary, and Mark Wills, among others. “It’s small enough where you know all the other writersand you’re aware of what’s going on. When there is success with any writer in a small company, the whole company feels it, and it benefits all of us. Matraca Berg has absolutely been on fire, and it’s good for the whole company.”

“The trick is to be big enough to matter but small enough to care,” Highgood says of his approach to publishing. “We’ve been lucky in that we do have a big company, and we have had a lot of diverse activity. We’ve had a lot of things that have been pretty significant pop cuts, and we’ve had a few hits in the AC field. We can put that together with some of the country things and it’s a rounded perspective.”

“I think it’s an important tool to be able to show that we are that diverse,” Highgood continues. “A lot of the smaller companies aren’t that diverse. When I put together a roster of writers I wanted to work with, I tried to be really conscious of not focusing in one direction. I tried to be broad and wide. We have people that are country and some people that are more pop or folk.”

Highgood has a firm idea of what he wanted to accomplish when he started Patrick Joseph Music because he had already amassed a great deal of publishing experience at other companies. A native Nashvilleian, Highgood started his career as an engineer. He worked at Cedarwood Publishing, then spent seven years at MCA Music, where he became VP of Nashville operations. He then worked at Warner/Chappell Music for three years as director of creative services, prior to founding Patrick Joseph.

Highgood’s company was originally a co-venture with Warner/Chappell, and after that three-year agreement ended, the company entered into a joint arrangement with Los Angeles-based Windswept Pacific Entertain-ment. “I don’t want to say they don’t have any hand in it, but this is my ship and I sail it,” he says.

“Obviously, there is a certain amount of belief each that I knew well. I know we haven’t invested the capital. We rely on them for information and creative enthusiasm. We key them out, and we have done more for us in give us a source of administrative personnel as well as capital… but far as signings, we feel somewhat more self-sufficient in that regard.”

Highgood admits that starting a new publishing venture is harder than it used to be. “You can’t do it on a shoe-string anymore,” he says. “You have to have enough things going on all the time to keep them satisfied with the deal with a lot of people, and that drives your overhead up pretty quickly in today’s marketplace.”

Highgood utilizes different tools to stay competitive, among them a two-CD sampler that featured many of the company’s writers, including Etta James’ “The Rock,” Yearwood’s “Everybody Knows,” and Martina McBride’s “Wild Angels.” The company also puts out the PUMM, or Patrick Joseph Update, which is both informative and humorous.

PUM also looks for different ways to showcase and support its writers. Highgood says there are plans to take Miller, Berg, and possibly some of the younger writers to New York in September to showcase them for "about 25 film music supervisors… to show them a different side to the writing and these writers that they might have expected. We are going to go after that market.”

Highgood will also throw PUM’s support behind Berg’s upcoming album on Rising Tide. “I was instrumental in getting her RCA deal in 1988, and Berg, who has been in the AC field, has never crossed over to the pop format.”

It came out of working her song catalog and showing people her song inventory. "I really realized she’s not only a talented songwriter, she is a talented singer also... We are working real close with Rising Tide to keep them abreast of all the activity she has in the writer’s role. ’’

“She’s going into her Rising Tide release with a lot of momentum as a songwriter, actually having in the last 12 months five songs that have gone to #1 in the country charts.”

Highgood has a modest staff that includes general professional man-ager Laura McCracken, VP of film and TV Whitney Williams, studio manager Mark Ermlieh, administrative assistant Ede Kuhnle, and tape library manager Marion Moore. The offices are in a building he renovated on Wedgewood Avenue, around the corner from Music Row.

The building features offices, kitchen, studio, tape library, and writers’ rooms and even has a bar, game room, and a complete bar. They occasionally have “writers among the campfire” showcases, and Highgood says he believes it was at one of those informal gatherings that Deana Carter first heard “Strawberry Wine.”
PARIS—Plus XXX Studios owner Claude Sahakian is so devoted to recording that he once feigned madness in order to gain a release from his military duty so he could go back to an assistant engineering job in a studio.

“I was discharged as a crazy man, but I lost my job anyway,” recalls Sahakian with amusement. “I found another job in a 16-track studio in Nerdman.”

That stroke of good fortune sent Sahakian on a course that would take him to the upper echelons of the recording business. Today, he presides over one of the busiest and most sophisticated recording facilities in a city that prides itself on world-class studios.

Located in the 10th Arrondissement here, Plus XXX offers three rooms loaded with state of the art gear, including a Solid State Logic 9672 J Series board, a Solid State Logic 4048 G Series board with Total Recall, and a New VR 60 with Total Recall. Recording in this facility is a variety of rooms includes Sony 24- and 48-track digital formats, PCM-7000, Otari MTR-90 II, and Studer A800 with Dały SII.

Like any studio of its caliber, Plus XXX boasts an impressive array of vintage and modern outboard gear, including Lexicon, Focusrite, Manley, API, Neve, GML, Tubetech, Urei, EMT, Eventide, and TC Electronics units, plus Digidesign Pro Tools IV capabilities. In addition, Plus XXX’s microphone selection features Neumann, B&K, AKG, Sony, Shure, EV, Bev Vanderbily, and Sonnyschein models.

Always a stickler for finding the right monitors, Sahakian has a stock of Genelec 1033A, 1030, and 1031A speakers, as well as Meyer HD-1s and a Sennheiser NS-10s. Other features of Plus XXX include 6-track film surround-sound mixes with Yamaha Grand C7 piano, and video editing.

Beyond its impressive spec sheet, Plus XXX offers a home-style vibe more as a characteristic of rural, residential than of urban facilities.

Headed by Sahakian and his wife, Natalie (who is booking manager), Plus XXX also employs four assistant engineers, a technical director, an assistant to the technical director, and a full-time sound engineer.

Up and entering the studio, visitors would find a skylight dim in the atmospheric space, while the studios are similarly drenched in natural light and have an unusual combination of glass and wooden surfaces. “The studios here are really advanced, but they are very cold,” says Sahakian. “They don’t have the same ambiance as Plus XXX. We always have new artists here who are on the cutting edge.”

The studio’s credit list includes such international luminaries as David Bowie, Toots Thielemans, Linda Stansfield, Duran Duran, Neneh Cherry, and Luciano Pavarotti. Even French stars, like Julien Clerc and Patricia Kaas, have lent an international flavor to the studio by bringing such star American producers as Phil Ramone and Frank Filipetti to work on their albums. The studio’s client base is enhanced by its membership in the World Studio Group, a consortium of international recording facilities headed by industry visionary Chris Stone.

“It’s very positive for us,” says Sahakian of Plus XXX’s membership in the organization. It’s “always important to increase our relationships with other studios. Sometimes one is afraid of giving up clients, but it’s better to see that the team doesn’t lose them entirely.”

Paramount to maintaining any studio’s profile—and its profitability—are keeping it open as cost as possible and helping clients plan their budgets intelligently.

“We have to be very precise in our transactions and book the studio almost all the time,” says Sahakian. “In the old days, it was easy to stop on Saturday and Sunday. Now you have different teams, and you have to work through the weekend and at night.”

Furthermore, multi-room facilities like Plus XXX need to guide clients through their projects so that they maximize their budgets.

“Record companies don’t know how to manage a budget for a recording,” says Sahakian, “so we help them build a project. We might say, ‘You can start the tracking in Studio 1, which is big, and afterward do all the vocals in Studio 3, which can cost half the price. That approach helps to keep the margin within the studio and avoid a premium in the budget for the record company.”

Sahakian’s intimacy with the operations of a recording studio comes from a long career as a musician, recording engineer, console manufacturer, and as a studio owner. An avid guitarist since his adolescence, Sahakian—who was born in Paris to Armenian immigrants—has studied mathematics, electronics, and acoustics, but he didn’t pursue any of those activities with the fervor that he reserved for music.

Sahakian began his session as a son of a freelance sound man, Sahakian walked into a recording studio and never looked back. Upon entering the control room, which was equipped with a Scully 16-track recorder, he was convinced he had to make his living as an engineer.

“I tried to find a job in a studio, and I found one as an assistant,” says Sahakian. “Initially, it was a great day. I was in that studio with a 3-track console in a 5 inputs and a 3-track Philips recorder, so I started working with that. I learned a lot because I was working by myself.”

That job was interrupted by Sahakian’s army service, but it did not take him long to regain his footing. He would end up at a 16-track facility in Normandy owned by an arranger.

“We had some major recording that studio, and it was good for me, because I had to take care of the studio by myself,” says Sahakian. “I was young and not very well paid, but it was wild and I learned a lot.”

Among the facility’s specialties was recording covers of current chart hits—a common practice in Europe at the time. “It was a very good exercise for the musicians, the arranger, and the engineer to copy everything very quickly,” says Sahakian. “Within a week, we’d have to record and mix a whole album.”

Sahakian returned to Paris in the mid-’70s and worked as a freelance engineer and as a second engineer at a local studio. Eventually, he landed at the Studio de la Grande Armée, then located near the Arc de Triomphe in central Paris (it has since relocated to the Palais des Congrès on the city’s outskirts).

“The studio was growing, and they asked me to take care of it,” recalls Sahakian. “I was hired as main engineer, and the place was awful. A French manufacturer had to sell it, which was not working at all. The tape machines were early models by 3M, which was the first equipment manufacturer that would lease equipment. I had to change a lot of things in that studio to make it function normally.”

It was at Grande Armée that Sahakian and co-worker Pierre Antonini learned to modify consoles in an effort to improve their sound. That skill would not only provide critical to Sahakian’s success as a technical engineer, but it would launch his career as a console maker.

Sahakian says, “We decided with Pierre Antonini to build our own boards, and we called our company Plus XXX—an admittedly contrived reference to the promise of more than 30 dB of headroom in the new boards.”

“When that period no console was going over 24 dB, but we imagined that digital would offer us a wider area of headroom—plus 30 dB of headroom,” explains Sahakian.

The boards, which were distributed in Europe by 3M, became extremely popular in the late ’70s and early ’80s, particularly in Europe. However, Sahakian decided to shift his focus toward record production and build a studio of his own—a dream he had harbored since he set foot in that 16-track Scully room.

Antonini launched automation business Optimix, and Sahakian inherited the Plus XXX name and built the studio on the company’s manufacturing site.

When it opened, the studio had a Plus XXX console and a 24-track analog 3M recorder in a small control room with no adequate tracking facilities other than an overdub booth.

In the late 1970s, business, Plus XXX has grown into a three-room, world-class facility with ample tracking space, state-of-the-art control rooms, and a management team steeped in the art of recording. Sahakian—who is an avid wine collector—sums up Plus XXX’s role in the Parisian recording market with the following analogy: “Studios are like wines,” he says. “No two facilities, no matter how good, will have the same quality. So there’s always room for professionals, and being different is a good thing.”
Epic Records Group chairman David R. Glew was honored as the humanitarian of the year at the 23rd annual T.J. Martell Foundation dinner May 8 in New York. Glew was presented with the prestigious award by Columbia recording artist Mariah Carey. Epic Records' Gloria Estefan served as MC for the gala, while a performance by 550 Music artist Celine Dion capped the evening. Under Glew's leadership, the foundation raised a record $8 million for leukemia, cancer, and AIDS research during its 1996-97 campaign.
Sony Targets Indian Market
New Co. Gives Jackson Set Major Launch

BY NYAY BHUSHAN
NEW DELHI—Sony Music India has announced its presence here with a high-profile launch for Michael Jackson’s new album, “Blood On The Dance Floor—History In The Mix.” The company, which began trading in India in April, mounted a music-and-video spectacular at a leading New Delhi department store in association with MTV India and Pepe Jeans. Similar in-store promotions are now planned in other cities, such as Mumbai and Bangalore.

The aggressive marketing strategy marks Sony’s rebirth in the Indian market following a go-ahead from the government in mid-1996 to launch a wholly owned Indian subsidiary, Sony Music India. It is headed by Vijay Singh, who was previously head of Disney’s Indian operations.

Headquartered in Mumbai, India’s entertainment capital, Sony Music India has in-house duplication and production facilities equipped with the latest imported equipment. Though its 17,000-square-foot production plant has space for CD presses, Sony is importing CDVs at this stage while waiting for CD player penetration to grow. Cassette production has already commenced for international releases like Aerosmith’s “Nine Lives” and Bally Sagoo’s “Rising From The East.”

“The Michael Jackson release is definitely the first major-marketing exercise for us,” says sales director Rajat Kakar. Of the company’s other priorities, he says, “Among other areas, our efforts will focus towards strengthening retail, but we are also getting into nontraditional outlets, like further developing department stores, airport shops, and so on.”

Before opening its own affiliate, Sony product here was available through a licensing deal with Indian company Pan Music. “Our relations with Pan are quite cordial, and we have a reverse distribution agreement with them for their domestic titles,” says Kakar. Pan is now concentrating on its repertoire of regional and film music, in addition to promoting its catalog products.

Having established offices in the major urban areas of Delhi (for north India), Madras (for the east), and Bangalore (for the south), plus additional warehouses, Sony also has ambitious plans to develop domestic repertoire. “We have just made our first Indian pop signing with A.R. Rahman, the noted film-music director, and we definitely want to get into Hindustani music as well,” he adds.

(Continued on next page)

Online Karaoke Deal Helps JASRAC Fees Rise 9.7%

BY STEVE MCLURE
TOKYO—Japanese performance/mechanical rights society JASRAC’s copyright fee collections for the year ending March 31 were up 9.7% to 90.6 billion yen ($82.1 million), the society announced May 21.

The rise was mainly due to the deal worked out last year between JASRAC and Japan’s online karaoke business operators, who previously had not paid copyright fees to the society. Fees paid by online karaoke operators in fiscal 1996 totaled 7.2 billion yen ($63.6 million).

That helped make up for a 3% drop in mechanical collections to 42.3 billion yen ($382.2 million). Audio disc royalties, the biggest single mechanical categories, were down 0.3% to 37.9 billion yen ($335.4 million), mainly because of poor music sales from last November through February.

About 25% of JASRAC’s collections go to foreign rights holders, mainly through Japanese subpublishers.

Performance right royalties totaled 27.1 billion yen ($259.5 million), up a solid 8% over fiscal 1995’s result, with karaoke collections rising 7.8% to 9.8 billion yen ($87.3 million).

KPS STORES LTD. has opened its fourth and fifth stores in Taiwan. Located in Taipei and the suburb of Neihu, the new outlets are 3,000 and 8,000 square feet, respectively. KPS managing director Carrie Romain, a speaker at one of MIDEM Asia’s business panels, says that the larger stores are suffering from supply problems, and that shelves at the chain’s 20,000-square-foot Taipei flagship outlet are “one-third empty.” Nonetheless, he says that the new stores are part of a roll-out in progress, and that he hopes to have 12 sites in the market by year-end. The Hong Kong-based home-entertainment web has been engaged in bullish expansion of stores in its home market of Hong Kong, where it now operates 39 outlets.

midem asia

MIDEM ASIA in Hong Kong suffered a drop in attendance this year, compared with 1996, and the numbers also fell short of the organizers’ declared target.

According to the Reed MIDEM Organisation (RMO), the May 21-25 event drew 2,138 participants, representing 918 companies from 61 countries. This contrasts with 2,432 delegates in 1996, and 2,129 in 1995, the convention’s first year. RMO originally said that it expected more than 2,500 attendees from 1,100 firms this year. However, it did note that the decline saw an increase in the ratio of Asian representatives, from 39% in 1996 to 49% this year. The 1988 edition of MIDEM Asia will take place May 27-29 in Hong Kong.

UNIVERSAL RECORDS president of prominent Asian independent Rock Records, expressed support “conceptually” for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), by which mechanical royalties are being disbursed in the region. The leading multinational music companies have signed the MoU, and their label divisions are paying mechanicals to sister publishing units at 50% of a recording’s wholesale price. Taiwan-based Rock has not yet signed. Speaking during MIDEM Asia, Duann said that he accepts the need for a mechanical royalties system in Taiwan, and that his company pays these on a “case by case” basis. But he added that he didn’t think it was necessary for the firm to sign the MoU itself. “It’s just a piece of paper,” he stated.

CHYRASLIS RECORDS co-founder Terry Ellis attended MIDEM Asia, firming up plans for his new label, TigerStar Records. The New York-based venture aims to develop new American acts specifically for Asian markets. Ellis is assembling a network of independent licensees in the region with the help of Stuart Watson’s SWAT Enterprises. TigerStar’s formal launch is expected later this year, although Ellis has already licensed “The Very Best Of Art Garfunkel—Across America” for release in some Asian markets (Billboard, April 12).

LACHLAN RUTHERFORD, president of EMI Music Asia, has been named chairman of the Asia/Pacific regional group of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, while PolyGram Far East president Norman Cheng has been selected as vice chairman. The appointments, which will take effect later this year, were finalized at the federation’s regional board meeting, held in Hong Kong during the same week as MIDEM Asia. Cheng is the group’s current chairman; the vice chairman is Michael Smellie, senior VP of EMI Entertainment International’s Asia-Pacific division.

September's newsline...

SONY: Online Sales In Test Stage Only

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS
LONDON—The major record companies are experimenting with online music sales. But reports that the EMI Group has committed itself to the system are “very, very exaggerated,” according to the company.

Respected journals in the U.K. and U.S. have stated that EMI was putting in place the structures to allow it to sell music and receive payment via the Internet.

However, EMI Group spokeswoman Sharon Christiansen says that all that EMI—and the other major labels—have been involved in is a “very small-scale experiment.”

The press reports were based on EMI’s participation in a scheme run by French company Eurodat, which is supplying a test service of music via the Internet.

New music is being played on the Internet’s KPS STORES LTD. has opened its fourth and fifth stores in Taiwan. Located in Taipei and the suburb of Neihu, the new outlets are 3,000 and 8,000 square feet, respectively. KPS managing director Carrie Romain, a speaker at one of MIDEM Asia’s business panels, says that the larger stores are suffering from supply problems, and that shelves at the chain’s 20,000-square-foot Taipei flagship outlet are “one-third empty.” Nonetheless, he says that the new stores are part of a roll-out in progress, and that he hopes to have 12 sites in the market by year-end. The Hong Kong-based home-entertainment web has been engaged in bullish expansion of stores in its home market of Hong Kong, where it now operates 39 outlets.
SYDNEY—PolyGram International Music Publishing has gained full ownership of Australian publisher PolyGram Music. The companies had operated as a joint venture since 1994. PolyGram has now exercised its exercise of option of the 1994 agreement to buy the 50% of MMA it did not own from founder Chris M. Murphy. Neither side is revealing the financial details of the deal.

PolyGram's international layout gives PolyGram access to a substantial catalog that includes writers from hit acts INXS, You Am, Screaming Jets, and Custard.

Furthermore, says David Hockman, CEO of PolyGram International Music Publishing, "It will be an excellent fit with PolyGram's Australian publishing company and will help us expand our interests in Asia." PolyGram's publishing arm, under former indie entrepreneur Roger Grierson, has a reputation for being street-smart and aggressive.

"MMA is the only Australian label, Kim Frankiewicz, has formed a music supervision company for TV, film, and advertising. It is called Frankie Goes to Hollywood.

Heather Kendrrigan and Donna Young, A&R/operational managers in MMO's Hong Kong and Los Angeles offices, have also been absorbed by PolyGram.

MMA was set up in 1980 by Murphy to solidify a part of what he claims was exploitation of Aussie writers by overseas record companies. "I'd taken over management of INXS and found they'd just been given a publishing advance of a hundred dollars."

At a time when few local composers were aware of the importance of intellectual property, MMA created a culture that helped shape Australian music businesses with international collaborations. In the late '80s, when MMA pioneered a move into joint ventures in Asia, it was active in growing their publishing catalogue. It won Australian representation for songs by Genesis, Phil Collins, and Big Audio Dynamite and for the publishing of compositions by Tommy Boy and Beggars Banquet labels.

The sale of his music publishing is Morrison's latest move in setting up business in Australia. In 1995, he gave up INXS and last year sold the successful roseArt label to EMI.

EMI: ONLINE SALES IN TEST STAGE ONLY
(Continued from preceding page)

cable to 400 households in the French cities of Paris, Le Mans, and Annecy (Billboard, March 15). As part of this, EMI and the other major labels offered music for sale, with accounts to be set as part of the customer's cable-broadband package.

Christians argues that settlement in this manner is a long distance from buying music via the network using a credit card. "This scheme is very, very small," she says. "It's like a scheme British Telecom ran in Colchester [England] two years ago."

She says EMI was involved in the Eurodata scheme "because, in principle, we believe that online sales are going to be a channel for the future, and we have to understand it."

Noting the need for customers' credit card information to be kept secure and for labels' copyrights to be kept from risk, Christians says, "We are doing with Eurodat is all about trying to find the right way to protect the customers' rights and to protect our copyrights."

However, she describes the reports that EMI is now committed to online sales as "a bit too early" and says the sales are not yet committed. We are in no way the leaders in this.

SONY TARGETS INDIAN MARKET
(Continued from preceding page)

well," says Kapoor. "We want to get into all segments of the market."

The Indian music market is dominated by sales of film soundtracks, which often surpass box-office revenue and the song of a question, Sony's major Indian talent now is Sago, a Birmingham, England-based producer whose "Rising From The East" was released worldwide in October 1996 through Pan Music in India.

"Of course we missed that marketing opportunity since Sony was still planning their Indian entry at the time, but the album is still quite alive, and we are working closely with Sago on this," says Kapoor.

PolyGram India has also launched an aggressive marketing campaign to promote its Japanese catalogue "Billy Sago On The Mix: The Story So Far." PolyGram's two India-produced videos of tracks from "On The Mix" have enjoyed heavy rotation on Channel V, MTV India, and numerous TV stations, almost overshadowing the "Dil Chahta" video taken from "Rising From The East." "We may come out with a new, special edition of the album from Billy to further strengthen his market position," says Kapoor.

Sony's other marketing exercise has already commenced for "Nine Lives," an album that ran into rough weather recently when a Hindu religious organization protested the original album's cover design, which depicted a Hindi Krishna in a derogatory manner. Kapoor notes, "Aerosmith have apologized to Indians worldwide, and they have also changed the album cover."

The next major-marketing exercise for Sony will be for the compilation concert "Max 2." And the last week of May. It is a collection of dance tracks jointly compiled by Sony, WEA, and BMG internationally.

Musician Style magazine, which gained international distribution after Murphy acquired a foreign operation, that year's movie French finance. He is financing an Australian title movie "Praise" and compiling its soundtrack. Murphy's Music Communications also owns Sydney radio station 2SM-AM.

Peace Concert On Cyprus Takes Place Despite Violence
■ BY ADRIAN HIGGS

ISTANBUL—Death threats and violence failed to dampen the fun at a concert held in Cyprus and on a Green Line that divides the Turkish-Cypriot north. Some 4,000 people crossed into this United Nations-controlled strip of land to hear Turkish pop idol Burak Kut and Greek singer Sakis Rouvas in an emotional show of reconciliation (Billboard, May 17). Most of the attendees were young people born after the 1974 division of the island. Hand in hand, the audience, which included Yolanda and Kut to John Lennon's "Imagine," the Beatles' "Come Together," and Bob Dylan's "Blowin' In The Wind"

"It's true that it's been a while since I put out a record, and everybody's sitting there and saying, 'Well, OK ...' quipped Joel, whose previous studio album, "Peace," was released in 1994. "I've been writing a different kind of music, which is why I'm recording a Bob Dylan song, actually. He's not a bad writer," Joel deadpanned.

Asking by Billboard what song he and Elton John would record as a duet, Joel said, "We don't know yet; we're kicking around some ideas."

Joel was accompanied on his Sydney stopover by Sony Music Aus- tralia chairman/CEO Denis Han- dlin and Michael Gudinski, chairman of the Mushroom Group of Cos., who is exclusively booking international entertainment into Melbourne's new casino and entertainment complex.

"We're going to finish this rec- tording [soon]. I'm going to go to L.A. with Peter Asher and work on it some more, and I'd be happy to have you guys work with me," Joel told the crowd. "You are the guys who started the whole Billy Joel thing [internationally] as far as I'm concerned. I was the Piano Man for a while, and then it blew up over here, so I always point out it's your fault," joked Joel. "As far as I'm concerned, you guys are light-years ahead of other countries, and you show them how to do it."

AFTER TINA ARENA sold more than 700,000 domestic copies of her Sony Music Australia's "Don't Ask," scored the No. 1 chart album of the year in Australia for 1995, and enjoyed a hit single across Europe, the U.S., and Asia with "Chains," the plain-spoken diva re-called telling her husband and man- ager Ralph Carr that she didn't have a clue whom she should work with on her follow-up album. "I just had a feeling one day and we're playing records, and I'm thinking, 'Jeez, I really got to be honest with you; I have no idea who to record with.' I was really freaked," Arena confesed to the Sony Music Australia at their marketing meeting.

One of the albums that Arena played as she contemplated her next record was Billy Joel's "Cold Spring Harbor," "Storm Front," produced by former songwriting partner Nick Jones. "That's when the idea hit me," she said.

Music communications coming album, produced by Jones in Los Angeles, has all the elements of a massive international smash, judging from a preview pro- vided to the Sony staff here. Among its offerings is Arena's dynamic new representation of the Foreigner hit "I Want To Know What Love Is." The album also includes four tracks on which Arena collaborat- ed with "Chains" producer David Tyson.

"I believe we have an album now that will definitely surpass "Don't Ask,"" says Arena. "It's truly an international-selling record." During her worldwide promotion over the past two years, says Arena, "I have really felt an amazing Aus- tralian presence internationally, and I really feel that that's why this is now. Let's make the most of it.

"I really would like to thank Denis for his attention to detail," Arena said. "As I'm going to be working with Sony Music Australia chief Denis Han- dlin. "I don't know if you know this, but Denis came to the United States while I was making this record there three times. I thought, 'Jeez, if he comes one more time, I'm going to ask him to do back- ground vocals.'"

NOTES FROM DOWN UNDER
The recent international success of a string of Australian acts—Sav- age Garden, Mertel Bainbridge, Silverchair, The Living End, and TINA Arena, among others—has re-confirmed the market's strength as a global repertoire source. Following visits in Sydney and Melbourne last month, this column will report in the weeks ahead on a number of Oz artists to watch.

Home & Abroad is a biweekly col- umn spotlighting the activity of the international market and Australian artists outside their home markets.

Information may be sent to Thom Duffy, Billboard, 24 Edgmont St., London, WC1E 7AH, or faxed to 071-132-2316.
TORONTO—Released May 24 worldwide except in the U.S. by Universal Music, the Tragically Hip’s latest 10-minute concert album “Live Between Us” is being welcomed by Canadian music retailers and radio programmers.

While the Kingston, Ontario-based rock band has not fared well internationally, it has consistently delivered big-selling albums at home. The band’s six-album catalog has topped Canadian sales of more than 5 million units, according to Russ Reynolds, president of Universal Music Canada. “I’m not aware of any other contemporary Canadian or international band which has had the sustained continuing success of this band,” Reynolds says.

TRAGICALLY HIP

“This album will do exceptionally well,” says Tien Baker, buyer with the Toronto-based 31-store Sunrise Records chain. “Some [people] are being apprehensive about this being a live record, but I think it’s going to do even better than a studio album. What remains to be seen is, What kind of legs is it going to have after six weeks?”

“The Hip is the biggest act on our station,” says Rob Robson, music director of album rock radio CFQX Vancouver “Anything they do is welcome.”

Without a U.S. label deal, the group’s seventh album has been sold in the States since May 27 exclusively on Music Boulevard –NRG Entertainment’s online retail site, at www.musicblvd.com (Billboard, May 31) and through the company’s phone-order line, 1-800-996-MUSIC.

“The first day on our site [May 20] we had pre-orders of 300 units, more than we got with [1992’s] ‘Road Apple.’” says Larry Rosen, chairman/CEO of NRG.

The album was previewed May 21 via a two-hour program produced by the Tragically Hip. It was hosted by 49 Canadian radio stations and telecast on NRG’s Rocktopus Network worldwide.

Featuring some of the Tragically Hip’s best-known catalog songs, including “New Orleans Is Sinking,” “Springtime in Mirvish,” “Twist the Line,” “Nautical Disaster,” and “Ahead By A Century,” the album could provide a substantial sales boost for the band, particularly outside Canada.

Produced by the group and its longtime soundman Mark Vreken, “Live Between Us” was recorded Nov. 23, 1996, at the 12,191-seat Cobo Arena in Detroit. The performance was halfway through the band’s 24-date North American tour of its album, “Trouble At The Henhouse,” which was released by MCA in Canada in 1995 and by Atlantic Records in Canada in 1996.

Last year, the Tragically Hip also recorded and released new material for a studio album, now slated to be released in early 1998. While the tour was being recorded, each show and sound check were made available on a portable 24-track digital Soundcraft board to capture ideas for new songs. Listening to the tapes, band members kept being brought to the Cobo Arena show, and the idea of releasing a live recording developed.

Recalls bassist Gord Sinclair: “There was a feeling from the opening bars of the Detroit show of ‘Wow, this has a lot of electricity.’ We felt really strong about the performance when we came off stage. It was just one of those nights.”

Singer/guitarist Gordon Downie, however, says he initially opposed releasing a live record. “After the tour, I had a theory we could go into the studio early on in [1997] and, strike while we were all still right, knock off a studio album in two or three months, and release it in May. After talking it over, I came to see a new album would have been too tastey. I’m glad I was turned around.”

Adds Sinclair, “As we were writing for a studio album, we came to realize that we had a very interesting collection of songs on our hands, but it would take more time to really do them justice.”

HIT SET LIST

According to Sinclair, it was by chance that the live recording includes songs from each of the band’s previous albums. “It was the way I did the set list that night,” he says. “For that tour we started playing old numbers from ‘Up To Here’ and ‘Road Apple’ without rehearsing them, and it just breathed so much life back into them.”

To have its performance fit a single CD, the band dropped three songs from the Cobo show. It also included embellishing the Detroit Tapes with a few studio overdubbing. “Once you start tinkering with it, it isn’t really a legitimate live performance anymore,” Sinclair says.

Producers of “Live Between Us” in Canada, Universal Music Canada purchased ads on video channel Much-Music and its French-language counterpart, MusicPlus. These ads were being followed by a national print and radio campaign. Prior to the album’s release, retailers were provided with banners, posters, flats and album covers, and a stand-up display catalog. Additionally, a limited run of 3,000 vinyl copies of the album was made available. Without a video, the album will get significant boosts from radio airplay in Canada, but the band’s upcoming eight-date Ford Roadside Attractions Tour will provide the greatest profile for the recording. The band’s third festival appearance is this year’s Vans Warped Tour, which takes place in July. The band also performed at Bacon In Buffalo, N.Y., and also on the bill are Sheryl Crow, Wilco, Los Lobos Ashley MacIsaac, and Mutton Birds, among others.

The Canadian dates are being promoted by Universal Concerts Canada, the Buffalo date by New York-based Metropolitan Entertainment, and the Highgate date by Metropolitan Entertainment and All Points Booking.

The Tragically Hip has been unable to mirror its Canadian success in America despite substantial touring there since 1995. According to SoundScan, U.S. sales of the band’s MCA albums “Up To Here” (1995), “Road Apple” (1996), and “Fully Completely” (1998), are 80,000, 70,000, and 94,000, respectively, since SoundScan began tracking sales in 1991.

The Tragically Hip’s two U.S.-released albums, “Day For Night” (1995) and “Trouble At The Henhouse” (1996), sold 54,000, and 61,000 units, respectively, according to SoundScan. The label and the group parted ways in January.

“We went above and beyond [promotionally] with the group, but we were not able to surround the boundaries that exist for them in this market,” says Vicki Germaine, senior VP (U.S.) of Atlantic Records. “We got more radio airplay than [MCA], but it didn’t lead to anything.”

Because the band owns its recordings for the U.S., it decided to bypass traditional label and retail outlets and sell “Live Between Us” on the Internet and through the number. Music Boulevard is also selling the band’s catalog.

According to the band’s manager, John Gold of the Management Trust in Toronto, it was a natural step, because the group maintains an in-depth Web site (www.thehip.com) and a significant mailing and E-mail database.

“We’ve spent a lot of time building our database on the Internet and mailing list,” he says. “We have over 30,000 names on our U.S. mailing list and 7,000 names on our E-mail list. In Canada, we have 7,000 people on E-mail and 10,000 to 15,000 people on our mailing list. [Names have been gathered at our shows and being on-line.]”

While Downie brings up the band’s lackluster American profile, he becomes testy with further discussion of the issue. “Interviewers always ask us about our success or lack of success in the States, which I find absurd,” Downie says. “While that is a story of the band, there are so many other stories . . . All we’ve ever wanted to do was be successful on our own terms, which is to have a body of work become undeniable, to be known for songs rather than one.”

Adds Gold, “People are more obsessed with our lack of success in America than we are. Last year the group made almost $1 million [gross earnings] touring the U.S., and our catalog scanned almost 50,000 albums, in addition to ‘Trouble At The Henhouse.’”
**HITS OF THE WORLD**

**EUROCHAT**

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Haven't seen this customer lately? She's looking for prerecorded music cassettes and can't find them in your store. 45% of your customers think it's terrible that you don't carry prerecorded music cassettes and they're shopping elsewhere as a result. And that group is even larger among females (55%) and over-35-year-olds (55%). They know that cassettes sound great, are portable and are a better value than ever before. Sounds like you're losing customers.

Find out how to get them back by calling toll free: 1-888-567-TAPE

ITA, The International Recording Media Association, is a 27-year-old industry trade association with 450 member companies throughout the world. Members include magnetic and optical recording media manufacturers, program right holders, recording and playback equipment manufacturers, and audio and video duplicators.

*SoundData 1986
Viacom's Flagship Store Opens
Chicago Outlet Offers Brand-Name Merchandise

BY MOIRA MCCORMICK

CHICAGO—Entertainment conglomerate Viacom Inc. opened its first Viacom Entertaiment Store May 23 at Chicago's Magnificent Mile, featuring merchandise related to six of Viacom's most high-profile brands: MTV, Nickelodeon, Nick at Nite, Paramount Pictures, and "Star Trek.

Its retail mood operandi emphasizes entertainment and interactive. The 300,000-square-foot, two-level store, located at 600 N. Michigan Ave. in the heart of downtown Chicago's shopping, dining, and entertainment district, is the flagship of a planned chain of Viacom Entertainment Stores, which will also spawn offshore boutiques.

A grand-opening benefit party was held May 22 at the store. Proceeds from the $100-per-person gala were earmarked for the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, with which Viacom plans an ongoing relationship.

At the event, Viacom chairman/CEO Sumner Redstone said, "Our goal when we created the store was to tap into the already strong relationships Viacom brands have with their audiences ... Viacom is not a household name, but this store will raise its profile. It will also be a powerful tool for helping us to drive sales."

"Viacom merchandise is in retail outlets. This store represents a major step in a companywide initiative to drive merchandising revenues."

Viacom expects to open three or four more stores this year in Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Boston, Redstone said. As for the spinoff boutiques, "we'll start with Nickelodeon stores, probably five by the fourth quarter."

Chicago was chosen as the flagship site because a number of factors make it part because it is a destination point for tourism and also because of the store's "prime location in the best part of Chicago's shopping area." Redstone declined to specify how much the store cost to build and stock but claimed the expected $25 million (net) was spent for a store "built by our contemporaries in this business."

Other entertainment conglomerates, such as Walt Disney, Time Warner, and Sony, have also created stores that feature licensed merchandise.

Designed as a high-ceilinged, loftlike "shell," the Viacom Entertainment Store utilizes an open floor plan and movable wall to create boutique areas for its respective brands. The store features more than 2,500 branded products, 78% of which are exclusive to it. They include 6,000 SKUs, including CDs, cassettes, video, and books.

The approach we took was to make the merchandise reflect the individual brands," said Tom Byrne, president of Viacom Retail Group.

The Nickelodeon products are irreverent and fun, the "Star Trek" products are futuristic, and the Paramount Pictures products have the glamour of Hollywood. The merchandise is high-powered, said Paul Colette, VP of product development and creative services, "We'll change product every six weeks to reflect what's selling. Customers are listening to that at moment."

Two different types of listening stations are utilized. One type, exclusive to the store, is developed by Viacom and a partner, allows customers to listen to any cut on any CD by swiping its bar code through a scanner. Each regularly featuring music, the boutique has 24, is equipped with two pairs of headphones.

The other type of listening station is called the Headphone Hang, in which 16 headphones hang down from a tangle of colored wire on the ceiling. An audio station of each of 16 albums that are clustered on a tree "under the hanging headphones plays continually. This is a great way for visitors to quickly sample the albums."

"It's a singles showcase, as opposed to the [whole album] listening stations," Colette said.

Selected MTV-related videos are also available, including "MTV Video Music Awards—Select Performances," "Beavis & Butt-head," "Road Rules Travel Guide," and assorted "MTV Pop"titles. The boutique features an extensive product line of MTV-inspired merchandise, including "Road Rules" travel CD cases. "MTV Jams" hip-hop clothing and jewelry, bathroom accessories whose theme is Beavis & Butt-head, autographed limited-edition Martin guitars, numerous other clothing lines (one music-inspired line is called Rave Girl), and more.

Experiential books include huge-better-than life replicas of Beavis & Butthead on a couch, with whom customers can take pictures. In the MTV Studio Room, a padded-closet-like space where visitors can respond via computer to MTV polls or sound off on a specific topic (responses are videotaped for possible use on MTV); and MTV On-Line Motel, a replica of a "foggy phone desk where the clerk's head is a TV monitor displaying MTV's World Wide Web site, with mouse pad attached for customers' use."

The VH1 boutique, on the lower level, merchandises its 500 titles as they correspond to the music channel's segments: "Big 80s," "Crossroads," "Eight Track Flashback," "Soul Of VH1," and "Top Ten." Four CD listening stations are featured with barcode scanners.

A current experiential book is a rock photo exhibit by photographer Kevin Mazur. Sheryl Victor, manager of VH1 and MTV Retail Group, said, "It's a cool way to get the customers involved."

"Sheryl's going to build it," Colette said. "We're going to let them create their own areas."

Ad: One of the store's most two-dimensional attractions is "Star Wars Day," an event being held May 24.

The flagship Viacom Entertainment Store, left, opened May 23 on North Michigan Avenue in Chicago. MTV, a Viacom brand, has one of the six individual boutiques, right, within the store.

NEW YORK—If trade shows are a true reflection of the industries represented, then video is in the midst of a midlife crisis.

Its two longest-running events, the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDB) convention and the more nationally oriented Assn. of Video Distributors (NADV) conference, are less vibrant than they were a few years ago. VSDB, still trying to recover the momentum lost when it set up exhibits in Dallas two years ago, returns July 9 to Las Vegas with a more Hollywood inspired, celebrity talent, including John Travolta, that will help return attendance to old levels.

But, for the first time, Warner Home Video isn't exhibiting. Disney and has decided not to stage the extravaganzas that had been VSDB's hallmark event for years. (Last year's event in Los Angeles featured Robin Williams and a sprawling food and entertainment tented bazaar in Griffith Park to celebrate release of the studio's direct-to-video "Aladdin And The King Of Thieves.") From the studios' perspective, it's an expense—in Disney's case, more than $1 million—they can do without in a mature market. Sources indicate Warner might actually appear under a DVD banner, but that would be flag-waving of a different sort. The vast majority of independent dealers attending VSDB aren't nearly as interested in DVD as they are in rental, with many, for many, celebrity autographs.

Retailers, predictably, consider Warner's absence a slap in the face to the trade. In fact, VSDB has suffered a loss of glitz for about a decade. In the mid-'80s, every major put on the dog, hosting dinners and entertainment for thousands—and occasional setting off altercations among retailers trying to get in the door. RCA/Columbia Home Video (now Columbia TriStar), MCA/Universal Home Video (now Universal Studios), and Paramount Home Video long ago decided to save the money and the headaches.

Overall, the number of sponsored meals has declined sharply, parallel- ing the growth of off-the-shoe floor meetings. Hotel suites are considered the place to get down to brass tacks with key accounts, who increasingly dominate sell-through and don't spend much time visiting booths. A great deal of the wheeling and dealing these days is done without the benefit of middlemen, the wholesalers who are bypassed when vendors ship directly to distribution centers or individual stores.

Direct delivery is one reason for the subdued NADV conference, held last month in Indian Wells, Calif. With vendor/manufacturer-relationships on the rise, there was less to talk about. And there were fewer people to talk to. NADV attendance continued its gradual decline from the halcyon days of the early and mid-'80s. This year, 240 people registered, 36 fewer than in 1996.

The association generates little or no spats, in contrast to a decade ago, when wholesale—for better or worse—was the only vehicle to get product to stores. RCA/Columbia once used the conference to tell distributors that it was granting exclusive territories in a business known for fierce competition among rival branches. Several distributors learned there that they were being dropped from the "A" list. Consternation—very apparent at the poolside of the Grand Champions hotel—was widespread. A backlash kicked in immediately, and the studio plan lasted scarcely longer than the conference. Its failure ultimately cost some RCA/Columbia executives their jobs. But, for that moment, NADV was on the map.

Membership attrition, including the departure of pioneering distribution executives like Gene Silverman, Ron Eisenberg, and Walt Wise- man, has since lessened the association's impact. Studio staffers still like the face-to-face contact at Grand Champions, but Hollywood increasingly dominates the conversations.

Pay-per-view (PPV) windows are a prime example. NADV's longer-in- better policy, announced for rental releases since 1989, doesn't get much respect from the studios, which base PPV start dates on cassette orders. The bigger numbers, the longer suppliers are encouraged to hold back cable delivery.

Since the reverse is also true, distributors say they're caught between a rock and a hard place. They can't dictate purchases by retailers, who have to spread limited-open-to-buy dollars among more titles, and they can't convince the studios that wider PPV windows might help sales.

While NADV has had its successes, such as Tuesday street dates, leverage is lacking elsewhere. A new release tracking service, for example, received "a ho-hum response" from Hollywood, according to NADV executive director Bill Burton, and has been scrapped. At least three majors, including Warner, reportedly refused to participate, despite the fact that NADV didn't see the data. "Really, the report didn't benefit us," said association president (Continued on page 76)
Oak Lawn Records Keeps Dance Music Moving in Dallas

BY PATRICIA BATES

DALLAS—Hi-NRG, house, trance. The music seems to change as often as the partners on the dance floor, but Oak Lawn Records & Compact Discs has kept time with it for 17 years.

In just four months, sales have already increased 18% over 1996. The legendary Dallas disco the Starck Club is back with new owners, and diva Donna Summer has returned to the top 25 of the store’s in-house charts.

“Dance doesn’t get that much radio airplay or publicity,” says Ray Cooper, president of Oak Lawn Records & Compact Discs. “So we have to know what songs are being heard at midnight at the local nightclubs.”

Ray Cooper, right, is the president of Oak Lawn Records & Compact Discs in Dallas. At left is VP David Hilzendager. (Photo: Patricia Bates)
NAIRD Attendees Lighten Up in New Orleans
DiFranco's Upbeat Speech Sparks Attitude Adjustments

PEP TALK: As Dinah Washington might have sung—had she been in the practice of attending record industry conventions—"What A Diff'rence A Year Makes."

Last year, at NAIRD's convention in Baltimore, the atmosphere was gray as distributors and label representatives hunkered down under the avalanche of returns then hurrying back to retailers; the grass was neon green in one convention city near by. This year, at the Fairmont in New Orleans, May 21-25, was an upbeat event, conventions crammed to grappling with the sobering realities of the current business climate, but they weren't going to let the situation bring them down, especially amid the multiplicity of entertaining distractions offered by the Big Easy.

If no one could definitely eliminate the negative, convention organizers did, they could to accentuate the positive. The emphasis was on music at this year's get-together, with label showcases running every night; we saw 10 terrific acts over the course of the event and even scratched the surface of what was available to club-hoppers.

Music also reigned as a topic of conversation in the hotel halls and at daytime panels. Candidly spotlighting one of the indie side's major success stories of recent years, NAIRD brought on singer/songwriter Ani DiFranco, who is also proprietress of Buffalo, N.Y.-based Righteous Babe Records, for the '97 keynote.

While some groused that DiFranco's positive message was at odds with the oft-cite state of the business, her disarming presentation kicked off the convention with a much-needed emanation of good vibes. And certainly there were many in the house who shared DiFranco's orientation as artist-label operator: An informal Saturday-morning meeting of artist-run imprints drew more than 30 attendees.

DiFranco started her pep talk with the self-efacing declaration, "I feel like such a jerk, because I'm a folk singer, and I don't know shit." She credited "the evil genius" of her label director and manager Scott Fisher for the ongoing success of the label.

The green-haired performer's crucial message came early in her speech: "What served me well was thinking small... It doesn't have to be expensive or complicated... I didn't have to wait around for the patronage of corporate America to make little recordings."

DiFranco characterized Righteous Babe as "my joke at first." Walking listeners through the history of the label, she recounted how she sold cassette stock on the stage as she toured relentlessly around the country.

First selling her work on consignment to stores in upstate New York and then working with alternative distributors of women's music like Ladyslipper Music in Durham, N.C., and Goldenrod Music in Lansing, Mich., DiFranco secured her first

NAIRD executive director Pat Martin Bradley announced that the trade group—under its new name, the Association for Independent Music (AIM)—will meet May 13-17 next year at the Adams Mark Hotel in Denver.

In related trade confab news, the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) will mount its 1997 Mid-Year Conference Sept. 11-14 at Marriott's Laguna Cliffs Resort in Dana Point, Calif. The event, which will combine elements of the old Retailers Conference and Fall Conference, will place a much sooner than the long-running wholesalers get-together to allow for full sales planning.
Suppliers Not Thrilled With New Musicland Credit Deal

Two weeks ago I detailed some policy changes made by Universal Music and Video Distribution. Most of that information was gleaned from sources in the marketplace. Now that I finally got my hands on the policy letter, I see I missed a change. According to the letter, dated May 9, the company is eliminating its returns exception lists. While all product returns generally need to be authorized by the distributor, the exception existed to ensure that priority product wasn’t returned until the distributor gave the OK. Of course, even with the elimination of the exception list, Universal won’t accept returns for product during the first 90 days of a title’s availability, unless authorized.

Another thing that happened concurrently with the Universal policy letter is that Interscope created its first midline. The label put out about 30 or its titles into the midline, which carries an $11.98 list, reducing releases from the front-line prices of $13.98-$16.98, including 4 Non Blondes’ “Bigger, Better, Faster, More!,” Helmet’s “Betty,” Pure Soul’s self-titled album, and the Rev. Horton Heat’s “Liquor In The Face.”

Interestingly, with the creation of the midline, Interscope came up with what Retail Track believes is a new wrinkle in addressing the issue of declining cassette sales. In some instances, the CD version of titles were kept in the front line price tier while the cassette was placed at midline.

For example, the Toasties’ “Rubberneck,” Bush’s “Sixteen Stone,” Primus “Pork Soda” and “Tales From The Punchbowl,” Rocket From The Crypt’s “Circus: Now” and “Scream, Dracula, Scream!,” Nod’s “Tragic Kingdom,” and the “Natural Born Killers” soundtrack all have the CD version of the album at full price, but the cassette format is reduced to $6.98 from either $9.98 or $10.98.

That strategy was enacted to promote the cassette, according to Candle Berry, head of sales at Interscope. But, she added, in other instances cassette sales were just so low that the label decided to drop the CD to midline and delete the cassette version. Among the albums that received that treatment were Marky Mark & the Funky Bunch’s “Music For The People,” Primus’ “Sailing The Seas Of Cheese,” and the soundtrack to “Bill & Ted’s Bogus Journey.”

Making Tracks: Lenore Lello, former director of alternative marketing at the now-defunct Alliance Label Group, has joined IDG Distribution as director of independent distribution... Denise Pizzini, formerly North-east regional marketing manager for Rhino Records, has taken a position with Atlantic Records as Northeast regional sales manager. In other Atlantic news, Alexis Aller, director of marketing for classical music and the Jonesuch label, will become director of sales... Jim Evans, previously a sales manager for Universal Music and Video Distribution, is now West Coast regional marketing manager for Sire/Discovery. Barry Bordin, currently VP of store planning and marketing with Nobody Beats the Wiz, is leaving the company and is seeking opportunities. He can be reached at the Wiz at 908-682-1900, extension 1326, or 516-454-6823.

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Disney "Herculean" Effort Into Boosting Audio

by Moira McCormick

include a mall tour that began in February and runs through June. Some 200,000 copies of a cassette single with the song "Zero To Hero" (performed by the movie's gospel-influenced Muses record label artists) have been sold. The album has also been released as a CD and cassette set. The album is described as "Herculean" and is being given away as a "Herculean" effort.

"Hercules" is part of McDonald's Just-launched promotion "Celebrate Disney Music," in which McDonald's customers can purchase a Disney cassette sampler for $3.79 with food purchase. Through the promotion, "Hercules" is being given away as a "Herculean" effort.

"We're also launching retailer-specific promotions and synergistic activities along with tie-ins with the Disney Channel, Disney Interactive, and Radio Disney. The "Hercules" video has been serviced to all broadcast venues. Also new from Walt Disney Records is "The Official Album Of Disneyland And Walt Disney World," a collection of songs from the theme parks' attractions, which features over 70 highlights. Highlights include such songs as Dick Dale's "Lights From the Caribbean" theme song, "Lights From the Caribbean," and "It's A Small World."
OAK LAWN RECORDS

(Continued from page 68)

between 1988 and '94," says Cooper. "Today, dance music lovers come into Oak Lawn for its selection. "In the early- to mid-1980s, a lot of women in here for tracks for their aerobics routines," says Cooper. "Then, America went through the Asian invasion in the mid-1980s, but today it's more European. Our average customer is between the ages of 16 to their 50s, and the split is about 50% gay to straight."

Dance is an art form that isn't just "a pastime, it's an obsession" for its fans, says Cooper. "By getting the single, you can relive the club experience." The customers also want to be the first to have a current-12 inch single, he says. "Madonna's 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina' was available on vinyl and CD. We went through Warner Bros. Records to get it as an import from the U.K., but when it originally came from Germany," says Cooper. "We like it, because it's what keeps us alive. When they release it in U.K. before America, that means we can get it before Blockbuster and Best Buy."

Cooper and Hilzendager hire DJs, and on the "team," as they call the nine-member staff, is five-year veteran Tony Aco, director of the North Texas Dance Assn. and a DJ at the Star Club.

"We have meetings here once a quarter, and we serve pizza. That's when we discuss the previous month," says Cooper. "We usually talk about charges and checks, because we do volume, but we're also a small business."

Today, Oak Lawn Records advertises in both straight and gay publications. Sometimes, the owners take a four-page ad in MixMag, but they're looking toward the Internet, too. "Someday, all music may come into homes via PCs," says Cooper. "We are always worried about the future of independent record stores like ours each year with the computer age."

CHILD'S PLAY

(Continued from preceding page)

Stores like Noodle Kids have long featured interactive merchandising with certain products, such as games and CD-ROMs, notes Tangney. "Now it's happening with audio," she says, noting that the listening station program is "a nice addition." The program, which runs in three-month sessions. The participating stores agree to run the program a minimum of six months and to stock at least one copy of each featured title. The program carries a policy of 100% returns. Included in Slips's listening-station program are such independent artists as Tim Cain, Cathy & Marc, Jonathan Sprout, Jill Rogoff, Dana, Broadway Kids, Odds Bodkin, Linda Arnold, Sarah Pirble, Jim Weiss, Joemmy Wilson, and David Holt, as well as such readily recognizable names as Barney, Raffi, and Fred Penner. Indian labels taking part include Music for Little People and Kimbo Educational, featured series include "Woo Lawn," "The Classical Musician's Classical Kids," and "The Classical Child."

"The listening stations help labels break their whole product lines," notes Tangney. "If you like "The Classical Child At The Ballet," you'd want to check out the rest of the series."
If Vid Is Reality-Based, Viewers Bite
Demand For Danger, Disaster Titles Growing

By CATHERINE APPLEFELD OLSON

WASHINGTON, D.C.—While our everyday lives get diller, our thirst to teeter vacuously on the edge of danger and disaster can't be quenched. At least that's how program suppliers interpret the recent flood of reality-based video. More and more consumers are saying yes to videos that detail natural disasters, police shootouts, and plane crashes.

For this growing audience, it seems, there's nothing like the real thing. Witness the success of aptly named Real Entertainment, initially founded last year as the sales and distribution entity for Barbour/Langley Productions. Real's "Cops: Too Hot For TV," which includes footage that didn't fly with the popular television series' censors, has notched sales of more than 1 million units. The company's two subsequent "Cops" tapes—"Caught In The Act" and "In Hot Pursuit"—have sold in excess of 500,000 each. More titles will be lead-footing it down the highway toward year's end, says Real Entertainment's marketing VP Darren Howell.

Another relative newcomer, WinStar Home Entertainment, this month rolled out "Air Disasters," a reality program produced in the U.K. WinStar originally planned the release last fall but postponed following the July 1996 crash of TWA Flight 800, says Michael Olivieri, president of Fox Lorber Associates video distribution.

Specializing in nontheatrical titles, WinStar has shipped videos on topics ranging from real-life disasters and psychic experiences to the true story behind the man-eating lion movie "The Ghost And The Darkness." Beginning in late August, WinStar will begin distributing the recently acquired "Court TV" video line.

After returning "Cops" to Real Entertainment when a contract between the two companies expired, MVP Home Entertainment decided to build its own reality-based line. Eventually, those programs will account for 30% of its catalog, says MVP CEO Philip Knowles.

Other labels also specialize in the genre. Simitar Entertainment in Minneapolis has produced its share of reality-based titles, as has Brentwood Home Video, whose latest pair of "Tiganic" tapes are meant to piggyback the $250 million James Cameron-directed movie of the same name.

"These are real-life soap operas," says Dan Guritz, VP of sales for WinStar. "They are a case of reality being absolutely stranger than fiction. Sometimes it is much more compelling to watch things that really happened." Howell, too, chalks up Real Entertainment titles' popularity to the appeal of the real thing. "They are showing heroic acts of courage from everyday people, and it's so dramatic and so gripping that you realize it's not a movie," he says. "In life, you don't need any special effects.

For MTV the nodas operandi is to find niches within the market that aren't yet overexposed, Knowles adds. His current focus is rush-released videos of hot news stories, such as "North Hollywood Shooting—Terror In The Streets Of LA." The March release provided details of a Los Angeles daylight cop-and-robbers shootout that captivated—and horrified—the TV audience that was watching. MVP's new "Heaven's Gate: Culticide In California" covers the recent mass suicide in Southern California.

Knowles says the idea is to get the titles out within a month of the actual event, when follow-up television coverage "sets" as a commercial for the tape. People are always looking to see more of whatever happens. "The time constraints on TV coverage helps. Knowles notes. "The press only allows you to see so much, and often this is not enough to satisfy (the audience's) curiosity."

(Continued on page 76)
Food Vendors Among New Exhibitors At VSDA Show

Convention Grazing: Attendees at the upcoming Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) Convention July 9-12 in Las Vegas won't be hungry walking around the show floor. As a result of VSDA's lengthy campaign to attract new exhibitors, more than 90, mainly in the food and beverage category, are taking booth space. VSDA marketing VP Cathy Scott says that much of the credit goes to director of sales Kimberly Orr, who has spent the last year traveling to non-video trade shows to hustle up new business.

"This has been a full-time, year-round effort," says Orr, "and it's been Kimberly's job to go to trade shows and sell floor space." Thanks to Orr, conventioners will be snacking on samples of Haggen-Daze ice cream, Rondelle bagel chips and cheese, Land-o-Lakes Chocolate Classics, Nestlé USA Candy, and Seneca Foods fruit juices, among others. First-time exhibitor PepsiCo has also decided not to take a booth doesn't mean we went out and scrambled to get these new companies in.

Other new items on the VSDA convention menu include two panels focusing on the adult video market. One will give retailers tips on merchandising and marketing, and the other will advise dealers on how to handle the numerous legal complaints in carrying adult product. There will also be sessions on guarding against crime in the workplace and how to investigate a harassment claim, as well as the usual seminars on merchandising, how to buy new releases, a market (Continued on next page)
**SHELF TALK** (Continued from preceding page) overview from a studio perspective, customer service, privacy, and—least we not forget—the impact of DVD.

**WATCH AND LISTEN:** PolyGram Video is bringing back its "Video Worth Listening To For Less" campaign with four new long-form music videos bargain-priced at $9.95.


In other developments, PolyGram has inked up distribution rights to "The Reppies," a live-action kids’ program. Produced by REI and distributed by American Programming Service (APS), "The Reppies" debuted in April 1996 and is shown on 120 PBS stations. APS will increase the distribution to 260 PBS stations this summer.

The first title from the series, "A Merry Reppies Holiday Special," will be in video stores in October. The program is a multicultural celebration at the celebration of Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, and Easter. "The Reppies" is based on characters created by Wendy Severin-Harrison.

**D V D FOR EUROPE:** Philips has announced that it will provide European content providers with free MPEG-2 multichannel audio encoding for DVD for the next three months.

The offer is part of a support program Philips is initiating to get European content supplier up to speed on the release of DVD programming. Philips will also provide fully operational DVD authoring, mastering, and MPEG-2 replication services, plus decoder hardware to manufacturers that want to make players.

Any European company interested in finding out more about the program should contact Philips for encoding documentation, evaluation discs, and so on. Philips plans to introduce two DVD players in Europe this fall.

**VIDEO WORLD PREMIERE:** Tri-star Home Video will release the direct-to-video kid feature "The Adventures Of Gaegalbeth" July 29 for self-play.

The title, which will be released under the company’s Kidmark label, carries no suggested retail price. "Gaegalbeth," a medieval tale featuring a prince and a dragon-like creature, will air on the Disney Channel in January 1999. Pre-packs are due in 12, 18, and 24 pack configurations.

In other news, Vidmark has picked up distribution rights to the CBS mini-series "The Last of the Mohicans," the Mafia drama written by "Godfather" author Mario Puzo. "The Last Don" was shown during May sweeps week. It was the top-rated highest-rated mini-series of the 1996-97 TV season.

The home video release will contain additional footage containing nudity and violence edited from the TV version. Tri-mark has yet to decide on a release date or price point for the title.
IF VID IS REALITY-BASED, VIEWERS BITE
(Continued from page 73)

“Cops” has been a niche opener for Real Entertainment, which is selling its immediately titled “Amazing Video Collection.” The line includes “Caught Off Camera,” “Life Against Death,” “Man Against Nature,” and “Incredible Rescues.” Due are “Blazing Infernos” and “Natural Disasters,” both sure to appeal to moviegoers who appreciated “Twister” and “Volcanos.”

Real Entertainment has evidence, aside from sales, that it has tapped into a need. “We are receiving calls from production companies, studios, and a wide range of people who either have footage they want us to put together and do a program with or who have a finished program in the can and are looking for distribution,” Howell says.

Because of the disturbing nature of some of the material, the genre has run into resistance from selected accounts. Knowles acknowledges that several of the “more content-sensitive” mass merchants will not stock MVV’s tapes. Sales, meanwhile, are strongest in the large combo chains and some independent stores.

Howell says Real Entertainment hasn’t had the same problem. One reason is that the reality lines just naturally get a better reception in the specialty outlets.

“We’ve found that the retailers that are doing really well are the ones that are merchandising it correctly—either by setting up their own reality section or specifically shelving the ‘Amazing Video Collection’ together as a series,” he claims. To help merchants, Real Entertainment has created in-store display pieces and supplies trailers.

WinStar, though, is witnessing “a high level of interest from both sides of the market,” says Olivieri of “Air Disasters.” He notes that Suncoast Motion Picture Co., Media Play, and Sam Goody locations are giving the title premium placement.

“It seems that an hour of video that serves a lot of purposes. On one hand, this is extremely disturbing footage, but on the other hand, it is extremely important footage,” Olivieri comments. He says distributors have told him “Air Disasters” likely will follow “Cops” fast track.

In July, WinStar’s “Air Disasters” lands at retail. The company calls the footage “too hot for TV” in some markets.

In Billboard

Top Special Interest Video Sales

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JUNE 7, 1997
COUCARD PRODUCERS: Jerry Finn, Coucard
Electra 62045

The Dog from New York—a four-piece has one foot planted in the past and the other in the present, combining the irresistible melodicism of The Cars and Clinic with the exuded capacitance of coots Figgish and Cracker. Lead single “I Don’t Care” is a rousing, upbeat rock song, and should ring some chimes at modern rock radio. However, the track doesn’t fully capture the band’s talent for unashamed pop melodies as convincingly as do “Clutch,” “Popularity Kills,” and any number of other perfect concoctions on this delightful debut.

THE SONGS OF RAY HENDERSON
The Best Things in Life Are Free PRODUCERS: Pat Cerny
Living Easy 2057

Royals of Alley/Broadway’s greatest melodists, Ray Henderson was the co-author of many of the genre’s most beloved hit songs. Several of which are presented here in recordings made between 1925 and 1941. Many of the songs’ performers are as famous as the tunes themselves—Fats Waller, Rudy Vallee, Bing Crosby, Shirley Temple, Dick Haymes, Haylen Forrest—and those vocalists are joined by stars of the day who are lesser known now.

Owing the album on this function, which was compiled in the U.K., are British. Even those who might be offended by the racist stereotyping of “That’s Why Darkeys Were Born” are still likely to be impressed by the magnificence of Henderson’s version. Distributed by Koch.

JAZZ

TIM McGRAW PRODUCERS: Byron Gallimore, James Stroud, Tim McGraw
Curb 77886

Although all the attention is going to the first single, the Na-Noa, by way of one or two which Tim McGraw is joined by spouse Faith Hill, “Everywhere” is an overall solid album that shows the artist’s emerging musical maturation. Great songwriting by the likes of Mike Reid, Tony Joe White, and Stephen Smith and skillful production (by James Stroud, et al) obviously have a great deal to do with it.

LEO ROY PARNELL Even the Night Time PRODUCERS: Lee Roy Parnell & the Hot Links
Columbia 14778

No one in country music has a better groove than Leo Roy Parnell, and once his record company discovered that, his hits started coming. That gritty groove continues with this album’s first single, “Unlucky Me.” As his fans know full well, the Parnell sound is the Dardis and the Superstars, but now his thematic thread with tracks like “Booker T” & “M.G.”’s “Green Onions.” Vehicle are joined on the final two tunes with hits like Eddie Cochran’s “Summertime Blues” and the Outsid- er’s “Tie Won’t Let Me.” Make out music on the final volume includes such favorites as the Pattersons’ “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes” and Santsi & Johnny’s “Sleepwalk.” With practical- ly no information offered about the songs, the “ Elders” is a totally run over form format. Each booklet features vintage cars photographs, old hotel and graphic and photographs of great names.

VITAL REISSURES *

JOHN CLARK I Will PRODUCERS: Ralph Simon
Single 1016

The longest set from progressive jazzman John Clark reaffirms his dis- tinctive and engaging talent—and not just in his somewhat-narrow field of jazz French horn players. Highlights include Clark’s immersion in the soulful depth of Coltrane-Green

RAVI SHANKAR Chants Of India PRODUCERS: Dan Harris
Angel 55948

The oldest statesman of the classical sitar turns his attention toward any chant that forms the foundation of Indian sacred music. Rather than take a straightforward interpretative approach to the materials, as others have done. Shankar uses those Shankarian mantra as a backdrop of Indian and Western instruments, at times writing new music to frame the nods. Expertly guided by longtime collaborator (and Billboard Century Award honoree) George Harrison, who sings and plays various instruments here, the project presents a hypnotic music quality reminiscent of the label’s endlessly popular Gregorian chant recordings. Beyond that, “Chants Of India” represents a creative milestone in the life of a veteran artist whose contributions to traditional Indian music cannot be overestimated.

The alto saxman in Schubert’s quartet format, accompanied by pianist Anthony Wonsey and two alternating rhythm sections. The change of venue seems to have reinvigorated Harrison whose keening, sometimes spartan, vocal so solo defines the set. The Harri- son-Bernstein, highlight include the liphe, airy “Little Flowers,” the bop- pishly ornate Parker tribute “Christopher,” the gently yearning “Sincere Yours,” and the bussa-nova-pulsed, popgroan, “Now Hope.”

STANLEY DAVIS & THE HOT RODS PRODUCERS: Sonny Rollins
Vocalist Karina Fonseca personifies the popular with a tune of both wistful yearning and grace. (As on this label’s Peru’s “Lullaby” and Ted and now most Latino

LA MAFIA En Tus Manos PRODUCERS: Fonso Lichtenberg
Sony Discos/Sony 82267

After cutting the diverse, Grammy-winn- ing disc “Viva,” this hard-working band from Houston returns with an album laden with hookyumberas (Amiga “Cruel,” “En Tus Manos,” “Emancipated”), climactic, intense hands “Vivir,” “Que Haría tu” (“Live It”), and the closing piece “Vuelve Conmigo” —the best track on this likable set.

LUZIA CUBANISTA: Lluvia Perfecta, Juan Berzosa, Sondeo/Sony 822247

This superlative effort from the noted cover of the legendary reading of Mozart’s “Requiem” as well as an excellent reduced-price disc sur- veying the conductor’s various other orchestral recordings. This “Portrait” includes a deluxe booklet with an exten- sive essay and discography, as well as an extensive work of colorful charts laid out on the genius Kurt Weill’s political/existential “Berliner Requiem.”

VICTORIA: Espana De Mi Pueblo PRODUCERS: Paul Malaba Hanrahan
Shanachie 78901

Just picked up for distribution in the U.S. by Quallon, Spanish early music label Cantus has this as the last of a great series, and none is finer than this disc devoted to 16th-century Flemish composer Orlando Lassus’ deeply moving “Lagrimas Di San Pietro” in a 200-year-old edition published Spanish and the cover of the holy trinity of Renaissance polychoral with Palestina and Lassus, Eyes to (Continued on page 79)
HOLLY PALMER: Come Lie With Me (3:30)
SINGLE: Producers, Kenny White, Holly Palmer
PUBLISHERS: Children of the nebulous Butler, BMI, MVF
ASCAP
Remix: 77540 (Waver Bros. (cassette single))

With this literate shaffer, Palmer positions herself as a modern-day troubadour who keeps close ear to the ground, and she knows that there's more to music than what she's woven in. But without the often-mentally lyrical portrayal, Palmer has an expression that's not as clearly defined as it is with this one.

Zap Mama could have a smash hit with this sleek and rhythmically dynamic rendition of "Show Me Your Pop Evergreen." The other layered vocals are underlined by a languid acid-jazz groove that is both thoughtful and in-jam. A chilled head-bobber who will want you to experience again and again.

VOICES OF THEY Somethin' (4:50)
SINGLE: Producers: Anthony d'Angelo, Ralph Hadlow. PUBLISHERS: Outstanding/Universal BMI
ASCAP
Remix: 1000/3404 (vinyl single)

"Somethin'" is a doo-wop showdown. But like the flame stoked from the quiet, gentle vocalist Mona Lisa, and the track's producer (Jellybean Benitez and D. Most) is not "bright" or "hot" enough to distinguish the group from other R&B acts on the market. The Smoothie and Westside remixes add a few more coal to the act's hearth, but look forward to re-leafing other vocalists with more significantly altered vocals on future outings, as the Philly-based act's effort shows chart potential.

WRITE CLAFTON Bust My Bubbie (3:30)
SINGLE: Producers: Bob DiPiero, Rich C. Barker
PUBLISHERS: Johnstone
ASCAP
Remix: 4000/3406 (vinyl single)

Following up the emotional "Daddy's Little Girl," Bramlett returns with her title track from her Curly Universal debut. The song combines feisty Cajun fiddles with an insinuating groove that proves to be an intoxicating mix. This single also shows Bramlett's impressive vocal abilities. Her voice is strong yet sultry as she stirs through this rhythm jam. The thumping percussion, a relaxed (lyrinx) and Bramlett's performance, rises above the ranks of kiddos who rant about "having no real point of reference in the soul." A reminder of the court of straight and R&B general practitioners, but they aren't "sufficiently worded". The voice cares about this single show simply out of the primary version.

TRISHA YEARWOOD: How Do I Live (5:30)
SINGLE: Producers: Tony Brown, India Named
PUBLISHERS: D. W. McMurtry
ASCAP
Remix: 4000/3406 (vinyl single)

Diana Warren's songwriting gifts are legendary. And Yearwood is a vocalist with the soul to back it up. This is a song that is a testimony to the power of music. It's full of passion and nuance, and it's guaranteed instant widespread appeal. It's a testament to the power of music. It's full of passion and nuance, and it's guaranteed instant widespread appeal.

BYRON MILLER: Show Your Love (4:13)
SINGLE: Producers: Tony W. Miller, W. C. Slay
PUBLISHERS: Big Star
ASCAP
Remix: 4000/3406 (vinyl single)

Instrumentalist Miller makes a solid bid for inclusion on playlists that showcase the latest in contemporary R&B and hip-hop hits. He's joined by Everett Harp on rax, which adds both a stash of star power and a flashy "voice" for Miller's taut melody. From his fine new collection, "..."
The sky but feet on the ground, Munica Fietta voices the songs and music with earthy intimacy. Also new on Canus is "Vouz Ou La Mort?", a disc of 17th-century Flemish music. These songs and instrumental fantasies, including several compositions by the father of Renaissance music, Josquin Desprez, are performed with style. New releases feature gorgeous packaging and exemplary notes.

OKEGHEN
The Clerks' Group: Requiem, etc.

PRODUCER: Jonathan Freeman-Albert

ASV 168

18 Ashley Scholars: Missa De Plus En Plus, etc.

PRODUCER: Steve C. Smith, Pete Philip

Gimble 454 935

This year not only marks anniversaries for Beethoven and Schubert, it is also the 600th year since the death of medieval politician/composer Johannes Ockeghen. The fourth in a series of discs featuring the master alongside his contemporaries, the Clerks' Group's latest highlights the Requiem and Missa For Seulement, the latter on the CD for the first time. On "Live In Rome," the Clerks' Group presents us with an excellent live recording to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Palestrina's death in '94, here exploring the master's most renowned beauty of tone in service of Ockeghen's Missa For Seulement and Missa Au Travail Suis. Atmospheric and accessible, both albums offer an ideal next step into the choral repertoire for those enchanted by Gregorian plainsong. ASV is distributed in the U.S. by Koch; Gimble is a Philips Music Group label.

NEW AGE

★ ROBERT RICH & ALIO DIE

Fixtures

PRODUCER: Robert Rich & Alio Die

Fathom 11076

"Perfect Love" is yet another carefully wrought work in the growing canon of synthesist Robert Rich. A collaborative work of layered, concertized sound text, "Perfect Love" is laden with reverberating, processed flute melodies and ethereal lap steel guitar, combined with the environmental soundscape of sampled textures and itinerates of Italian synthesist Alio Die (aka Stefano Musso). Like a fractal sequence, "Perfect Love" is laden with reverberation, and allows for a space where musicians can add a live or recorded sound as they wish to add another layer to the piece. Fathom Records

CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN

★ KATHERY TROCCOLI

Living Express: Power Batte, Kick Crusader

Cherry Red 00008

Kathy Troccoli continues to be one of popular music's most versatile and impressive talents. Though most of the tunes here are geared toward the Christian market, there is also music to appeal to her pop fans, not notably the Diane Warren-penned "Call Out To Me." Troccoli is blessed with a smoky alto that is mesmerizing in its haunting beauty like "Water Into Wine," "He'll Never Leave Me," and "How Would I Know" and speaks with a delivery that is heavily tinged with "Love Me Another." Other highlights include "A Baby's Prayin," an abortion-themed song that speaks from the perspective of an unborn child, and "Love And Mercy," a rockin' and soulful sounding tune. An outstanding album from an artist in peak form.

FOR THE RECORD

The title of Shirley Caesar's "A Miracle In Harlem" was listed incorrectly in a Spotlight review of the album in last week's issue.

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INDIE AWARDS
(Continued from page 10)

JoEl Sonnier & Eddy Raven spark the show.

At their induction into NAIRD’s Independent Music Hall of Fame during the banquet, Sunny Richman, the trade group’s first executive director, and her husband, Jerry, won a rousing standing ovation. New Orleans pianist Professor Longhair also was inducted; his plaque was accepted by his son, the Rev. Alexander Byrd.

At the end of the evening, current NAIRD executive director Pat Martin Braley and board of trustees chairman Clay Pasteur of M.S. Distributing unveiled the new logo for the renamed trade organization, which will now be known as the Assn. for Independent Music (AIMP).

Following is a complete list of 1997 Indy Award winners:


LIFELINES

BIRTHS

Girl, Dakota, to Gina Lorillo-Corales and Shaun Corales, April 21 in Los Angeles. Mother is vice president of national promotion at EBIT Promotion.

Boy, Jordan Bryan, to Dan and Sue Marks, April 24 in Radnor, Pa. Father is executive VP of Library Video Co. and Schlessinger Media.

Girl, Madeline Ellsworth, to Lee Rolontz and Ernie Fritz, May 13 in New York. Mother is GM/executive producer at Coors Records. Father is a documentary and concert film director.

Boy, Samuel Patrick, to Daniel Robert and Lyne Brien, May 21 in Longueuil, Quebec. Father is a sales representative for PolyGram Group Sales.

Boy, Jeremy Irwin, to Trudi and Marty Rosenberg, May 24 in Jamaica, N.Y. Mother is the audiobook reviewer for Billboard.

MARRIAGES

Eddy Clearwater to Renee Greenman, May 21 on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. Groom is a blues musician. Bride is his manager.

DEATHS

Arthur Klein, 56, independent label’s most enclosed career, April 7 in New Rochelle, N.Y. In 1956, Klein founded the soundtrack label Spoken Arts, which specialized in recording literature, poetry, and drama, often read by the original authors. Among the hundreds of recordings released by Spoken Arts are works by W.B. Yeats, Vladimir Nabokov, Aristotle, Miller, Carl Sandburg, Dorothy Parker, Langston Hughes, and Gertrude Stein. The label’s most striking releases included the 18-volume “Treasury Of 100 Modern American Poets.” Klein sold his company, which had grown into an educational multimedia producer, in 1990, but recently repurchased the audio catalog. His survivors include his son Joe.

Tony Johnson, 56, of a massive heart attack, May 26 in Pasadena, Calif. Johnson was founder and producer of Reggae Sunsplash. He is survived by his wife, daughters, son, mother, and grandchildren. The family asks that donations be made to SoKa Gakki International/USA, 115 W. California Blvd., Suite 177, Pasadena, Calif. 91105.

Joel White, composer, “This Is High,” June 1, 2007.

Eddy Clearwater to Renee Greenman, May 21 on St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. Groom is a blues musician. Bride is his manager.

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Joel White, composer, “This Is High,” June 1, 2007.

BLACK BOOK, A series of events honoring the late Universal Records founder, J.R. ‘Country’ Black, is scheduled to begin July 1 in Los Angeles.

The international trade association NAIRD has announced that its 2008 annual conference and trade show will be held March 17-19 in Los Angeles at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

The annual conference and trade show, which draws thousands of trade professionals from around the world, will feature a variety of educational seminars, including sessions on marketing and sales, promotion, and production. The conference will also feature a variety of product displays, as well as an exhibit hall showcasing the latest in music technology and accessories.

The NAIRD conference and trade show is one of the largest and most influential events in the music industry, and is attended by thousands of professionals from around the world. The conference is also an excellent opportunity for networking and building relationships with key industry executives.

The NAIRD conference and trade show is scheduled to begin Thursday, March 17, at 9 a.m., and will conclude on Saturday, March 19, at 5 p.m. The conference and trade show will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center, located at 1201 W. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90017.

For more information on the NAIRD conference and trade show, please visit www.naird.org. You can also contact the NAIRD conference and trade show at (818) 240-2121.

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WKTU DJs Hit Infomercial Circuit
Jocks Use Humor To Sell 'Dance Mix U.S.A.'

**BY DOUG REECE**

While a certain New York DJ may boast of being "king of all media," only cross-town top 40 dancemix WKIU's nighttime tag team of Hollywood Hamilton and Gumba Johnny can lay claim to having conquered one of society's most pervasive mediums: the infomercial.

This doesn't mean you'll be seeing the jocks flexing their salesmanship muscles demonstrating "the ultimate in home-workout equipment" or delivering the usual pitch about their own line of cubic zirconium jewelry.

Instead, Hollywood Hamilton and Gumba Johnny (whose real names are Sean Hamilton and Johnny Vine, respectively), will be plugging a product more apropos their chosen profession.

Quality Records has enlisted the duo for a series of nationally aired "stir-up infomercials" promoting the label's six-volume "Dance Mix U.S.A." series.

The half-hour program, which first ran in test market in New York, features Hamilton and Vine in an unabashedly hokey story line that takes the DJs from New York to Las Vegas, where they proceed to invite frenzied dance parties everywhere they go.

Vogue clubs, craps tables, house parties, and even airplanes flying between the Big Apple and the City of Sin aren't safe from the team's high jinks.

"At first, we were really hesitant about doing an infomercial. We don't have any lead-sweaters, and we don't know anything about blenders and juicers," quips Hamilton.

Still, Hamilton and Vine were persuaded to appear after Quality allowed them creative control over their segments. The infomercial also features staged testimonials, ordering information, and a heavy dose of music videos from artists

(Continued on next page)

Celebrities Boost Recycling
In 'ECO-Quiz' PSA Series

LOS ANGELES—Radio stations nationwide are teaming up with the National Recycling Coalition and the Steel Recycling Institute to expand and perfect a public service program aimed at informing listeners how they can recycle everything from glass and paper to motor oil and aerosol cans.

Though it may not sound like the most attention-grabbing subject matter, famous musicians, athletes, and businesspeople are using the environmentally oriented "ECO-Quiz." produced by Washington, D.C.-based Jamieson Broadcast.

For example, one type of campaign features San Francisco 49ers quarterback Steve Young explaining how much money American produces and what can be done to reduce waste.

Steel Recycling Institute president Bill Heenan says the most obvious sign that the program is working is has been feedback from National Recycling Coalition members who say consumers are beginning to become more aware of their existence and function, thanks in large part to the celebrity connection.

"Everyone involved is coming away with something," says Heenan. "We're getting our word out, the stations are getting information..."
include on the compilations.

Quality president Adam Levy says the label was forced to branch out from its previous infomercials, which featured former MTV host John Norris at various stops.

Though he admits that Hamilton and Vine may not have the same name recognition as Norris, Levy says he was confident that their talent and the format of the commercial would boost album sales.

"When we first started doing this, it was during the glory days of the infomercial," says Levy. "Anything you put on TV sold. Now, it's a much tighter and difficult market, so we're hoping the story line helps them out." Hamilton says that the structure and lighthearted delivery of the new infomercial makes it more watchable than its predecessor.

"Instead of just having the same people over and over dancing in a night club," he adds, "this is a whimsical story and is mixed with comedy and good music," says Hamilton. "So you have three elements instead of one. Instead of 'Bring the station back and we got the music,' this takes you for a comedic ride."

Still, Levy says, Quality sells most of its product at traditional retail outlets, whereas the compilations are available separately.

Sales of previous Quality releases have varied. "Dance Mix U.S.A., Volume 4," which was released in March 1996, has sold more than 600,000 copies, and "Dance Mix U.S.A., Volume 2," which debuted in April, has sold more than 150,000 units. According to Levy, Quality shipped more than 250,000 units of "Volume 6." - the latest edition in the series — within the first two weeks of release and is off to the strongest start of any title in the series.

The infomercials, he says, prompt most purchases directly or indirectly. "Some people listen to the infomercial and think, 'That's something for a change,'" he says. "In these days when people are spending all their time ordering things through TV, and other people don't," says Levy. "We're addressing different audiences: it's the new thing about TV. If we don't sell it to them directly, they may pick it up at the store when they connect the infomercial with the product. So it's a two-pronged assault."

While sales begin to plateau, Quality will initiate a series of 60-second commercials promoting Volume 6. "Hamilton and Vine will be picking up on that, and they're going to be very strong in the market, which is the most-listened-to music format," Heenan says. "A big part of our promotional plan is related to what's happening on the country side." Developing this "ECO-Quiz" was given an additional boost in the country market when the Branson Music Network began making the public service announcements available to all its affiliated stations.

Branson Music Network GM Doug Raines says that he was drawn to the spots, which were offered to affiliate stations for use in place of unsold commercial time and dayparts, due to their production value and name talent.

"The [spots] probably would not be receiving as significant airplay as they are, had they not brought in as many name personalities," says Raines.

"It's a good program with good production, and the material certainly isn't objectionable," Heenan adds.

Heenan says that the Steel Recycling Institute is exploring the possibility of creating a third CD targeted to stations that focus on sports.

This year's "ECO-Quiz" dice features such superstars as Kenny Rogers, Trace Adkins, Kenny Chesney, Bryan White, and Ricochet.

With nature "the first "ECO-Quiz" spot two years ago, Robert Reynolds from MCA Nashville said the Mavickers has been an enthusiastic supporter in the project as has his wife, Trisha Yearwood.

According to Reynolds, an appreciation for nature gleaned from growing up in semi-rural Florida, as well as a sense of responsibility tinged with guilt, has inspired the performers to contribute their time to the program.

"I wanted to try to use a little of that borderline celebrity to do some good," he says. "So much falls through the cracks even in the best home recycling programs, and when you’re on the road as much as we are, you become one of those people who is constantly leaving a little mess behind them everywhere they go."

"I find that most of the people in our business are absolutely in touch with the recycling effort," he adds. "A lot of them are fishermen or hunters, and they’re very much into taking care of our natural resources in any way they can.

"So it’s only a small amount to be doing something, which is the only way it can be done correctly.

KLIX Twin Falls, Idaho, has been running questions and answers on "ECO-Quiz" on its news/talk AM and oldies FM between commercials for local sponsor Southern Idaho Solid Waste.

Meanwhile, brokered outlet WAXY-AM Miami has been giving gift certificates to local supermarket listeners with the correct answers to "ECO-Quiz" questions.

According to Steve Brooks, executive producer of the station and of the program, the "ECO-Quiz" attracts listeners to WAXY's programming, while offering information—and the prize.

Each night, he says, the listener answering correctly is given a chance to win $20. If no one readily comes up with the right response, the amount carries over to subsequent evenings.

"The idea is to encourage our listeners to learn about the environment and recycling, which are things everyone needs to know," Brooks says. "It’s an absolutely valuable service," Heenan adds. "At the same time listening to the infomercials is entertaining and learning about the environment and recycling, which are things everyone needs to know."
I'm not an 'angry young girl'—or whatever the phrase of it means— but I'm human.

—Meredith Brooks

Rhett Butler (Elvis Costello, 1995)
A DULT ENTERTAINMENT: If Oglio Records has its way, the most famous shower scene in pop culture history will no longer come from “Psycho.” Instead, how about “Deb- bie Does Dallas”?

On May 20, the indie Redondo Beach, Calif.-based label released “Sex-O-Rama,” a collection of 12 rerecorded instrumental passages from key scenes in such cult adult-flick classics as “Behind the Green Door,” “Deep Throat,” and “I Like to Watch.”

To drum up initial support for the project, Oglio made the tracks available to radio stations nationwide, with hopes that morning shows would include the campy ’70s-based “wah- wah” music in any way they saw fit. Sure enough, a number of the market’s rock and top 40 outlets have reacted with their fingers on the play button. According to Oglio president Carl Caprioglio, after postcards featuring CD cover model and acclaimed porn star Jenna Jameson were sent to stations nationwide, the label received more than 200 calls from stations expressing interest.

“It’s something that’s really radio-friendly—you’re not missing anything in the news,” is the label’s play in the background. I could imagine from very early on that every wacky radio DJ in the country would get interested,” Caprioglio says. “There’s nothing pornographic about it; in a way, it’s good clean fun.”

As soon as I heard about this thing, I had to slap myself in the head and say, ‘Why didn’t I think of this?’ says Steve Marshall of “The New And Improved Morning Show With Heidi Hess And Steve Marshall” at hot AC WPLL (Planet Radio Miami). “For someone to actually put this on an album is just fantastic. Everyone only rents these movies for the music anyway, right?”

Planet Radio primarily uses the themes for morning-show promos, which run throughout the day. As well, Marshall, “We have Drew Barrymore’s mother, Jade, in the studio, and the entire time, we had the theme to ‘Deep Throat’ in the background. It was perfect. As soon as you hear those basslines, you can’t help but enjoy it. It’s irresistible.”

Max Maxwell, executive producer of “The Barsky Morning Show” at modern rock WPXY (“Y100” Philadelphia), also utilizes the disc for background beds, particularly during listener phone calls. “It’s a riot,” Maxwell says. “If someone is talking about something sexual, we instantly think ‘Sex-O-Rama.’ Some will ask, ‘What is that? We don’t worry, you just keep talking to me.’

“That’s the fun part of this. Some guys will call in and say, ‘Is that from a movie?’ and we’ll ask, ‘How did you know that?’ It’s like a huge inside joke for guys who know it comes from these movies.”

Taking it a step further, mainstream rock WVIY (98 Rock) Baltimore, during its morning show, has utilized the music from “Deep Throat” during traffic reports. “We milked it to the end,” says morning show producer Carry Dietrich. “Our traffic guy is normally called ‘Detour Dave.’ That morning he became ‘Deep Throat Dave.’”

The inspiration for “Sex-O-Rama” came from a conversation over dinner with Scott Ramsey, one of Caprioglio’s oldest friends and a former business partner. “The idea actually goes back to the early ’80s,” says Ramsey, who has also worked overnight spots for KROQ Los Angeles. “I was dating a girl who took me out to the Fulton Theater in Hollywood when I turned 18.”

Ramsey says that while he revered his first porn flick experience, it was the music that left an indelible impression. “Oh my God, it was some of the cheesiest music I ever had heard, and I thought ‘wow, we’ve been good fun, though not necessarily commercially viable,’ he says.

Fifteen years later, during the fateful dinner, Ramsey told Caprioglio that he had an idea. “I said, ‘If you like it, here’s the outrageous amount of money I want you to pay me.’”

Caprioglio bit, and the project ensued. He first tried to secure rights to the original soundtrack masters from the movie companies, but “the adult film business in the ’70s was less a business than something a little more shady,” instead, he gained permission from publishing companies to rerecord the songs, usually for about $2,000 each.

Musicians were then hired who owned instruments similar to those employed in the movie songs, including guitar, bass, drums, piano, synthesizers, organ, trombone, sax, flute, and percussion—all the while, according to Caprioglio, “We had to get the key of each song down before we played at the time,” says Caprioglio.

“We were able to turn 45-second segments into a 3:30-minute song. The quality is better, too.”

For the cover, Oglio chose Jameson, who has appeared in numerous adult films via her contract with L.A.-based Wicked Pictures. In addition to her three previous releases, Caprioglio says she has recorded new best-selling starlet, best actress, video vixen of the year, and more within the industry. Jameson also created a paper for the show called “The Shot Show” and its companion television version on E.

“ ‘It’s very, very cool,’ she says of ‘Sex-O-Rama.’ ”I love all that ‘70s retro stuff.” Jameson adds that music is a key element of adult flicks, “especially the best-selling to date is “The Coolest Christmas,” including songs from Roy Orbison, Eartha Kitt, the Beach Boys, Cocteau Twins, and the Alarm. That disc has sold in the “hundreds of thousands,” says Caprioglio. Other CDs in the Oglio catalog include a six-volume “Pil- lbox Favorites” from KROQ personality Richard Blade, several ’60s compilations, and collections from WONY (550, the street).

Westley Willis and Howard Stern’s head writer Jackie Martling. “Now, we’ve got a ‘Sex-O-Rama’ cover,” says the label fun,” Caprioglio says.

Next up for the project, believe it or not, are proposed house and trailer remixes for the show theme in “Debbie Does Dallas.” Caprioglio is working with DJs at KACD/KBCD (Good Music, Detroit), who have been “very much fun, though not necessarily commercially viable,” he says.

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Virgin Plans U.K. Channel; Country Vid Outlets Thrive

Virgin Video Network? Virgin media, the parent of Richard Branson's V2 Records, is reportedly planning to launch a music video channel in the U.K. by the middle of 1997. The channel is seeking distribution with direct broadcast satellite and cable operators and will compete with MTV Europe and the Box.

Country CLIPS: The overall number of regional country video outlets is down slightly from the previous year, but there has been solid growth at national, multi-regional/syndicated, and pool/closed-circuit country video outlets, according to a new report by Nashville-based Country Network Inc.

Among the new national players cited in the report are Nativica's Country network's "High Notes," the Box's country-specific service, the Odyssey and Family Net weekday video series "Country Crossroads," and the forthcoming Channel Earth mini-dish-delivered clip program "Barn Dance."

The report also cites new opportunities for streaming videos on the Internet.

M2 on the Move: MTV's little-sister service M2 finally makes its direct broadcast satellite video debut on December 1. M2 operates as part of United States Satellite Broadcasting (USSB) and Eos' Dish Network. The channel will be made available free of charge to all 6.5 million Dish Network subscribers in the U.S., which are equipped to receive both DirectVU and USSB. In addition, the channel also provides about 500,000 Dish home users, which brings its U.S. reach to 6.4 million C-Band and mini-dish households. The channel was originally slated to debut on USSB in May.

Music Makes a Splash: 2 Music Television is teaming with the Christian Booksellers Assn. for the EveryBody...In The Pool Sweepstakes. Participating retailers will sell music product with affiliated game pieces that offer consumers the ability to instantly win discounts and prizes. Consumers can win concert tickets, video game systems, sports watches, "pool party packs," CDs, and magazine subscriptions. Additional sponsors of the promotion include Warner Music Distribution, Brentwood Music Distribution, and CCM Communications.

Quick Cutz: Former Music Video Assn. director Jill Karageijian joins Around the Globe as director of national video programming. She had been producing the 13 episodes of "Apt. 2F," a new half-hour weekly comedy show that premiered July 15.

The Box Worldwide has reported a net loss of $1.42 million in the three-month period that ended March 31. That loss is larger than the $1.22 million deficit reported during the same period in 1996. The decline is due to increased investment in digital equipment and start-up costs for its international operations. However, advertising revenue rose from $1.95 million to $2.35 million during the quarter.

Newcomer Commerical production company Mad Media has opened a music video division called MadMedia. The first production is Jocelyn Enrique's "Do You Miss Me," which was directed by Joe Brey..."Seafood" star Michael Richards (aka Kramer) appears in the music video for Taj Mahal's "Mr. Pitiful," which was directed by Brett Weiss.

The 1997 International TV Programmers Market is being held June 16, 1997, in New York, and accepts applications for its music video categories. Information: Contact 914-893-5040 for more information...Spice Girls members of the British sitcom "Absolutely Fabulous" on their new video, "Who Do You Think You Are?" which was directed by Greg Masuak...MTV Networks CEO [John] [Smith] has announced that the speakers slated to appear at the Intel International Music Video Festival '97, July 16-17 in New York, will be a mix of artists from the "older guard" and newer talent. An example of this was the Charlie Laine-directed video for "I Don't Wanna Wait," by No Doubt.

Los Angeles

The video for "On Your Mind" by D'Angelo featured a woman who was directed by Daniel Zirziff for Pop/Art Film Factory. Marlon Parry produced the shoot and Mike Zirelli and Blairective produced and Blair_exceptive, Adam Santelli directed photography for the clip.

The Wet Sprocket's "Come Down" video was directed by Marcus Siegm. Steve Hens produced, Don Faller executive-produced, and Dojozolar directed photography for Notorious Pictures.

New York

Notorious Pictures director Marc Smirking was the eye behind the clip for "Just A Freak" by Crystal Waters, which features appearances by Will Smith and has been dubbed on the "Doublebeat" soundtrack. The video was executive-produced by Rachel Dobbs. John Perez directed photography for the shoot.

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During the era, Davis often acknowledged his appreciation for profoundly rhythmic bands like Sly & the Family Stone. Davis established himself as a force to be reckoned with, and his current lineup was part of a newfound energy for Stockhausen's work. Hence, a piece like "Rued X" from "In Concert" is both a testament to the era and an indication of Davis' growth.

The music was made by a permanent, morphing cast of characters arranged in septet, octet, and even larger festivals, such as one might find in three guitarists, and often two or three keyboardists. Wah-wahs and the occasional sound of various instruments. Clipped figures from Davis' trumpet formative beneficent beats and other aggressive cadences. It was, in a sense, the most unlikely of a complex, and the density of the action—the textures and the colors—would often obscure the fact that it is a very coherent music.

The band, which always came previously, "he says, "is the most complex music that Davis has ever heard. It was a time when jazz was wanted. The period is called "The Front of America," and that's where he went about it."

Rothstein offers a possible reason why the style of music befuddled so many listeners, "It's a very different language," he says. "From the 50's to the 60's, there was no way to hear this."

The new York, says Davis, "is the stuff that he really didn't get in America, and that's the way he went about it."

Legacy decided to skip the usual route of having liner notes written by critics, because it didn't want journalists to do a dissection of the music. "The idea is to make true to music the kind of music that Rothstein offers," says Davis. "They were rock packages: Nothing was said, there were no explanations. The packages included a 60-page fanzine written by the various artists in all the time. It was some of Miles' most mysterious music."

Instead, players from the Davis band would talk about their relationship to the music and opinions on both the stage experience and the quality of music. Chick Corea, John Scofield, Lee Ritenour, Gary Bartz each participate. The final set's commentary is provided by drummer/composer Bob Bechard and by Davis himself. The band is called "Ditches Breeze" period. Calling themselves the Horse (You Ride On)."

"In sound checks I'd often play the rhythm to "Pharaohs Dance," says Prevé, "and the guys wouldn't completely understand it until after the game. But when we took it a bit more seriously, the music was so much fun to play and so different from anything else."

Prevé is mulling over the idea of recording some of the pieces for his own label, called Depth of Field, due to debut in the fall of this year. The performances that make up most of the disc are lengthy, without breaks. For enhanced radio play and listener ease, Belden has indexed the key moments—which are well-camouflaged—so listeners can tell when one piece ends and another begins. "The hardest thing for people to understand are where the individual tunes begin and end, and the positions of tunes. Coltrane used to call 'em signposts or mileposts."

"We thought that if maybe someone adventurous radio station was on the fence about playing the stuff, indices would help," adds Prevé. "So we'd play these disc to jazz radio and, says Rothstein, "will definitively try to involve the college radio system have we in place here in the pop department. Reps from the alternative radio and marketing staff will be involved."

Gary Walker, music director at WBGO Newark, N.J., realizes that the band's success demands that the label would make it tough to program during a noncollege jazz show. But he doesn't necessarily feel that the discs won't be seen on radio.

"This stuff went on forever, but it was great," he says. "And it is promotable. Say you offer something like that, it's the right side of the electric side of Miles. It might fit into a late-night thing; it might work as a chronology, a documentary of sorts. I can't say we're doing that, but if you're going to devote that much time, I play the discs that aren't usually played, you'd have to promote the hell out of it."

Davis is looking into the series in the core jazz magazines and looking into an alternative campaign in style, fashion, and music months.
at the music industry. Observers outside the media and entertainment industries have already sounded the political and economic warning bells. "One Chinese musician, a representative of the industry, published in London, in a recent issue focusing on the future of the British music industry, acknowledges, "in film, music, language, and alternative media, Hong Kong’s imports have been shaping the face of the music and for some time.

As the U.S. Congress debates President Clinton’s recommendation to extend GSP, a program that gives developing countries a trading status for one year, contingent on its continued progress in human rights, the prospect for freedom of expression and other countries which are not viewed as "good" is in question. An article in Foreign Affairs suggests that all countries which have not signed an international treaty on freedom of expression will be included in the list. This puts Hong Kong in the red as an "aggressor" nation, and suggests that the Chinese government will come to Hong Kong, and we don’t know what will happen if we release such a list.

As an artist, does Ho expect that Hong Kong will see a system of submitting lyrics for government approval? "We will keep going this way. Not yet will they make any law, but I think that it will be done someday. Despite the gloomy prognosis, Ho is realistic: "If they do it, they do it. Until that point, I have to do what I do.

He concludes, "If things change, we’ll do it another way. Mainland Chinese artists are already commenting on society in another way."

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**Midnight Flight’s Canto Punk on Media Bank**

BY GEOFF BURRUE

HONG KONG—Canto-punk trio Midnight Flight, fronted by guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Simon Ho, performs an abrasive, New Wave sound that is so far from Hong Kong’s mainstream as to be underground. The band’s second album, titled "Mo Lai" in Cantonese, and "Han Lai" in Mandarin, will be released June 16 in Hong Kong on Media Bank Entertainment’s Dim Sum label.

"The very name of the album means someone who does something nasty," says Ho, "because he has never felt right.

Andrew Wong, the Hong Kong sales and marketing executive for Media Bank, acknowledges that the album won’t get the exposure opportunities available to less edgy repertoire. The one possible outlet for airplay, says Wong, is the Sunday-evening Commercial Radio slot of DJ Anthony Wong. Apart from that, some live gigs in the territory will be the only means of promotion.

"But people now don’t care about society; they just want to have a good time. I am very confused. Before I cared about the same thing Cui Jian cared about, but I felt I could do nothing. Young people want a singer right now who can make them feel about something certain, so I could sign an album of PolyGram Far East’s Musician imprint. His current album, "Ming Shan Yi Yue," features a track called "Mo Lai," which roughly translates as "all good bandanas must draw to an end," a Chinese proverb and a resonant metaphor for developments within Hong Kong and the greater Chinese world. After an initial release within China, Zheng’s album is being marketed aggressively by PolyGram through the region, including Hong Kong. "I just feel there are many people out there who feel like me who will buy my record," he says.

VARIED EXPERIENCES

Music videos from outside mainland China have had varied experiences with actions of censorship by Chinese officials.

Sam Duann, managing director of the MNW Records Group, one of Sweden’s leading independent record companies, says his company has had to be careful in establishing direct relationships between MNW’s Beijing representative and those who grant approval of international releases at the Ministry of Culture.

From his visits to Beijing, Nicholas Firth, president of BMG Music Publishing, found the Chinese music scene "much freer than I thought it would be," despite limits on explicitly political repertoire. "I can’t get over the progression," he says.

Sam Duann, president of Rock Records in Taiwan, one of the largest independent music companies in the region, says that because of the censorship in Hong Kong during his keynote address at MIDEM Asia, "We can always find a way to express ourselves. You just find a way and do it, and if more and more people did, the government would change," he says.

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**MUSIC CLIP CREATOR SEEK PRODUCTIONS**

(Continued from page 6)

in the business practices of the music video industry.

The Video Production Assn. (MVPA) is hoping to establish the use of legally binding deal memos that outline eane obligated to the first director, producer, and production company. The MVPA is also hoping to standardize the common use of job space sheets to be completed by the labels prior to the bidding process. The space sheets would include a budget figure, a director credit, and a release date. This information is provided prior to the production shoot.

The industry trade organization has also come up with a proposal for pre-production payment on its World Wide Web site (http://www.mvpa.com) and is expected to hold a discussion on the proposal in coming weeks, according to MVPA president Billy Poveda.

Many times the production companies are asked to produce more information on the schedule. The MVPA president Billy Poveda.

"Timing is everything," says Ho. "I don’t think this happens intentionally most of the time, but the music companies can work faster to cut a check. It is just bureaucracy, but it creates problems for the production companies—especially if there are complications." Such complications are fairly common. Some music videos are often produced quickly and under rigorous deadlines, it is not unusual for a creative concept to be altered or shortened only days before a shoot begins.

In rarer cases, a clip that has already been directed is in increased need of creative or legal deficiencies. For example, Troy Braxton’s original video for "I Don’t Want To Know" was scrapped in favor of an entirely different second clip at the request of the artist. However, in this case, the same director was used for the follow-up clip, so a potential legal battle was avoided.

The rapid-fire production pace of music videos can also result in conflict over the true origin of the creative spark behind a clip’s concept.

Poveda says that the music video industry has increasingly been lower because of the U.S. Copyright Office and, possibly, the Writers Guild of America to establish a protocol for registering and recognizing the creative ideas submitted by production companies when they bid for a project. In another development, there is a grass-roots effort to establish a new fee for music video directors and producers when they submit their creative treatments for music videos.

On May 15, veteran director Matt Gabriel, president of the MVPA, suggested that they challenge the long-standing policy of free submission of music video treatments. The letter from Gabriel, which has directed clips for U2, Metallica, Peter Gabriel, Ice-T, Bush, and numerous other artists, stated that "The music video business has turned each competing production company into an unpaid creative agency... Directors and production companies must have a strong hand in determining how our business is conducted."

"We have become impatient to the process for fear that if we change a fee or treatments we will somehow be blacklisted or sidestepped because of the abundance of directors who will continue to work for free. This policy as they stand us against one another. Coming together on this issue is the only way to make a change.

We do not, this unfair policy will continue and only get worse. I am going to charge for my treatments. "Mahurin says he has already received a positive response from many well-known directors as a result of the letter."
Turkey shows promise as viable int'l market

(Continued from page 1)

Home-grown success stories; the emergence of more expressive and contemporary compositions; the development of a new retail chain.

At present, there is only one chain, Raksteok, part of Raks Music, with more than 40 joint venture outlets. The country's retail system overall is a confluence of small independent outlets and barrow sellers, supplemented by a few multi-outlet music and printed media retailers in major city centers.

But a new chain is in the making. RTV, a 50/50 joint venture between Raks and Turkish music conglomerate Dogan Holding, opened its first outlet May 17 in Istanbul. In addition to music, DNR sells books, magazines, gifts, and electronic hardware and software. The first store, the only one to be run directly by DNR, also has a Internet area.

Mehmet Ergin, DNR's coordinator, says that frequent store runs will be on a franchise basis, citing Ankara, Izmir, and Antalya Turkey's primary markets.

Label action is also on an upward arc. Following PolyGram's move into Turkey at the beginning of this year (see Jan. 26), Sony, EMI, and BMG are all diving deeper into the country's local talent pool. The motive is not hard to understand: 92.2% of the country's 26.5 million unit sales in the first half of 1996 were of local music.

Four of EMI's current signings were taken on in the last 12 months. International manager Ayse Birkan says that current signings with young artists like Sukriye Tutkun and Gilgun, both of whom have released albums in late March and April Opera records, and Tunc's "Sevin Gayri" (Love Each Other From Now On) is a modernized folk rock album, and Gulgun's "Parmak Parma" (We're Burnt) is Turkish pop.

Five of Sony Music Turkey's roster of 12 were signed in the past year, and marketing manager Engin Akinsevi agrees that the local stakes are higher than ever. "We're much more aggressive now," Akinsevi says.

Sony is also signing established artists such as Fenol, a Turk of mixed Armenian and Greek parentage whose three albums and cassettes have total sales of more than 1 million. His fourth album will be his first for the company.

BMG Turkey GM Tim Schindler confirms that the label's priority is also in new local signings, with 11 acquisitions made in the last year out of the current roster of 19. BMG is also doing well with three soundtracks: "Superbaba" (sex, violence, and tourism), whose lead singer by Velener, "Istanbul Katanlarim Altinda" (Istanbul Under My Wings), with music by Palahnas Ugar and vocals by Golay; and "Eskisi" (Brigand), with music by Erkan Ogur.

These new artists step into an industry that has two main chart producers, Raks and Turkish International Federation of the Phonographic Industry member Myuap, neither of which is enjoying unblemished credibility. Both sources have received widespread critical acclaim, according to Michael Fay of Myuap because of its method of calculation.

Aside from the obvious conflict of interest between the label and artists, they do not take track sales, are confined to the main population centers: about 88% are in Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir. Raks' lawyer, Aydın Orhan, says that the company's discs are "good enough to make a rating."

Muyap's chart has a national scope, but its reliance on wholesalers to supply folk rock denies the folk market a chance, despite considerable evidence that it can equalize with retail sales.

"Most radios adopt the practice of recording six weeks of chart information with a CD sales account for only about 7% of the total," according to Yesi Giresunlu, managing director of music distributor Balat, although sales in this format are growing faster than the other only occasional, cassette.

Turkey's established performers are household names here. From Turkish pop, they include Sezen Aksu, Nilufar, and trio MFO; from art music, Zeki Muren, Muzaffer Abaci, and Buçent Erosy; from Arabesk, Orhan Gencebay, Muselim Gurses, and Ibrahim Tatlises.

Several established artists have enhanced their reputation, gaining megastar status, through acting in films and, more recently, in soap operas.

Alongside these favorites is a massive crop of new young performers, some of whom have secured their careers and many others who will leave no trace. In the pop sector, Demet, Murat, Tarkan, Mustafa Sandal, Sertap Erener, Kenan Dogulu, Refet El Roman, Celik, and Burak Kut are among those who look to play. In the Arabesk/fantasy category, the leading forces are Emrah, who became well established from his childhood group, and Suat and Ozan who look to play. In the art music field, Yilmaz Mogul, Ebub Gunde, and Mustazze Erosy are now permanent fixtures.

Turkish pop is an unidentified grouping. Demet, one of the country's leading female vocalists, puts this down to the small number of names. "I don't want these limited choices," says Demet, who is looking for a foreign arranger for her next release, which will be partly in English.

Sibelisal, 23, a relative newcomer doing well in the charts, agrees. She says there are only seven or eight arrangers, adding that "this is a real problem."

Erdal Kizilely, a longtime musician with David Bowie who returned to Turkey after 25 years in Europe, tells the same story. In addition to releasing his own material in Turkey, Kizilely wants to arrange and produce here. He plans to work with younger artists. "I want to help them," he says. Anatolian folk music is "like the blues for me. Music makes music problems."

Kizilely says he wants to use his experience in the West to mix this genre with Western sounds. But the market for talent here is getting more crowded.

"There used to be only two or three pop singers," says Sibelisal, "and now there are over 100."

Demet notes the four or five local releases each month and comments, "People have gotten used to bad music."

Certainly, the massive sales of the '80s, when Aksu, Nilufar, and MFO were selling more than one million copies of each album they released, are over. The "pie doesn't get any bigger," notes BMG's Schindel of the growing number of artists competing for sales.

Nation of contrasts

Classifications in Turkish music have existed for generations, but today some of the boundaries are breaking down. The barometer of these changes, Istanbul is a microcosm of Turkey itself, and both are an enigma, assaulting the senses with contradictions that the Western mind is ill-equipped by culture, education, and language to resolve.

An act called the Bosporus, a narrow international waterway linking the Black Sea with the Aegean, Istanbul connects two continents, Europe and Asia, with a beauty that masks an uncommon harshness of life. The density of bars, clubs, and restaurants in the various entertainment centers is bewildering, and not what many foreigners expect in the cultural capital of a country whose population is 99% Muslim.

The drumming TV offerings is enough to persuade any doubters. Predominantly low-brow, mainstream channels do not balk at scantily clad women offering their bodies as a bass drum, but by contrast there are also religious channels on which women often appear with covered heads.

Only about 1,000 of those stations have sought registration with the Radio & Television High Council (RTUK), as the law requires, and these are generally the stations broadcasting nationwide or the larger city-based stations. The rest, 2,000 or so, have simply declined to register, as they do not want to pay the RTUK 3%-4% of their revenue required after registration. Consequently, these stations have a relatively unregu- lated, smaller local stations often break into those used by larger stations. A bill allowing deregulation of the frequencies remains with the government.

Turkey is geographically, culturally, and politically of the East and of the West, born of a number of different influences, from the historical, the religious, the ethnic, the racial, and the other, Raks' Artistic Director, says that "There is an hunger not only for the information, but the form."

Corruption, which has been a factor throughout the multiparty era, took off in the '80s, reached crisis proportions (Continued on next page)

Music acts as healing forces in the Balkans

(Continued from page 1)

The wars in the Balkans have exacted a heavy toll and rewritten the map of Europe. But there are signs of renewal, and music plays a role. Turkey, meanwhile, is developing a more sophisticated music industry.

Janko Mesić, left, American percussionist Donald Knack, center, and Morana Bećvar, right, perform on spent Russian-made artillery shells inside the ruins of a building in Vojin, Croatia. (Photo: Peggy Evarts)
TURKEY SHOWS PROMISE TO BECOME VITAL INT’L MARKET

(Continued from preceding page)

in the '90s, and is one of the contributing factors to the worst political crisis since the 1999 coup. A car crash in November, which had killed a high-ranking official, brought to light links between right-wing organized crime groups, police, and parliamentarians. One of the victims was Derya Sertel, a young student, named after the place of the crash, a killed police chief and leading mafia figure wanted by Interpol and injured police officers. Derya's family were all traveling in the same car. A large arms cache was also recovered from the car.

The other crisis factor is Islamic fundamentalism. Stauchly secular, the military is disturbed by the actions of the Islamic Salvation Front and its allies, so that it issued a virtual dictat of anticlerical measures. The military rates fundamentalism as a greater threat to the country than the Soviet disintegrating, rather than one with some avowed democracies, is a sobering one, especially in NATO circles.

The army and the Islamists' secular junior coalition partner is the True Path Party, whose leader, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister, has put this dilemma. But before they came to power, the Islamists, portrayed as chauvinist nationalistic nationalists, opened parliamentary investigation into some of the many corruption allegations against Ciller. Now, dependent on the True Path Party to remain in government, they have systematically closed these investigations. The Islamists made their first major gains in 1994. A shock wave went through the country when the Islamist party won control of Istanbul and Ankara, the party's political capital, in elections that year. Fears that Istanbul, and especially its traditional entertainment center of Beyoglu, would suffer for a clampdown have, however, proved largely unfounded, according to Mahmet Ulug, one of three people running Turkey's leading jazz and blues promotion company, Pozitif.

ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS

Nevertheless, over the years inward migration has changed Istanbul, and not just the Beyoglu district. Once called Pors, an Istanbul byword for fin de siecle sophistication, Beyoglu is now rather seedy, remains rather seedy, remains remains a BSPD. The army and the Islamists' secular junior coalition partner is the True Path Party, whose leader, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister, has put this dilemma. But before they came to power, the Islamists, portrayed as chauvinist nationalistic nationalists, opened parliamentary investigation into some of the many corruption allegations against Ciller. Now, dependent on the True Path Party to remain in government, they have systematically closed these investigations. The Islamists made their first major gains in 1994. A shock wave went through the country when the Islamist party won control of Istanbul and Ankara, the party's political capital, in elections that year. Fears that Istanbul, and especially its traditional entertainment center of Beyoglu, would suffer for a clampdown have, however, proved largely unfounded, according to Mahmet Ulug, one of three people running Turkey's leading jazz and blues promotion company, Pozitif.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina remain one of the regions worst affected by the war in the former Yugoslavia. Few new

For a clampdown have, however, proved largely unfounded, according to Mahmet Ulug, one of three people running Turkey's leading jazz and blues promotion company, Pozitif.
MUSIC ACTS AS HEALING FORCE IN THE BALKANS

(Continued from preceding page)

trian acts took place in the Sloba club. DJs from the U.K. and France have regular club nights in Sarajevo, while other regulars pack Sarajevo's local cover band Don Guido & the Missionaries.

PETAR JANJATOVIC

MACEDONIA (NORTHERN GREECE)

The split of Yugoslavia created a new nation, with Macedonia as one of its component parts. The use by the small southern former Yugoslav state of the name Macedonia (a name of ancient Greek origin that still gives rise to conflict among the states of Greece) has led to severe tension between the two countries. After negotiations, Greece agreed to the Yugoslav state being recognized by the United Nations under the temporary name FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), showing a final desire to avoid the name to be made after further negotiations. In the last couple of years, relations between the two countries have improved, paving the way for several significant cultural exchanges.

In April, famous Greek composer Dimitris Mitropanos conducted the Choir and Symphony Orchestra of Skopje in a concert of his new symphonic work, the third in a series of programs at the Choir and Symphony Orchestra of Skopje, the FYROM capital. The concert was attended by 600 political and cultural personalities from FYROM, Israel and Greece. Another 200 Greeks, mainly businessmen and members of parliament. Government officials from both countries saluted the ‘‘tunnel of culture’’ and government officials hoped it could be an additional step toward the establishment of better relations between their nations and finding a lasting solution to the name problem.

Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

Currently dominating this region and one of the most successful bands in the region's new music scene, led by Dragan Dautovski, has begun an inspiring exploration of Macedonian folk music with its debut set in FYROM. An invitation from the Macedonian government to participate in the second edition of the Macedonian Song and Dance Festival, Macedonia has won recognition for its work on the soundtrack to Mice Milek’s film ‘‘Before the Rain’’ (PolyGram France).

In March, Anastasia put on a successful tour in Sarajevo, Bosnia, and the group’s recent promo single, which includes the songs ‘‘Face’’ and ‘‘Burn,‘‘ is a taste for a new album due in the fall. Meanwhile, a procession of old, previously unreleased material by Anastasia is soon to be released in Greece.

PETAR JANJATOVIC

SLOVENIA

The music scene is very much alive in Slovenia, with numerous groups and activities in a market where the population is a mere 2 million. The most famous Slovenian band is the Balkan-influenced intend to promote its new album, ‘‘Jesus Christ Superstar,‘‘ but was due to return to Slovenia for a concert May 15 in a show that will feature live performances with the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra to mark the European Month of Culture. As part of the same concert, Slovenia’s most iconic band, Baloghi, which consists of Tito Puente and James Carter, and the Druga Godba rock festival, which will welcome guests from abroad and introduce new Slovenian bands, such as He E Tane, which has recently released the circuit-debut album ‘‘Lava’’ (FM Voice).

One of the veterans of the Slovenian scene is the long-running rock band Lacri Fran, which has recently been working with the band Sukar, which performs Gypsy music. Sukar has written a song for the band ‘‘Bombom’’ (Sazas), features ethnically arranged vocals of Lacri Fran’s greatest hits, utilizing the Gypsy musical tradition as well as Balkan, Greek, and Sardinian.

Zoran Predin of Slovenian band Lacri Fran.

HUNGARIAN HOLIDIES

The album has received a warm reception and has been on a recent sold-out gig in the prestigious Cankarjev Dom hall. Vlado Krešin, a songwriter who has a sensitivity in the Balkans, has released a new album, with which Predin has put out a new album, ‘‘Pikapolica’’ (Carnal, Working with members of an old folk orchestra, Belinska Band, and his own bands, Logi Bogi, Krešin has come up with a storytelling combination of rock and more ethnic compositions.

PETAR JANJATOVIC

ALBANIA

For a small nation with a widely scattered people and troubled history, Albania has an astonishingly rich and vibrant musical scene. That scene is woven into the texture of everyday life. Traditionally musical roots run close to the surface, and it’s common to hear bus and taxi drivers giving their passengers to find out that one of their favorite songs is ‘‘Balka Chehi’’ and ‘‘Spaunata’’ (Police Officer). One of the best acts is probably Vlaiëzërt Ali (the Ali Brothers), many of which are original musicians of Albanian origin. Attempts at popular music are less successful, and sung acts such as Francuzi Rauli, who suffered 10 years in prison because they starred in the Albanian’s first rock festival, and Mira Konçi are to be applauded more with effort than results.

KIM HURTON

BULGARIA

Bulgaria is bordered by a rich musical tradition that is well-known worldwide. Folk ensembles such as the Grammy-nominated choir Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares (Bulgarian MysteriÖse Voices), the Bulgarian State Ensemble of the Bulgarian (Bulgarian Xalma), Trip Bulgaro, and jazz-folk virtuoso Ivo Papasov are renowned abroad, with acts such as Naka Ilieva, Lale and Ponesa, and many others, such as Alexandrina Mihnea, Anna Tomova-Sintova, Yulia Wiener-Cheni scheva, Nikola Ghiaziene, and Nikola Chorbajian, are internationally renowned.

Although they are stars outside Bulgaria, they are at the bottom of the social ladder in their own country, due to the collapse of the economy during the last six years. The state operates only to many costs. Even the major cultural events and classical concerts have virtually ceased to exist. The average annual wage for a classical musician is less than 100% below the national average of the last six years. But when the groups travel abroad, they are received with open arms. Bulgaria has a high number of students in the arts, and rock musicians is even worse. After a brief boom in American country music, the country that is closer to Western culture, there was the phenomenon of the Bulgarian blues revival. The leading figures—Vasco ‘‘the Wolf’’ Kameniarov, the group Podoune Blues Band—also played a prominent role in the struggle for democracy. But now, the groups are played only in small clubs and at political meetings, and rock musicians are stuck in a dead end. Even a folk-punk giant such as the band Control can barely manage to release albums on a regular basis, while famous groups of the past—including the Crickets, FSB, Tangra, and Factor—are practically all washed up. During this period of belt tightening, the only local genre that has survived is the folk groups, which is often mistakenly referred to as folk.

Although regarded in some quarters as low-class entertainment, pub music has unprecedented appeal, with most records achieving gold status (30,000 sales). Famous acts include Stela, Vesna Vilibor, Vlada Ristovska, Goga Vaseva, Extra Nina, Luna, Gloria, Ilija Lajukov, and Valentin Valide, able to sell 200,000-300,000 copies of an albums. But out of the 150 radio stations in Bulgaria, only Ves selina and Signal Plus play music from outside of the country. They air the hits of most of the international top 40 format.

CHAVDAR CHENDOV

ROMANIA

"From one world to another/From one country to another?/From the land of longing/To the land without longing/From the land of pity/To the pitiless land . . . . The somber words of a traditional Romanian funeral song reflect the fact that Romania is the only Nato member where the music still performs here as a key element in any form of social gathering. The children of the revolution, which has been shattered by 25 years of brutal and inefficient rule under the feared Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, music has emerged from the ashes of the conflict to preserve in an almost-legendary folk state. But Romanian musicians are now stepping out of the world stage with renewed confidence.

The 12-strong Gypsy ensemble Taraf De Haidouks have been storming the world concert stage since the late 1980s, Europe, making a particular mark in France and Belgium. Their music comes from deep within the Gypsy soul, and it is no coincidence that one of the group’s vast repertoire, one of its most moving songs is “Bailada Conducta,” a well-known international tune adapted to new lyrics that mock the late Ceausescu.

In March, the country’s most radical and controversial avant-garde rock band, composer, Iancu Dumitrescu, who has been hailed in Britain and America as a key figure in the development of postmodernism, moved to France the U.K. performance with his virtuoso chamber octet, Hyperion, in London to signature.

The Romanian music industry has also been opening its arms to the outside world, and this year, for the first time, there was a five-day International Music Fair in Bucharest’s Palace Hall. The event was attended by numerous Romanian companies with a view to sell foreign rights, new music, and it was announced that next year’s event will actively encourage the participation of foreign companies.

A new mood of determination among Romanian artists was evident at the annual Mamaia National Pop Music Festival, where their music was exhibited to the world, turning its kind, on, when, on the eve of the televised show, 19 of the artists, led by singer Mihaela Parvan, decided not to perform unless they received proper contracts. The situation was resolved at the last minute, with organizers finding a solution to the problem of copyright with respect to future transmission of TV recordings. But not all was topsy-turvy: the best albums of 1996 were the Mircea Rusu Band’s “Chef InGrozavesti” (Party In Grozavesti) on the Roton label and Marius Dragan’s “Party In Transylvania” on Metropol.

OCTAVIAN URSELESCU

and DAVID SINCLAIR

TURKEY SHOWS PROMISE

(Continued from preceding page)

Unscoured and passed down the generations, folk music found academic interest after the Turkish Republic came into being in 1923 and Turkey had shed its Ottoman rules. Republi- can music, influenced by Western sounds like a butterfly hunters, capturing on paper the myriad regional melodies and boosting their popularity and aca- demic influence.

Today, most young Turks learn music and dance at school, and folk music is one of the main musical traditions. The traditional folk instruments are bangers, blowers, and pluckers, which together give a harsh, flat, yowling sound that is almost about into about 1/8 octaves. But the sound can be oddly haunting and expressive of Anatolian life.

Although the beginning of the folk music of internal migration came Arabesque, a form of music common throughout the Near East, its fast beat is in sharp contrast to sanun and the lyrics, which often voice the feelings of alienation and oppression that accompany migration.

Some contemporary artists, such as Sibel Can, are equally at home in almost all musical forms, while others are blending styles, generally "poppy- poppy" folk and Arabic, and also fudging the art music/Arabesque touch with the "hoppity box" hybrid called "football music."

Subcultures, a valuable spur to musical expression internationally, do exist in Turkey, but they are by no means rare. The essential conservativeness of Turkish society and the strong influence of the family help confine most subcultural expression to the streets rather than allowing it to become a whole self-chosen lifestyle.

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www.americanradiohistory.com
disers’ Independent Conference in Phoenix as the crisis deepened. In marked contrast to those events, the Crescent Bank & Trust had liquidated last before the association shifted to its new Aen. For Independent Music Moniker, found indie labels examining every possible avenue to ensure a survival during continuing tough sledding in the record business.

"What is going on," one distributor said, "isn’t watered out there, right?" Said another distributor, "People are trying to get ahead with the changes rather than a step behind, as it has been the last two years. People have been hurt and, they’re just looking for something new."

Much of the activity was apparently spawned by the uncertain fortunes of the full family of businesses under the parent of Independent National Distributors Inc. (INDI), the country’s biggest indie distribution entity.

Less than a week before NAIRD convened, Alliance announced first-quarter net losses of $23.1 million (Bill-11, May 30). In December, the company had posted 1996 losses of $14.87 million, which it attributed to restructurings.

During a May 16 conference call with Wall Street analysts and investors, Alliance vice chairman Joe Bianco said that the company was discussing new financing options with more than one investor. As for the allegedly lucrative label meetings with INDIs at NAIRD, the INDIs representatives reiterated Alliance’s position that a new infusion of cash was needed.

However, some took the point of view that Alliance’s financial woes may very well be unsolvable. All INDIs distrib-distributed label darkly culled a cinematic metaphor to describe Alliance’s predicament: "[They’re] going through a scene in [Brian DePalma’s film] ‘Body Double’ that’s shot from the bottom of a grave, where the top looks like it’s a million miles away."

The incorporation of Alliance’s Den- based Passport Music Distribution into INDI also apparently spurred sources like to beat the bushes during NAIRD.

In early May, Alliance said it would stop using its YouTube distrib and fold into it INDIs following Passport founder Toby Knobel’s unsuc- cessful attempt to buy back the company. At about the same time, the detergent to fold Passport was being made, Berkeley, Calif.-based Fantasy Records—which sources said counted for $7.6 million in sales for Passport in 1996—shifting its business for the Southeast and Southwest to Woodland, Calif.-based Distribution Northern America (DNA) (Billboard, May 10).

One distributor said, "There are more record labels, in fact, looking at different distributors, particularly out of the Passport/INDI camp ... They were snarled up, you know, looking at those ‘what if we’re do go’ scenarios." Contacted by Billboard following the conference call, INDI’s Larry Stessel defended his company, saying that the distributor was current with its labels and not in danger of shutting down.

"Not a single label has been paid, period," Stessel said. "Labels have been billed, bills have been paid, and they’re getting their money. We’re not out of business, we’re not [in] Chapter 11, we’re not bankrupt."

Stessel said that INDIs has contacted some 20-30 Passport labels about continuing to do business with the company, "and we have not, Yet He added that, upon coming on board at INDI, ‘the first thing I did was pay every body. . . . but’ several labels have been contacted.

Regarding the current state of Alliance’s discussions on financing, Alliance chairman/CEO Al (Teller) will work out some kind of long-term financial situation.

Through the perceived instability of Alliance proved to be the prevailing topic at NAIRD, one distributor maintained that the company was not the only one being noticed by the uncertain climate in the business.

“Alliance is the heavyweight, but there are others too.”

In this uncertain climate, distributor found that their dance cards were, as free, on one-conference with both established and new labels occupied virtually every free minute.

“It was definitely wall-to-wall meetings,” one distributor said. “It was top-to-bottom talks by every label.”

“I got a submarine sandwich in the bar and went up the escalator, talking to a label,” another said.

I was still at 4:45 p.m. on Saturday (the last day of convention meetings).

“Two companies said to destroy the doors are open,” said another wholesaler.

“My one-on-ones were all on the floor,” one distributor said, who said to be aggressively court new business were DNA, wholly owned by Valley Record Distributors since last summer, and M.S. Distribution Co. in Hanover Park, Ill.

“We’ve picked up several different labels,” said someone at Joe Micallef.

Some attendees believed that DNA, already the beneficiary of Fantasy’s Passport business, could draw in additional trade. “(They) can pick and choose from 20 Passport labels,” one wholesaler.

While the principal focus of attention on NAIRD was on national indie dis- tributors, some suggested that a similar situation exists for regional indies’ focused sales approach.

Tiffany Phillips, sales manager for the local indie, says that she is looking for a free-standing Music Entertainment Depart- Select-O-Hits, noted during the State of Distribution panel, “There are a lot of labels out there that are facing threats ... the independent music out there isn’t being sold on a national level.

People really have to focus in on a lot of independent retail, and the smaller chains,”

Others suggested that the dicey dis- tributing business is being handled best by avoiding sell-direct. Melissa Boag of punk label Epitaph Records mar- ked a nine-bedroom apartment at one panel that only thing stopping the label from selling direct is its lack of system.

Talk about the teemous retail situa- tion, exemplified by the troubled Muscud and Silverland chains, was another conversation point in New Orleans, but panel discussions indicated that most believed that consumers have grown discerning and the prevailing chain-store environment.

“‘There’s been a complete disconnection of the average retail chain from their customers,’” said Mike Dreese, CEO of the 17-store Newbury Comics chain in Boston. “The model for the future is going to be the store that con- nects to their customer. . . . How do you not just be a big, boring, vanilla box, but the store that’s engagingwithout getting sympathy,’” he said. “It’s like your dog died.”

Addressing the glut of product in a market that sees nearly 30,000 releases a year, Glos noted that “stuff is coming in, but it isn’t going out. We’re not seeing the most cases of retail con- stipation I’ve ever seen in my life.”

Distributed on indie to “take retail back from the majors. Obviously they don’t do it as a cost savings thing, and they are dictating how we sell with minimum advertised price policies.”

However, the mood wasn’t all doom and gloom. Several indie retailers stepped forward to tell their success stories.

Panelist and veteran independent retailer George Daniels of Chicago’s ge- neralized Music Room said that it is possible to weather the storm if you have a niche and serve your cus- tomer base. “For 25 years I had fun and watched this business go full cir- cle,” he added.

Janie Ann Robert, a store manager of a New Orleans Musicland location, said that the chain has become more receptive to independent product and local artists.

However, other big chains have already beaten Musicland to the punch. Panel moderator Duncan Brown, GM of Rounder Records, noted that the Borders Books & Music web has become Rounder’s biggest client in a few short years since Boris entered the music business.

The specter of online music sales was conjured up by several members of the Retail in the Future panel, but most agreed that, while computers will definitely play a role in the indus- try in years to come, the Internet will never displace conventional retail stores.

As a result of this event was prepared by Craig Rosen.
KEN BERRY ASSUMES NEW WORLDWIDE POST

(Continued from page 1)

Music, a new worldwide post reporting to Fifield. In his new position, Berry takes over responsibility for the company's North American operations, something he did last year from Charles Koppelman, who is leaving EMI after an eight-year-association (see story, page 1). EMI Music Publishing will remain under the direction of chairman/CEO Martin Bandier, who continues to report to Fifield (Billboard, May 25).

EMI Group chairman Sir Colin Southgate stresses the need for a more cohesive approach to the global music marketplace, which is a clear and present goal of market leadership. “If you're not involved in, for example, what’s happening in Thailand and not involved in the developments in the countries for interna- tional, a new unit responsible for the world outside North America. His latest assignment embraces the latter territory (more recently known as EMI Music International), EMI Capitol, and Virgin.

Southgate ranks EMI Music at No. 3 in the global music market behind PolyGram and Warner Music and at No. 2 in the world outside North Amer- ica, he said. EMI has been as effective as its competitors in converting the repertoire of American artists into world sales, “but we have not had as much as they have to convert.” The group’s roster includes such internationally popular stars as Janet Jackson, he adds, “but not too many Celine Dionas.”

Southgate states that over the past three years in his EMI role, Berry has a tradition of developing artists and also making sure that he’s involved in projects of potential interest to the company. “We try to find artists that are better than anybody else,” he adds. “And we can do much better than they’ve been doing in a long time.”

Koppelman did “a great job,” adds the EMI Group chairman. “I’m not here to say rotten things about Charles, he never was, but he always is something that he has been as effective as its competitors in converting the repertoire of American artists into world sales, “but we have not had as much as they have to convert.” The group’s roster includes such internationally popular stars as Janet Jackson, he adds, “but not too many Celine Dionas.”

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STILL STAYIN’ ALIVE: The cyclical nature of music trends never ceases to amaze this writer. The Bee Gees rode the crest of the disco dance wave, fell off after the “disco sucks” era, and are now back in vogue. “ Alone” (Polydor/A&M), their 42nd charting single, earns Hot Shot Debut honors for its No. 34 bow on the Hot 100. With 14,000 units scanned, the single is also the highest new entry on Hot 100 Singles Sales list, at No. 38. Of Soulpepper’s eight geographical sales regions, 41% of the sales were in the mid-Atlantic and South Central regions. Airplay at 111 monitored stations contributes to the song’s 11 million audience impressions. “ Alone” is receiving the bulk of its airplay from AC outlets. The song is ranked in the top 10 at 31 stations, including influential AC players like KESR Little Rock, Ark. (43 detections), and KJ1 (KJ101) San Francisco (38 detections).

The Bee Gees will tour for the first time in 15 years; dates will be announced June 20.

HAT TRICK: With sales totaling 85,000 units, “It’s Your Love” by Tim McGraw (With Faith Hill) (Curb) debuts 18-9 on the Hot 100 and jumps 6-3 on Hot 100 Singles Sales because of a 126% sales gain. The song has 61 million audience impressions at country radio (see Country Corner, page 51).

This is McGraw’s highest-charting Hot 100 single to date. With sales of this magnitude, he may well catch up with Billy Ray Cyrus’ record-breaking “Achy Breaky Heart” (Merrcury); in its best week, that single scanned 111,000 units and rose to No. 4 on the Hot 100.

SOUNDTRAX SINGLES PART II: Two more singles from films enter the Hot 100 this issue, bringing the total to 13. Michael Bolton’s “Go To The Distance” (Columbia), from “HerEcules,” bows at No. 56, and Jay-Z’s “Who You Wit?” (Warner Bros./Jive) “Sprung,” comes in at No. 94. Both UB40’s “Tell Me It’s True” (Virgin), from “Singles” and Deborah Cox’s “Things Just Ain’t The Same” (Arista), from “Money Talks,” hit retail on Tuesday (3). Two singles from Tommy Boy’s “Nothing To Lose” sound track, Coolio’s “C.U. When U Get There” and Lil’ Kim’s “Not Tonight (Ladies Night),” arrive in stores June 17. Meanwhile, the title track from “Men In Black” by Will Smith (Columbia) isn’t slated for release yet, but a single is likely. All release dates are subject to change.

A STORE NEAR YOU: Here’s a rundown on which singles retail Tuesday (3). Barry Manilow, who hasn’t been on the Hot 100 in 11 years, releases “I’ll Remember Tonight” (Ariola), and Warner Bros., who has been absent from the chart since 1990, returns with “Spy In The House Of Love” (Virgin). Other new singles include 12-inch vinyl of Khambula Zoo’s “I’m Scared, You’re Scared (Cloud Eyes)” (Arista), a rap remake of the Isley Brothers’ “Let’s Do It” (Motown); the Pink (Don/Fame/ Mercury), and “Smile” by Scarface featuring 2Pac & Johnny P (Virgin).

In this issue, “Standing In The Rain” (Notorius/BMG/A&M), by John Corbett, is the only new entry on Easy Listening list. The song debuts at No. 100. The title track, from the soundtrack to “Caroline In The City, starring John Corbett, debuts at No. 141. More on that later.

TAYLOR’S ‘HOURGLASS’ (Continued from page 6)

I have a relationship with them. They’re interested in my records and know they’re there,” he says. “It’s always a crowded marketplace, but this spring, it seems there’s room out there for my stuff.”

Dunlap notes that Smithsonian Folkways is getting calls from older and younger radio programmers alike. On the one hand, you really last longer on college radio,” he says. “It’s more of an interest in it, which has made a major difference.

Second, “James is one of the most talented performers to ever live, and he really did his job with this one. When you have an artist with success over almost three decades who continues to defy trends and produce quality records, we wanted to let his audience know he was still out there.”

“We plan to work this album for a year,” Jenner adds. “There are many good songs. We look at the reviews and they’re all favorable, as if we wrote them ourselves.”

Without a doubt, a high-visibility publicity campaign to bring him face-to-face with his fans is an integral element of Taylor’s instant chart success. He has scheduled numerous appearances, including the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival and an A&E “Live By Request” special. Already, he has made stops by WDBM Chicago’s “The Jack Daniels Tonight Show With Jay Jeno,” “CBS This Morning,” and “The Today Show.”

As well, he has gained near-transparent status recently at VH1 with a performance on its April “Honors” special, and as the subject of an episode of “Archives,” which rebroadcast old talk-show appearances by Taylor. And, debuting May 30, he became the subject of the latest installment of the network’s acclaimed hourlong “Storytellers” series, which offers performances and chat in an intimate setting.

“See the Bee Gees and now James Taylor still attractive in an era where artists seem to come and go, be heard for a moment and then disappear,” says John Sykes, president of VH1. “Seeing an adult audience stay true to these artists reinforces their power at retail,” he adds. “The record business is speaking not just to teens, but to every loyal segment of buyers who want to be in touch with their favorite artists.”

The first single from “Hourglass,” “Little More Time With You,” began making its rounds in mid-May, generating interest in the audience.

“We’ve embraced James Taylor for years and continue to do so. We still have a couple of his songs in our gold library, so it’s nice to have a chance to keep him exposed in the market,” says Rick Johnson, PD and operations manager for AC WVAQ "94.5" WVAQ, who added “Little More Time” two weeks ago. “There’s a nice buzz on James, the album, and the new VH1 show, which is a nice opportunity, typical of James Taylor-style song.”

VH1 is supporting the single with a live performance clip pulled from the upcoming series. In mid-May, Taylor, who was among the first to be approached, May 28, began shooting a cinematic-flavored video in Santa Fe, N.M., for a second album track entitled "Through To You On Your Way." VH1 has already committed to airing the cut, which Kerr says may or may not be worked on the air.

Taylor, too, will do his part to keep the wheels rolling with a major tour planned for the fall. The tour, which will begin in mid-September in New York, and a fall profile special on PBS, which will again draw on his adult core.

“I really feel good about the future,” Kerr says. “He is so personable when he talks; he’s very real and warm and is such a great performer. It’s hard for me to have any reason to love him.”
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<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>LAST WEEK</th>
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* Albums with the greatest sales gains this week. ** Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 album units. *** RIAA certification for shipment of 1 million unit, with multiplication factors indicated by a numeral following the symbol. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time that exceeds two hours, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. ** Asterisk indicates LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for BBR and NWA label, are suggested lists. Tape prices are standard in all other cases. ** Indicates past or present billboard chart. © 1997, Billboard/BMI Communications, and Soundscan, Inc.
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**TOP ARTISTS (LISTED BY ARTISTS)**

- Bone Thugs
- Blessid Union Of Souls
- Big Mike
- Beck
- 702

**TOP ARTISTS (LISTED BY GROUPS)**

- Bone Thugs
- Blessid Union Of Souls
- Big Mike
- Beck
- 702
track to the motion picture “Trial & Error.” The picture stars Jeff Daniels and Michael Richards and was set to open May 30.

The least track, “Mr. Pitiful”—originally performed by Otis Redding—is on the album “Senor Blues” and is also prominently featured in the movie, along with Touin Carroll, VP of marketing for Private Music. Richard appears in the music video for “Mr. Pitiful.”

“The idea is to begin to ramp the song up at radio and with consumer through the movie. Then we can use that leverage to launch this song, taking full advantage of opportunities for screenings and ticket giveaways, and then gradually shift the momentum to Taj Mahal more specifically,” McCarrrel says.

The tracks “Senor Blues” and “Mr. Pitiful” will ship to college, triple-A, blues, jazz, and roots music radio stations and specialty shows. Additionally, the album’s title track, written by jazz man Horace Silver, will be worked at traditional jazz radio.

“Taj Mahal is one of the truly enduring artists who has a following, and you can see his influence in some of the new people we play, like Keb’ Mo’,” says Rita Housen, music director at public triple-A station WFUV New York. “Based on the success and audience response we had with his last album, ‘Phantom Blues,’ I can’t wait to start playing ‘Senor Blues.’”

In addition to “Mr. Pitiful” and “Senor Blues,” Mahal has also included songs previously recorded by James Brown (“Think”), Louis Armstrong (“You Rascal You”), and Marvin Gaye (“At Last”). The album also includes several Mahal originals and a Hank Williams cover, among others.

Mahal is booked by Mercury International and managed by Bill Graham Management. His publisher is Sony Trees/Panreads Music.

To promote “Senor Blues” beyond the “Trial & Error” tie-in and help boost Mahal’s mainstream exposure, the label has tied in with local record outlets, where consumers will receive a small discount on the album.

In addition to working the album aggressively at radio, the label will issue basic point-of-purchase material and tour posters and do postcard mailing.

Private Music has produced 10,000 cassette samplers, which will be given out at Mahal’s blues festival dates.

McCarrrel says the details are still being worked out with distributor BMG, but the sampler will tie in with local retail outlets, where consumers will receive a small discount on the album.

Mahal will tour Europe in June. In mid-July, he’ll start his U.S. tour, which will run through the fall. He is also on the bill of the Tibetan Freedom Concert, set for June 8 in New York, along with Thee Tribe Called Quest, Bjork, Michael Stipe, and Fattih Smith.

In addition to headlining his own dates, Mahal will play blues festivals and is slated to take part in the H.O.R.D.E. tour for the third year, an experience he says he enjoys not only for the opportunity to hear all the other bands, but also to cook for the production crew.

“It was really fun playing music and cooking and seeing it all from the production area. Sometimes I even played with my chef hat or apron on,” Mahal says.

Mahal is unabashed about performing before crowds not as familiar with his roots-based style. “I just play the music, and either they get it or they don’t,” he says.

While Mahal has been associated with films as an actor and composer in the past, as far as soundtrack work goes, he says, “last year was a banner year,” topped off by his inclusion on the “Phenomenon” soundtrack.

“We actively pursue them,” Mahal says. “I’ve been primarily a composer who performs both his own works and selected works from others, plus traditional and international material, so every opportunity to expose my work to a larger audience is very exciting.”

Mahal has an active World Wide Web site through which users can listen to music or buy many of his albums.

Over the years I’ve always had such a diverse range of music. I didn’t easily fit into the constantly changing categories and formats out there. So it’s really nice for folks who look at it and think, ‘Well, that’s a strange one, already. So, or for young people who are just looking around.”

Fans will also have a chance to sample Mahal’s work through a Columbia/Legacy double-CD that’s due in September. “I like the idea,” says McCarrrel. “It will attract more attention and enhance people’s perception of Taj as a legendary performer.”

Thus, the album’s short-term goal may be to boost Mahal’s profile among mainstream audiences and build attention to his enormous musical contribution as a blues, jazz, and roots music artist. Mahal is a living legend in the contemporary art, but Mahal is keeping things in perspective. “I’m fortunate to have a wonderful loving audience that has supported me for the last 25 years,” he says. “It’s not that big bronosaurus dollars, but at least their true feelings and vibrations are being felt.”

NEW BLOOD: Spice Girls and Bob Carlile maintain status quo at Nos. 1 and 2, respectively, on The Billboard 200—the former with a gain of almost 1% over prior-week sales, the latter with a flat week—but the chart’s real spice comes from new releases in the top 50, including four that have sold less than 5,000 units this week.

The fresh troops offer a few surprises. Before these titles hit retail, would you have figured that mellow adult fade James Taylor (No. 5, 72,000 units) would outgun the rocking Foo Fighters (No. 10, 71,000) and will end playing their new album, “The Best of Me” (No. 3, with 94,000 units), would you have guessed that Taylor and the Foo crew would both trail the hip-hop soundtrack to “I’m Bout It” (No. 4, 92,000 units), a direct-to-video movie? That opening-week sales of fleeting rap collective Boot Camp Clik (No. 15) would exceed those of Sammy Hagar’s first post-Van Halen outing or Toad the Wet Sprocket (Nos. 18 and 19, respectively)?

Although Michael Jackson’s camp had pledged that his package of remixes and new songs would be ushered in with an uncharacteristically low-key campaign, did you have any idea that “Blood On The Dance Floor: HI/Story In The Mix” would enter behind all of the above-mentioned albums? The infusion of new goods perks up industrywide album sales, with an increase over prior-week sales and a decent gain over the comparable 1996 week (see Market Watch, page 102). The latter comparison is especially intriguing when you consider that Spice Girls and Carlile have the only titles in the 100,000-unit range. There were six titles in the 100,000-plus club on the June 8, 1996, Billboard 200, and each of that week’s top four sold more than the 150,000 units that place “Spice” atop this list.

COMPARING: There was no network news magazine interview, no larger-than-life statutes, but even with the intentionally low-profile approach some industry watchers say the Jackson marketing machine is working—though perhaps not as well as No. 24 (35,000 units). It measures tall, when compared to other remix sets. In 1995, Mary J. Blige’s “What’s The 411? Remix” bowed at No. 194 and peaked at No. 118. Prior to the SoundScan era, a remix album by No. 1 hit, “558” by DJ Pierre, hit No. 72 in 1993, prior to DJ Pierre’s “The Breaks” at No. 72 in ’89, and Paula Abdul’s bow at No. 72 in ’90; all three reached the top 10. Jody Watley also released one in ’89, which peaked at No. 86.

LET IT FLOW: That album sales in ’97 exceed by 6% those for the same period last year has everything to do with improved product flow. In the first 22 chart weeks of 1997, an average of 9.63 titles per week have debuted on The Billboard 200, compared to 8.5 per week for the same period in ’96.

We have seen 40 albums debut in the top 20 so far this year, up from 31 top 20 debuts in last year’s first 22 issues. You’ll recall that the first nine months of ’96 brought more hit albums than we’ve seen already for the highly imbalanced 1996 schedule. Now, if only we could get more of those albums that debut high to hang around longer.

SEEN: A lot of those folks who don’t watch MTV got their first taste of Savage Garden’s cherry-cola flavored “I Want You” back in February when Rosie O’Donnell played a snippet during the opening segment of her talk show. It therefore seems appropriate that the group played her program May 21, an appearance that helps the rookie set up pick up The Billboard 200’s Greatest Gainer trophy (30-25, a 13% gain over prior-week sales).

The aforementioned James Taylor, Sammy Hagar, and Toad The Wet Sprocket also had TV exposure during the tracking week—Taylor on “The Rosie O’Donnell Show” and “The Tonight Show With Jay Leno,” Hagar and Toad on “Late Show With David Letterman”—but as has been the case several times in this column, it is virtually impossible to calculate what effect TV exposure has on debut-week sales.

Likewise, it is difficult to say how much “Train” helped Jorn’s attempt at No. 46 debut on Heatseekers. Note, too, that Jorn’s makes a Heatseeker debut before it appears on Top R&B Albums. Usually, it’s easier to reach the R&B chart than it is the Heatseekers list.
VIOLATOR LETS LOOSE HIP-HOP'S NEW CRU
(Continued from page 10)

"I have no fear toward the future." But the sensitivity of Beijing toward pop music with any political overtones is another matter. "But the overseas market is important," says Vic An, touring division manager of MP International in Beijing, books international artists into China after submitting audio and video recordings, biographies, and other material to authorities for review. He notes that the Scorpions from Germany, for example, would be unlikely ever to receive approval to tour the mainland after releasing their 1991 song "Wind Of Change," which commented on the rise of democracy in former communist countries.

Similarly, a Western music business executive, who had recently censured an instrumental recording in 1989. In the wake of the Tiananmen Square massacre—which occurred eight years ago on Wednesday (4)—Lettres International, the publisher on the track was interpreted as gunfire. Sixteen bars were excised from the recording.

Could the same sort of cultural controls come to Hong Kong?

"I don’t think anyone knows," says David K. Murray, publisher of Music Publishing in Hong Kong. "Look at newspapers in Hong Kong and how they were 12 months ago, and that gives you a hint." There is a perception in Hong Kong that the media have begun to practice self-censorship in anticipation of the handover. The charge has been levied at papers including The South China Morning Post, the largest English-language daily in Asia—and strongly disputed by the paper’s editor.

But the reality of the reaction to the pressure of a new regime “will be similar to what the local press people are doing now,” says Leslie Chan, managing director of King’s Music and Red Star Productions, whose previous signings have included Zheng. I don’t think it will be something like Red China, where you cannot touch this or talk about that. But in the future, people will avoid writing about politics.

There are fewer examples of artists in Hong Kong whose work could face restrictions in the future. Chan offers one such example: "Red Tractor," the group's album, "Highway Of Life," featuring Henry Lai, "Yo-Yo EYE HEYE," as a rare local release that touched on a political theme but had little commercial impact, says the Canton-bond Beyond on Rock Records cut a few years ago called "Papa Mama" about urban relations. More recently, the topic of Sino-Hong Kong relations is addressed by the Canto-punk trio Midnight Flight in its song "Conversa-
tion And Dog And Dog" (see story, page 80).

But Chan explains the caution of many Hong Kong music executives in responding too strongly. "Politically and economically, Hong Kong and China will be very close. Even for me, I have to do business in China. I will be careful."

"Freedom of speech in Hong Kong is already being curtailed, and once you start doing that, it’s a slippery slope," says Robin Munro, director of the Hong Kong office of Quiet Music, a major record company in Asia, a worldwide activism organization.

“I don’t think the freedom of thinking or songs is a trivial one at all,” continues Munro. "It’s quite possible that after July 1, you might see many people taking an interest in political culture. This would show that the way the things are run. There will be a greater need for ventilating and articulating concerns, and I would see culture as playing a very strong potential role there."

When Britain and China signed the Joint Declaration on December 19, providing for the return of Hong Kong to Chinese rule this year, the view then was that China was following a path of political reform that would minimize the threat to Hong Kong’s civil liberties by 1997.

"Of course, Tiananmen Square shattered all those illusions," says Munro. "What we’ve found is that we’ve had this awful crackdown on dissenters in Beijing. In fact, the only thing left to be answered is, Will Hong Kong be spared the draconian political and cultural policies of the mainland? There’s very little hope for those people, and believing it will. Hopefully, there will be more convergence [between the two societies]. If that trend does materialize, the future is not going to be spectacular for the arts here."

DOUG JOHNSON
(Continued from page 6)

was "to build the greatest record company we can and to do it right. Making great artists to great songs and making great records is truly magic, and that’s what we want to do here. I’m fortunate to join a great staff and a great roster. I’m also excited about Gigapedia’s business relationship with Ed Wrobleski, publisher, and the Warner Bros. family."

At Epic, Johnson was responsible for label A&R duties as well as creative and strategic direction. He shepherd-ed the breakthroughs of Joe Diffie, Collin Raye, and Patty Loveless and produced Don Murray’s "Don’t Think I’ll Be Long,"

I Love You More," and "I’ll Take You To Do"

Johnson is a lifelong recording engineer who has worked with a who’s who of recording artists on hits, says John Walker, chairman and founder of Epic Records. "I couldn’t be happy with Doug taking the helm of Epic."

Robert Sumner, his current head of A&R, adds that he’s "I wish Doug was still here."

SUMMER MUSIC BIZ GETS FULL DAY TO ADDRESS CONCERNS TO EU BODY
(Continued from page 3)

in the new millennium. Moore notes that later this year the EC will issue a Green Paper—the precursor to legislation—which will begin the process of implementing the resolutions of last year’s World Intellectual Property Organization conference in Geneva (Billboard, Dec. 28, 1990).

The Green Paper—once these resolutions give labels important new protections for music in the context of digital delivery—separately, the commission is also drafting an action plan for popular music in Europe. This program is believed to include proper proposals for support for bands who want to build an audience outside their home country, the creation of a guarantee fund for independent companies, and removal of bureaucratic obstacles to crossing national boundaries.

The EC education also forms a strong part of the plan, as it is seen as the key to future development of music and the music industry infrastructure in Europe. There are plans to look at a series of national popular music academies or "conservatories" in every member state to ensure that those seeking a career in the music industry are educated to the same standards across the EU.

Harmonization of VAT on music, which regulates the unanimous approval of all EU countries, is a key item on the agenda, says Moutouni. "That has to be the first thing we have to look at, and I hope it will be harmonized downwards, I don’t think the record industry should suffer from these taxes."

Once the commission has prepared a plan for music, the proposals will have to be submitted to the Parlia-

ment, which may make amendments to it. Once the amended version is presented to the Parliament, it must meet with the approval of all the groupings within the assembly. Provided there are no stumbling blocks, it could take 12-18 months to put the plan into action.

One insider close to the process says, "We are organizing the briefing now, and I hope that we can get it circuit-the process. If we discuss it now, it will save a lot of time when the commission presents its plans."
Out-Of-This-World Video Guide For Sci-Fi Fans

"Sci-Fi On Tape" is the ideal book for movie fans and science fiction buff everywhere. This comprehensive guide from Billboard Books catalogs over 1,250 science fiction and fantasy films available on videocassette. These films take viewers back to the past and forward to the future, from the depths of the sea to the farthest reaches of space. They embrace the creativity of talents from H.G. Wells and Jules Verne to George Lucas and Steven Spielberg. The entries are arranged alphabetically and cross-referenced with variant titles. Each entry includes the distributor, year of release, MPAA rating, running time, director, and main cast as well as a synopsis and review.

Author James O'Neil is a serious student of science fiction and fantasy films. He is also the author of Billboard Books' "Terror on Tape," a complete guide to horror films on video. "Sci-Fi On Tape" is available now for $19.95.

Jeanne Jamin has been promoted to circulation director for Billboard and its related publications. Jamin joined Billboard in May 1981 as circulation manager. As the Billboard Music Group grew so did Jamin's responsibilities. She added Billboard Directories, the four AirPlay Monitors and most recently the Billboard Bulletin to her list of duties for the Music Group.

In 1996, Jamin was recognized for her extraordinary dedication and productivity with the President's Award from parent company BPI. This award is presented to BPI employees who stand out in their work, acting as models of commitment and excellence.

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Bees Gees Stayin’ Alive With ‘Alone’

IF THE NEW SINGLE by the Bee Gees had debuted one week earlier, it would have been nicely timed to mark the exact 30th anniversary of the first appearance on the Hot 100 by the brothers Gibb, “New York Mining Disaster 1941 (Have You Seen My Wife, Mr. Jones)” entered the chart at No. 79 the week of Feb. 27, 1967. Even though the entry of “Alone” (Polydor) is off by one week, there’s still plenty of reasons for Bee Gees fans to celebrate. The first single from “Still Waters” earns Hot Shot Debut honors by peaking at No. 14. That’s good enough to instantly make it the most successful Bee Gees single of the ‘90s, based on its first-week chart performance. Only one Bee Gees title in the last 14 years has charted higher, and that was “Ooh,” which peaked at No. 7 in 1989. In the last 18 years, only two Bee Gees singles have fared better than “Alone.” In 1981, “He’s A Liar” peaked at No. 30. Few of the acts that shared the Hot 100 with the Bee Gees in their first week on the chart are still active or could have dreamed of careers that would last more than 30 years. It’s great to have the brotherly harmonies of Barry, Robin, and Maurice back on the chart as they began their fourth decade on the Hot 100 with a song that has the potential to be one of the biggest of their 42 chart singles. High above them George Michael’s “Faith” is another brotherly trio, Hansen. “Mimmop” (Mercury) remains No. 1 for a third week and is shaping up to be an international hit. It debuts on the U.K. singles chart at No. 10 and seems certain to leap to No. 1 next issue.

THE LANDSCAPE just under Hansen takes a surprising turn this week, as Spice Girls hold at No. 3 with “Say You’ll Be There” (Virgin) and Mark Morrison rebounds 4-3 with his former No. 1 U.K. single “Return Of The Mack” (Atlantic).

TAYLOR MADE: By debuting at No. 9 on The Billboard 200 with “Hourglass” (Columbia), James Taylor has his highest-charting album in 20 years. It’s his most successful album since “JT,” his debut on the Columbia label, peaked at No. 4 in 1977. “Hourglass” is the 17th album by Sweet Baby James to appear on Billboard’s album chart. Of those, only five have peaked higher than this latest release. “Midnight Blue/Slim And The Blue Horizon” remains Taylor’s biggest album, with a four-week run at No. 2. His first album to chart, “Sweet Baby James,” peaked at No. 5, and “One Day At A Time” was the other album aside from “JT” to peak at No. 4.

Taylor’s newest work expands his album chart span to 27 years and two months, counting back to the March 14, 1970, debut of “Sweet Baby James.”
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