Murfreesboro: An Emerging Music Mecca
College Program, Local Scene Put Tenn. Town On Map

By Chet Filippo

MURFREESBORO, Tenn.—On the bucolic, turn-of-the-century courthouse square of this middle Tennessee town of some 45,000, on a pleasantly warm July day, some folks are headed for a leisurely lunch at the City Cafe. Others are ambling down to the beauty shop or the Pastime Harbor Shop and Billiards Parlor, where a handwritten sign inside warns that “No Cussin’” is allowed.

Parking places are filling up—on-street parking is free for one hour, but violators who overstay their one hour are fined $1. Up at the corner of Main Street and North Maple, the young folks are streaming in and out of the record company.

The record company? Yes. “Some days I look out the windows and think I’m in Mayberry,” says Richard Williams, the 34-year-old founder of Murfreesboro’s Spongebath Records, laughing, “And you know what? It makes me very happy.”

Across the ‘Boro, as the town is called, in the ultramodern John Bragg Mass Communications Building on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), music students are settling in behind control boards in state-of-the-art recording studios or putting music to videos or working in the surround-sound lab or the MIDI lab.

At MTSU, the Department of Recording Industry’s Recording Industry Management Program is now the largest such academic offering in the world. This fall, there will be more than 1,200 students majoring in the program, coming from every state but Alaska and Rhode Island and from many other countries. Department chair Dr. Richard Barnett says he’s planning field trips to Alaska and Rhode Island to spread the word there. The department’s World Wide Web page (http://www.spongebath.net), he notes, is an active recruiting tool.

In a fortuitous convergence of events, Murfreesboro is now a buzzing center of music. Despite its proximity to Nashville, the music is not country, as might be expected, but pop. At least three dozen young pop bands are now actively producing a ‘Boro Heat, and the sound is beginning to resonate, quietly, in the ears of A&R executives who have recently been spotted in some of the city’s wide-ranging clubs.

Area bands have also quickly become staples on the annual “Extravaganza” show staged in nearby Nashville by the Nashville Entertainment Assn. (NEA), which.

(Continued on page 66)

Valley Label To Focus On Boomers’ Tastes

By Eileen Fitzpatrick

LOS ANGELES—Baby-boomer con-
amers still want to buy music, and newly formed Valley Entertainment intends on finding niche product to satisfy their maturing tastes, says the label’s founder/CEO, Barney Cohen.

A wholly owned subsidiary of leading one-stop Valley Record Distributors, the music and video label will specialize in.

(Continued on page 77)
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McLachlan Surfaces As Multi-Format Star

Arista Singer/Songwriter Benefits From Slow Build

BY CHUCK TAYLOR

New York—For Arista artist Sarah McLachlan, the No. 2 debut of her "Surfacing" album on last issue's Billboard 200 hardly appears to have been a subtle, inter nalized experience.

"Man," she says, "it was like a smack in the face, like, 'What? Really? How did that happen?'

In reality, to anyone who has watched the singer/songwriter's career take careful, ever-forward strides over the past decade, the answer is apparent.

With first-week U.S. sales of 161,000 units and a No. 1 debut on the Billboard Hot 100, the tender-hearted songstress has at last harvested the rewards of showcasing her lyrically crafted tunes on tour, along with four previously acclaimed albums and a swelling core following.

Indeed, while the Pierce Marchand-produced CD and its accompanying breaking single, "Building A Mystery," represent McLachlan's first experience as a multi-format artist, the writing has been on the wall for some time.

"We've expected over the past couple years that when Sarah's new album came out, it would definitely be a big break through. 'Surfacing' has done spectacularly well. I think even everyone's expectations," says Bob Bell, new-release buyer at Terrance, Calif.-based retail chain the White Album. "That album was the No. 1 seller in week one. It's No. 2 now, behind Puff Daddy & Family's debuting 'No. 1.'"

Bell adds that the sales pattern of her previous effort, 1994's "Fumbling Towards Ecstasy," has been revealing a factor in her current celebrity status. "'That album built very steadily for a long period of time, which really suggests that she has amassed a very strong fan base. It was no surprise that when the new record came out that it was a huge pent-up demand for it,' he says.

Comments McLachlan, "I do think that because of the touring and the albums, I have developed a loyal fan base, especially with 'Fumbling'—just from the indication that the first shows were very small bars and clubs, and now I've ended up playing very large theaters."

"Possession," the second of three singles from the now-double platinum "Fumbling" (current No. 7 on the Hot 100 Singles chart, albums chart), also etches a chapter in the story. After its initial release in March 1994, the single reached as high as No. 70 on the Hot 100 Singles chart and No. 4 on Modern Rock Tracks, then was released last summer when WHTZ (Z100) New York VP of programming Tom Poleman decided to bring the song to the Big Apple from his former base at KRBE Houston, prompting a nationwide resurgence.

"It was a secret weapon for us in Houston," he says. "I always knew that Sarah had the ability to draw a loyal audience. Her songs consistently tested well in research, and she sold a lot of records. Any time you've got an artist like that, you want to use her to your advantage.

"It's great that she's finally getting the industry and the masses to embrace her at the same time," Poleman adds. "For some time, the timing was off."

Consolidation Of DVD Royalties Collection Is Goal Of MPEG LA

BY SETH GOLSTEIN

New York—The movers and shakers in DVD, including Hollywood heavyweights, are about to be justified by a well-heeled new company with five heavyweights, including MPEG LA. MPEG LA has set itself up as a collection agency for the holders of about 80% of the MPEG-2 patents that made possible the home entertainment format.

MPEG LA—"for living" or "life"—stands for "legislative administration"—is just one contacting program suppliers, including Hollywood studios and disc replicators, about an all-in-one fee that would avoid the expense of multiple royalties paid to CD licensors. Without MPEG LA, according to one replicator, DVD could be priced beyond the reach of the mass-market consumer.

But, unless something changes, MPEG LA will bump up against one of the pillars of the home video trade and reignite a controversy the industry thought was over.

The First Sale Doctrine permits retailers to rent or sell prerecorded videocassettes as they wish. MPEG LA seeks to turn back the clock, in the view of several observers. Its plan is to charge 40 cents for each DVD title priced to rent and 4 cents for each to own. Differentiating between the two, never has, easy becomes increasingly difficult as more video stores stock up on 200-250 cassettes to build inexorable inventory.

"I can't see how anyone could propose a system of what was going to rent and what was going to own through. There's no way anyone could tell," says a veteran movie industry source. "And if anyone did propose such a thing, the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) would be up in arms."

As a fledgling trade group, VSDA earned its stripes defeating studio attempts in 1982 to rewrite the First Sale Doctrine to give the studios share of rental revenue.

DVD inequalities likely will be built along similar lines since the major releases are priced at $24.98 suggested list. Indeed, at least one distributor, Major Video Concepts, in Indianapolis, has already instituted it (Continued on page 68)
Talk Radio Has Vast Marketing Potential

by MICHAEL HARRISON

In this era of narrowly defined radio, in which stations avoid playing music even slightly outside the barbed-wire borders of their self-consciousness, it is hard to imagine a free-wheeling format that couldn’t care less about the stations that don’t play records. But there actually is a highly rated radio format with a huge audience of active pop culture consumers that categorizes all contemporary music under one big tent.

As unlikely as it might seem, there is an “alternative” radio format in which a typical station is anxious to give air time to such diverse artists as Elvis Costello, W.A.S.P., Tony Bennett, Shaun Colvin, Julio Iglesias, and Garbage. It thrives right under the nose of the music industry, yet only a small segment of those who promote records take advantage of the potential it has to offer. That’s because this format operates outside the traditional paradigm of radio and the music “industrial complex” and is, thus, invisible to a majority of record company executives. In the meantime, those music business visionaries who are building relationships with this format are furthering the careers of established artists, reviving the careers of past artists and even helping the careers of new artists—not to mention selling music that would have otherwise gone unmarketed.

The mystery format is talk radio. That’s right, talk radio—one of the highest-rated formats in the business (right up there with country). The current trend in talk radio is to join forces for the public interest to do with “entertainment,” “hipness,” or “youth.” Talk radio has a big welcome mat at the front door for the music industry.

But what good could talk radio do for an industry whose product is music? After all, those stations don’t play records. But look at what talk radio has done for the public interest in listening to the music of their main product, books. They don’t read books on the air on talk radio. They simply, more specifically, they talk to and about the people who write the books. Then, the books are slickly and unashamedly promoted.

Just as talk radio listeners will go out and buy a book an interesting person whom they have heard about (with the benefit of having the book read to them), they will also go out and buy a record by a recording artist whom they just heard interviewed on a talk show (without having to hear the record).

Much of talk radio’s super-sales audience grew up listening to music radio and are veterans of that fading era in which they heard a record played over and over on the music station to which they were glued and went out to that familiar place called a record store, where they happily plunked down a few dollars for their budget earmarked for this cultural ritual. But times have changed.

Today, these matured boomers are no longer glued to music stations and do not find record stores to be as familiar as, say, Barnes & Noble. In the millions, they listen faithfully to talk radio. It’s a prime demo: Statistics indicate that talk radio listeners are the most likely to go out and buy something about which they have just learned on the air. Having grown up with music, they still have a soft spot for it, but it is no longer the focus of their recreational attention. Yet, they are still fans at heart, and with the slightest bit of nudging they’ll plunk down 40 bucks or more to go to a concert by an artist they still hold dear or actually go out and buy a new record they have learned about without ever having heard it! They simply have to know that it exists and that it is possible to buy a new record that is still viable within their present-day cultural universe. Talk radio does a magnificent job of delivering that message.

Doesn’t talk radio deal only with political issues? Hardly. That’s an incorrect stereotype, and an image that the industry is actively trying to shed. Consultants and program managers are trying to spice up the format by describing it as top 40 or rock’n’roll radio without records. They are encouraging hosts to talk about culture—particularly movies, TV and music.

Radio talk-show hosts and producers are warmly welcomed guest appearances from musical artists and contemporary entertainment industry figures. Unlike their DJ counterparts, who ask musicians the typical questions, talk-show hosts give these artists an opportunity to talk about their lives, their careers, their opinions, and, of course, their latest projects, which get plugged generously during the course of the conversation (a talk radio tradition).

This form of presentation to an attentive, culturally plugged-in audience is extremely conducive to getting sales from boomers remembering artists they used to follow, fans learning of new records by big-name artists who don’t get much airplay anymore (and there sure are a lot of them), and parents getting gift-giving ideas for their kids.

Where have 100 million former record buyers gone for radio entertainment nowadays? Talk radio. Maybe that’s also where smart music industry marketers, promoters, and publicists would go to lure these folks back into their old habits.
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Lightyear Boosts Profile Through Links With Indies

**BY IRV LICHITMAN**

NEW YORK—Lightyear Entertainment (Four Eyes Music Inc.), a rock label formerly owned by the late Viceroy Records, a rock label formerly owned by the late Society (MCPS), has been acquired by an NEW YORK—Lightyear Entertainment (Four Eyes Music Inc.), a rock label formerly owned by the late Viceroy Records, a rock label formerly owned by the late Society (MCPS), has been acquired by an affiliate of Toronto's eightball, a New York dance and house music label, to bolster its presence in the children's audio and video markets, the company continues to spread its music coverage via several other ventures. Its deals include San Francisco-based Del Paso Heights Entertainment, a label and management firm focusing on R&B and rap; Vicerey Records, a rock label formerly distributed by Alliance Entertainment; and Eightball, a New York dance and house music label. In addition, Lightyear continues a release schedule, begun last year, with Tuff Gong International, featuring reggae artist who includes the hit album "Mr. Marley" by Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley. Further, Lightyear's own audio imprint is being launched with the Tuesday (5) release of Los Reyes' "Gypsys Legend," led by Antonio Reyes, brother of the Gypsy Kings' Nino Reyes. Antonio is credited with arranging, producing, and engineering the album, and has been working on demos for a follow-up album. The label's fortunes were clouded by a multi-million-dollar lawsuit filed by Delicious Vinyl, which claims that Red Ant has breached its joint-venture contract with the label and seeks a rescission. The outcome of the action could affect Red Ant's valuation as a viable company, since Alliance claimed Red Ant's 50% holding in Delicious as an asset in its bankruptcy filing. At the same time, news surfaced that other companies were eyeing Alliance's other labels, Castlemm Communications and Concord Jazz, as potential acquisitions. Alliance, which also owns a major one-stop and an independent distributor, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection July 14, listing liabilities of $358.5 million (Billboard, July 26). Red Ant is the company's publishing arm, but a week earlier, since Alliance stated its intention to sell off the label, which was founded by prewar president-chairman/CEO Al Toller Jr. in 1906. On July 23, U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York approved an amendment to an ASCAP-like DIP agreement with Chase Manhattan Bank (Alliance's major secured creditor, owed $186.5 million). Chase Manhattan had already sweetened the pot with a total cash advance in DIP financing to back the operations of Alliance's filing entities; the amendment allows for a cash advance to pay suppliers interest on financing for Red Ant on an out-of- bankruptcy basis (Billboard, Aug. 2). Alliance received approval for $20 million of the DIP financing (July 17). Fleet was granted $625,000 from that sum. A scheduled July 30 hearing on the remainder of the funding was postponed until Wednesday (Aug. 5), at that time.

U.K. Database Battle On Way To Settlement

**BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS**

LONDON—More than a decade of debate over the U.K.'s national discography is on course to be resolved and should result in the catalog of this country's musical heritage being available to anyone who wants it. The discography, officially known as the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society (MCPS) Database, lists every work released in the U.K. since 1965. Because of the huge number of releases of early music on CD in the late 80s, the 2.5 million-title archive includes British composition of note from the beginning of the century with works of allied and unpublished information. The database is based on details supplied by MCPS to the body to correct any mechanical and unavailability. The labels, as represented by the British Phonographic Institute, are "unavailable to anyone wishing the database information."

Toronto FM-License Decision Raises Ire

**BY LARRY LEBLANC**

TORONTO—The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission’s (CRTC) decision to award the last significant FM frequency available in Toronto to government-owned Canadian Broadcasting Corp. (CBC) has raised the ire of many in the Afro-Canadian community here. The CRTC’s July 29 decision followed public hearings held in Toronto in April, at which the commission also considered eight other competing applicants: Rawco Communications Ltd., Durham Radio Inc., Dufferin Communications Inc., 1210881 Ontario Inc., Radio One Broadcasting Corp., Doug Bings, Bill Wood, and Milestones Communications. The federal regulatory body approved four interrelated applications by the CBC to improve its service delivery throughout the Toronto area, among other things, converting CBL Radio Toronto, its English-language AM station, to the FM band using the 99.1-megahertz frequency. Dissenting opinions were offered by two members of the commission, William Callahan and Gail Scott, both of whom argued that an Afro-Canadian station would better serve the public interest in Canada's largest city, which has a 200,000-strong Caribbean community.

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African-Canadians Upset With Gov’t Broadcaster Choice

**BY LARRY LEBLANC**

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Justice Dept. Asks For Change In Decree Restricting ASCAP Abroad

**BY IRV LICHITMAN**

NEW YORK—As part of an ongoing comprehensive review of various federal consent decrees governing the setting of performing rights groups ASCAP and BMI, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has asked a federal District Court here to modify a 1950 consent decree with ASCAP that restricted its activities with sister groups abroad. The DOJ said that such activities included ASCAP's ability to enter into cross-licensing arrangements abroad, which the consent decree structured in a complex manner as a redress of antitrust complaints at the time.

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Suit Against Red Ant Could Affect Sale of Other Alliance Entertainment Labels

**BY CHRIS MORRIS**

LOS ANGELES—Brought by an infusion of $1.25 million, pending final court approval—coming from parent Alliance Entertainment's debtor-in-possession (DIP) financing, the lawsuit against the label and associated companies was filed by Mr. Sweeney, says Ivan. The lawsuit is against the label and associated companies as a salable entity. Friday, July 20, the hit Red Ant label, which was founded by prewar president-chairman/CEO Al Toller Jr. in 1906. On July 23, U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York approved an amendment to an ASCAP-like DIP agreement with Chase Manhattan Bank (Alliance's major secured creditor, owed $186.5 million). Chase Manhattan had already sweetened the pot with a total cash advance in DIP financing to back the operations of Alliance's filing entities; the amendment allows for a cash advance to pay suppliers interest on financing for Red Ant on an out-of-bankruptcy basis (Billboard, Aug. 2). Alliance received approval for $20 million of the DIP financing (July 17). Fleet was granted $625,000 from that sum. A scheduled July 30 hearing on the remainder of the funding was postponed until Wednesday (Aug. 5), at that time.

Digital-C’right Treaties Up For Vote In Congress

**BY DON JEFFREY**

NEW YORK—The House of Representatives has introduced a bill to implement international treaties negotiated last year that extend copyright protection to products for broadcast and performance and to control access to copyrighted works on the Internet. At the center of a storm, were surfaced that other companies were eyeing Alliance's other labels, Castlemm Communications and Concord Jazz, as potential acquisitions. Alliance, which also owns a major one-stop and an independent distributor, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection July 14, listing liabilities of $358.5 million (Billboard, July 26). Red Ant is the company's publishing arm, but a week earlier, since Alliance stated its intention to sell off the label, which was founded by prewar president-chairman/CEO Al Toller Jr. in 1906. On July 23, U.S. Bankruptcy Court in New York approved an amendment to an ASCAP-like DIP agreement with Chase Manhattan Bank (Alliance’s major secured creditor, owed $186.5 million). Chase Manhattan had already sweetened the pot with a total cash advance in DIP financing to back the operations of Alliance’s filing entities; the amendment allows for a cash advance to pay suppliers interest on financing for Red Ant on an out-of-bankruptcy basis (Billboard, Aug. 2). Alliance received approval for $20 million of the DIP financing (July 17). Fleet was granted $625,000 from that sum. A scheduled July 30 hearing on the remainder of the funding was postponed until Wednesday (Aug. 5), at that time.

According to the suit, Wright and Sweeney allege that “in or around 1987, the plaintiff and defendant entered into an oral agreement with 23-year-old Wright to act as Wright’s personal manager, advising Wright’s career decisions, promoting his career, coordinating concerts, and acting as the buffer between Wright and the outside world.” In exchange for his services, the suit claims, Heller was to be compensated with 10% of Wright’s personal adjusted gross income. During this period, Heller allegedly convinced Wright to give him unsecured control of his financial and business affairs. He also allegedly sought to be installed as GM of Compton Records, overseeing the company’s...
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WET WILLIE - “Grits Ain’t Groceries”, “Everything That Cha Do”
SEA LEVEL - “Take Out Some Insurance”, “Tidal Wave”, “Little Martha”
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- funding travel grants for students from other universities to conduct research projects within The Archive
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A&M To Co-Market MxPx With Tooth & Nail

BY DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—In a rare alliance with an independent label, A&M Records has paired with Seattle-based Tooth & Nail to co-market “Life In General” by Christian punk rock act MxPx.

Though the album, which was released by Tooth & Nail last year, continues to be distributed through Caroline, A&M has taken over the majority of promotional, publicity, and marketing duties. A new pressing of the album, estimated to be 50,000-100,000 units, will be stickered with a notice that reads “intercepted by A&M.”

The arrangement follows A&M signing the act to a multi-album deal in which forthcoming titles will be distributed through PolyGram Group Distribution.

Although the band has been pursued by several major labels, MxPx singer-songwriter Mike Herrera says the decision to go with A&M was based on faith in the label’s long-term strategy.

“They wanted more than one hit, and we felt that we could grow together with them,” he says. “They seemed more interested in us as a band and our careers beyond a hit record.”

A&M VP of A&R (U.S.) Larry Weintraub, who signed MxPx and is credited with spearheading the cooperative venture with Tooth & Nail, says profits will be split in half between the two labels after an unspecified number of units are sold.

“An indie like Tooth & Nail can only afford so much, but we’re intrigued, and we’re going to work through Caroline with a slew of promotions and get this record back in stock,” says Weintraub. “There will be a national, complete revitalization in retail with a concentrated effort in tour markets.”

According to A&M president/CEO (U.S.) Al Cafaro, the aggressive stance is representative of the label’s faith in the album’s long-term prospects but is largely due to indications that the single “Chick Magnet” retains untapped potential.

“Part of the reason we wanted to get this sooner than later was a perceived opportunity with ‘Chick Magnet,’ ” says Cafaro. “Rather than just leave the song to the Darwinian survival of the fittest that is inherent in the marketplace, we wanted to be active participants in trying to make this what it can be today with a longer-term focus on the future.”

“It’s a wild market now,” he adds, “and I think it’s incumbent on any record company to look at our options creatively and see how we can take advantage of what’s going on in the world and act with these new tools so that growth can be realized.”

Major and mostly West Coast modern rock stations like KROQ Los Angeles, KNDD Seattle, and XTRA San Diego have already shown support for the track, while a clip for the song received limited play on M2 and MTV.

“Life In General,” which reached (Continued on page 15)

Love Spit Love Goes Beyond Psychedelic

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—With Love Spit Love’s “Trysome Eaton,” due Sept. 9 on Maverick, Richard Butler has made what he feels is his best recording since his early 90s heyday fronting the Psychedelic Furs.

Yet Butler isn’t only back on track musically. After Love Spit Love’s self-titled 1994 debut failed to make a significant impact, due in part to turmoil at the band’s label at the time, Imago, Butler has found a happy home at Maverick.

“I’ve never been with a record company that has been so deeply involved—in a good way—with the entire process of making the record, doing the artwork, and choosing a video director,” says Butler.

Love Spit Love came to the label courtesy of young A&R hotshot and Maverick partner Guy Oseary. When Oseary heard that the band was looking for a new deal, he contacted the group’s manager, Richard Bishop of A&M.

Although the A&R executive wasn’t completely convinced by a band demo of a dozen unfinished songs, he was interested enough to urge Love Spit Love to go into the studio and properly record three tracks. “We did that, and he said, ‘Yeah, I love this stuff, let’s make a record,’ ” Butler says.

That record, “Trysome Eaton,” will be released simultaneously in Australia and Japan and is tentatively set for European release in mid-January. The album’s release comes at a time when there is renewed interest in Butler’s former band, the Psychedelic Furs.

On Oct. 21, Sony’s Legacy label is planning a worldwide release for “Should God Forget,” a two-CD, 33-track retrospective spanning the band’s career from 1980 to 1991, when the Furs recorded for Columbia Records. The set features all of the band’s hits, plus rare and previously unreleased live tracks, b-sides, and demo recordings.

“Should God Forget” comes after the Furs have already been anthologized on the 1988 “best of” disc “All This And Nothing,” the 1994 odds-and-ends compilation “Here Came The Psychedelic Furs: B-Sides And Lost Grooves,” and this year’s U.K.-released “Radio One Sessions.”

The retrospective also hits the shelves at a time when some of today’s most popular acts have given the Furs the reverence they’ve long received. For example, the Counting Crows’ cover of the Furs’ 1985 modern rock hit “The Ghost In You” was included on the “Clueless” soundtrack, and Live has featured its interpretation of the Furs’ 1982 single “Love My Way” in its live set.

“It’s not just Live and Counting Crows,” Butler says. “Elvis Costello did a version of ‘Pretty In Pink,’ and Annie Lennox did a version of ‘Heaven.’ And I believe Marilyn Manson were talking about doing ‘Love My Way’ at one point. I would have loved to have heard that… I’m quite proud of the [Furs].”

Bruce Dickinson, who worked in Columbia’s marketing department during the Furs’ days at the label and is producing the retrospective, says, “I always felt this was a band that had not gotten quite the recognition it deserved. A lot of people making records now grew up listening to the Furs in the early 90s.”

While Butler is flattered by the interest in the Furs, there are no plans for a reunion. Instead, he is focused on Love Spit Love, which he started in 1992 with guitarist Richard Fortus, whose previous band, Pale Divine, once

Choice Cuts. Members of 550 Music modern rock act K’s Choice hold up their Heatseekers T-shirts, which commemorate the ascent of their album, “Paradise In Me,” to the No. 1 spot on that chart. The group continues its tour with RCA’s the Verve Pipe through August and will begin playing radio festival dates thereafter. “A Sound That Only You Can Hear,” the follow-up single to the K’s Choice hit “Not An Addict,” will be promoted at radio starting Aug. 26. Pictured, from left, are band members Eric Groesman, Jan Van Sichem Jr., Sarah Bettens, and Gert Bettens. Drummer Bart Van Der Zeeuw is not pictured. (Photo: Tarzana)
Soundtrack Captures Spirit Of Dancehall
Island Jamaica Records Offers Diverse 'Queen' Set

BY ELENA UOMANO

The sound track is slated for release Aug. 23, the movie's official date, with series expected from Island Jamaica Films (Billboard, March 9, 1996)—premiere Tuesday, (in Jamaica and will be released theatrically there and elsewhere in the Caribbean.

Depending on response, we'll decide whether to go to theatrical release in heavily populated Jamaica and possibly Miami. We're also screening the movie at the Toronto Film Festival.

The film is also expected to be available on home video, although a release date has not been set at press time.

"The movie is very Jamaican, and we're not subtitling it," says Maxine Stowe, president of Island Jamaica Records and executive producer of the soundtrack. "We wanted to keep the movie very raw and ethnic, and for the music to reflect that.

"The soundtrack is also the major vehicle to promote the movie, so we included crossover elements to get it to a wider market. It's a very nice balance of most of the dancehall hits of the past year, as well as new projects from Bee nie Man, Bounty Killa, the Marley Girls, Chaka Demus & Pliers, and Chevelle Franklyn."

"Hopefully, both the album and the single will be among the biggest reggae releases for the summer," says Stowe. "The (title track) single came in at No. 94 on Billboard's R&B singles chart (in the July 5 issue), and in one week jumped 30 [places] to reach No. 64 with a bullet," she adds. "And it's doing very well in Europe, so the album should be the flagship for Island Jamaica."

The title track was produced by the famed "riddim twins," Sly Dunbar and Robbie Shakespeare. It was written by Beenie Man and features his sinuous reggae rap and singing Franklyn's quasi-dancehall vocals. The song "In the Mood" by Larry Anthony Jr., Mark Andrews. (Continued on page 76)

"This was a unique situation in a sense," says Franklyn. "Someone else (had) voiced it, and then Sly and Robbie decided I should do it. They just said, 'Put your stuff on it,' and, since they are among the major Jamaican producers, I felt honored. Beenie Man and all the people involved with the project made it very easy for me."

The album leads off with the Dancehall Queen Bass mix and includes the Maurice Joshua Club Hall Edit mix (by the renowned Chicago dance music remixer) and the air-tearing Delano Renaissance mix (by Delano Thomas, the lead selector of the Renaissance Disco sound system).

Sugar Minott, veteran singer and master of both the lover's rock and "cultural" dancehall idioms, teams with music master Bounty Killa for an update of his hit dancehall single "I See You." (To The Dancehall Sound,) an 80s hit.

Bouncy also gets together with Grace Jones—a mind-boggling yet weirdly fitting union—on Sly and Robbie and Thomas' revamp of "My Jamaica Guy," Jones' languorous yet early '80s homage to her boyz.

The Marley Girls—Cedella, Sharon, and Erica Newell (also known as the harmony trio of Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers)—team with the Wayne Armand-penned, Cedella-produced "Unbelievable." Reggae duos Chaka Demus & Pliers contribute the Sly and Robbie-produced "What's The Move."

And no dancehall compilation of the last 12 months' boomshots would be complete without "Joy Ride," featuring the dancehall singer Wayne Wonder and rising DJ (reggae rapper) star Baby Chum, on producer/writer Dave Kelly's transcendent riddim track of the same name. The completely irresistible joy ride has been cutting up households throughout '97 and shows no sign of (Continued on page 71)

RECORD COMPANIES. The Work Group in Santa Monica, Cali., names David Field VP of A&R. He was VP of A&R at Capitol Records.

Rhino Records in Los Angeles promotes Andrea Kinloch to senior director of product management. She was director of product management.

RCA Label Group in Nashville promotes Greg McCann and Debbie Schwartz to associate directors of artist development and Marion Williams to associate director of media relations. They were, respectively, promotion managers and manager of media relations.

Sony Music Entertainment in New York promotes Andy Lemaitre to assistant controller of shared accounting services. He was director of accounting services.

Susan Tully is appointed VP of finance and administration at Mercury Records in New York. She was corporate controller at PolyGram Holding Inc.

Island Records in New York promotes Matt Signore to VP of finance. He was controller.

Jimmy Dickson is promoted to VP of new media/chief technology officer at Reprise Records in Calif. He was director of new media.

Geffen Records in Los Angeles names Lew Roberts associate technology director. He was program manager at Microsoft.

Rykydse in Salem, Mass., appoints Beth Pickett manufacturing manager. She was production coordinator at Spectrachord.

Arkadia Jazz in New York names Jay Portelli as VP of marketing. He was GM at Fifth Colvm Records.

PC Music in San Diego promotes Todd Korn to radio promotion coordinator and names Sarah Daly retail and tour promotion coordinator. They were, respectively, retail and tour promotion coordinator and marketing assistant at GTECH.

PUBLISHING. Randy Poe is promot ed to president of Leiber & Stoller Music Publishing in Los Angeles. He was executive VP/GM.

Geffen Records in New York promotes Dale Dodson to director of creative services. He was manager of creative services.

RELATED FIELDS. Andrew Leary is appointed VP of business development at EMI-Capitol Properties in Los Angeles. He was VP of A&R at Time Warner.

House of Blues in Orlando, Fl., names John Portelli GM and Steve Glum marketing manager. They were, respectively, an independent events consultant and public relations manager, respectively, for the Hard Rock Cafe.

David M. Hart is named VP, concert and theatrical affairs, for Dream Entertainment Inc. in New York. He was senior VP at MCA Concerts.

The Headline Group in Atlanta promotes Fran de Entelia and Mark Cammack Etel to VP of public relations. Both will continue as director of media services.

Lawsuits Don't Disrupt Dru Hill's Success

BY J.R. REYNOLDS

LOS ANGELES—Despite the lawsuit filings by hit act Dru Hill and its label, University Music Entertainment, against Island Records, PolyGram Holdings, and Island black music president Hiriam Hicks, all parties involved continue to market and promote what has turned out to be one of the most promising debut R&B acts of 1997.

"We're moving forward," says University Music Entertainment founder/CEO A. Haq Islam, whose Washington, D.C.-based record company filed its lawsuit July 23 in U.S. District Court in New York against Island, PolyGram, and Hicks.

University is suing for interference with business relations, business defamation, and breach of contract (Billboard Bulletin, July 28).

The suit alleges trademark violations with regard to PolyGram's use of the name Pure Soul in the title of a recently released compilation album. Pure Soul is also the name of a University female recording act whose album pre- ceded Island's compilation release.

Islam declines to comment on the suit but indicates that University is continuing to advance the career of its four-man act, whose self-titled debut album peaked at No. 5 on the Top R&B Albums chart in the Feb. 8 issue and has sold 777,000 copies, according to SoundScan. The album, which was released in November 1996, is No. 28 this issue on Top R&B Albums.

According to Islam, the Baltimore-based act was in Los Angeles at press time, where it taped an upcoming episode of "Moesta," starring Brandy.

Other activities include Dru Hill's recording with Foxy Brown on "Big Bad Mamma," the lead single from Def Jam's "How To Be A Player" soundtrack.

The set is scheduled to tape an appearance on "The Keenen Ivory Wayans Show" this month. In addition, Dru Hill will be featured on a tour beginning Aug. 27 that includes Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, Mary J. Blige, Aaliyah, and Ginuwine.

University's suit, which seeks damages of $45 million, cites an alleged pattern of harassment on the part of Hicks since November 1996. The suit also alleges threats of physical violence beginning in April by the recently promoted executive. The alleged threats culminated in an incident at an Atlanta nightclub in May, during which an alleged altercation took place between Hicks, his bodyguard, and Dru Hill manager Kethan Ingram.

A separate suit filed by Dru Hill against Island and PolyGram seeks damages totaling $48 million and alleges "coercion and intimidation practiced by Island's agents and approved by the corporate defendants, which severely disrupted the relationship between the group and its management and legal advisors."

The suit also alleges that the act has been "discharged from their agreement with Island" and "that the very purpose of the agreement between Island and Dru Hill has been frustrated and rendered impossible because of the acts of discrimination against Dru Hill by Larry Anthony Jr., Mark Andrews, (Continued on page 76)
ROADRUNNER RULED OZZFEST!

WHAT WERE THOSE NUMBERS AGAIN?

410,256 Attending fans
21 Shows
#2 Average gross POLLSTAR [7/21]
#8 Overall top-grossing tour PERFORMANCE [mid year]
5 Bands

TYPE O NEGATIVE
FEAR FACTORY
machine head
COAL CHAMBER
VISION OF DISORDER

265,493 albums sold [sale period 4/20-6/30]

1 Label

Thank you Sharon & Ozzy Osbourne, Jennifer Perry, all at Pace Concerts, and all at RED.
**Grant Set Different, But Heartfelt**

**Singer Covers New Territory On A&M/Myrrh**

**NASHVILLE—**Amy Grant has built a successful career on positive songs and an upbeat, girl-next-door image that makes people feel she's a friend they know well. However, with the Sept. 9 release of "Behind The Eyes" on both A&M and Myrrh, listeners will discover that she perhaps didn't really know Grant at all, and this revelation may spawn her most successful album yet. "I look back at the songs that had an impact on people that I've written and, in fact, very few of them have originated from me," she says. "I was either asked to write the music or the lyrics, but the book was already established. I still poured my heart into it, but there's a difference between somebody saying 'Here's a piece of art I'm doing, help me connect the dots,' and somebody saying 'Here's a blank palette, what do you want me to do?'"

Grant tells a story about a letter she got after hosting a recent party and impromptu performance for educators in Nashville. One of the attendees enjoyed the evening's music so much he purchased Grant's last two albums, 1984's "House Of Love" and 1987's "Heart In Motion." "He [wrote], 'I never owned any of your records, and I listened to both of those records all the way through. I was looking for the woman I had seen that night.' He said, 'She was there, but she was covered up, and it was hard to find her'... What he said was that he was looking to re-emerge, and that she had some Vince Gill thing had said three years ago—'Where are you in stuff?'"

Grant credits A&M senior VP of A&R David Anderle with encouraging her to expose her soul on "Behind The Eyes." "David really challenged me to not follow the pattern he saw me falling into," Grant relates. "No. I single. 'Baby, baby' was such a unique, different musical venture, and I wasn't quite sure where to go from there... He felt like 'House Of Love' that I was trying to find a direction, but not really quite sure what to do. He said, 'I really just want you to challenge as an artist, as a songwriter not to follow old patterns... I want you to put enough of yourself into this album for me to walk away from it and say that you really have a feeling about it.'"

Anderle encouraged Grant to make an album that came from her heart. "That's what it says, 'I think it might take a while to find this album, but I think particularly women [will identify with a lot of what] hormonally is going on... It's singing about people being together, people not being able to be together, people being together and separated, all those kinds of things which I think are real core issues. This is not a casual (Continued on page 11)

**Dad & Daughters Team For 'The Wilsons' On Mercury**

**LOS ANGELES—**Mercury's Sept. 9 release of "The Wilsons" is more than just a cross-generational recording event—it may also be a catalyst to revitalize West Coast recording industry marketing VP of marketing (U.S.) Marty Mospens, who adds notes, "It's always great when you can marry a great record with a cathartic experience for the band, and I think that's what they've done. They have really poured themselves into this album, in terms of emotional depth, and I think that's what sets it apart.

Says Wendy Wilson, "It's overwhelming, and it's very therapeutic, and it's exciting. There's an area of emotions you go through every time you listen to it. Some days you're feeling some days you'll smile. Depends on how you feel that day."

Canada adds, "It was everything we wanted, and it was also emotional, and we are very proud of each other... I know I've felt more love from [Dad] in the last year than I ever have in my life.

The sisters—whose 1990 debut album with Chynna Phillips, "Wilson Phillips," was a platinum-platinum pop smash that spawned three No. 1 hits—are returning to music and building on a new label after a four-year absence. The duo's last release was the SBK Christmas album "Hey Santa!" in 1993. Some of the success was due to Canada's work on her non-charted TV series as an endeavor Wendy, who was concentrating on her songwriting, encouraged her to take on. "We always knew we were going to come back and make a duo album," Canada says. "Then I called Dad from Connecticut, right after I made a solo album, and I asked him, 'Would you want to do an album with Wendy and I?'"

"The Bleat" by Melinda Newman

**PBS May Launch A Label; Juilliard Piano Program Gets Aretha's Respect**

**PLEDGE DRIVE: PBS has hired Creative Artists Agency (CAA) to explore the feasibility of the network launching a record label. "Given the profound respect and trust that the American people have in PBS and its programming, a music label is a natural extension and enhancement of that service," says Stu Kantor, director of corporate communication for PBS.

PBS has solicited CAA to "look for strategic partners, look at business models, and look at the label from a market initiative," says Kantor. Kantor says any distribution plans for the proposed label are premature. PBS already has a deal with Warner Home Video to distribute its long-form videos.

However, Kantor says the audio label may differ from its video counterpart in that releases may use PBS programming as a springboard, as opposed to having mere audio replications of programs. "The video is the cassette equivalent of what you see on-air," Kantor says, "and has the ability to create new compilations, new works with a specific artist, or to release soundtracks of PBS events." He cites such examples as drawing on 25 years' worth of "Great Performances," many of the outlet's educational children's programming as potential album material.

Anne Blakley, PBS' VP of licensing and distribution, will oversee the music project.

**This And That: Aretha Franklin has been accepted to the Juilliard School’s music program to study classical piano. Franklin will be matriculating in the fall. "It's just something she's always wanted to do," says her representative. She'll have little time to buy school supplies before September, however: Franklin is busy recording a new version of "Respect" for the movie "Blues Brothers 2000," in which she represents her role as a restaurant owner.

Artists act the Dogmen act in a studio with producer Bill Laswell recording the follow-up to 1995's "Life Begins At Forty Million"... Todd Rundgren has rerecorded many of his best-known tunes: "Hello It's Me," "Do You Know What I Mean," Can We Still Be Friends, and more in lounge fashion for a new release called "With A Twist." The album will come out Sept. 25 on Vanguard Records.

**Shure Microphones: One Great Performer Deserves Another.**

Iggy Pop

The Sound of Professionals Worldwide.

**Assistance in preparing this column was provided by Ira Lichtman.**

**By Deborah Evans Price**

**12**
Artists & Music

Suzzy Roche Steps Out Solo On Red House

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—After nearly 20 years as part of New York sister act the Roches, youngest sibling Suzzy Roche is stepping out on her own.

Her debut solo album, "Holy Smokes," comes out Sept. 16 on Red House Records. However, Roches fans can rest assured: It does not mark the end of the beloved trio of Suzzy, Maggie, and Terre, whose self-titled debut album arrived in 1979 on Warner Bros.

“We were on the road so often for so many years that I think all three of us needed a break,” says Suzzy Roche, who adds that the group had cut back dramatically on performing following the death of their father—and biggest backer—two years ago.

“We were all completely leveled by it, because he was such an important person in our lives,” she says. "Then we all started to discover our own lives, and I had time for the first time in a really long time to really sit down with myself and have somewhat of normal life—which was a revelation.”

But time off was also work-intensive. Every day, Roche got up and turned on a tape recorder, initially speaking into it instead of singing: “I love the sound of spoken voice on tape, and I probably made a thousand tapes of me communicating exactly what I was trying to say in a simple, direct, and intimate manner,” she says. "The album comes across that way, more like one piece as opposed to any particular songs: Everything flows from one to the next.”

Actually, "Holy Smokes" was inspired by a collection of poems given to Roche by her father, Jack. "It seemed that without him, I felt invisible and meaningless," she says, "and a lot of the songs came out of deep feelings about that—almost from the unconscious. One song, 'Egg Shell,' my mother wrote the words to: It was a poem she wrote about me when I was 9.’"

Another album track, "Breathing," Roche wrote about her 15-year-old daughter, while "Pink Ballet Slippers" came out of the ballet classes Roche immersed herself in "to heal myself" following her father’s death.

"A couple songs are totally about my father, like "Rules," which is one of my favorites: Maggie sings on it, and it perfectly expresses something about my father—and about life, too.

"Holy Smokes," which also features guest vocals from Jules Shear, was produced by Roche and Stewart Lerman, who produced three Roches albums.

“We work really well together,” says Roche. "He has his own studio, and we got to spend a lot of time experimenting. But I had spent the better part of two years just in my house with myself writing all these songs, and I had an idea of what I wanted it to sound like. I just didn’t know if there would be a place for it, after years of being on the tight wire of having a certain amount of commercial success but obviously never having had a hit.

(Continued on page 31)
DAD & DAUGHTERS TEAM FOR 'THE WILSONS' ON MERCURY

(Continued from page 12)

It' and he said, 'Yes,' surprisingly. So we were really thrilled.

Working with their father—with whom Wendy and Carnie had reconceived—a lengthening arrangement—proved to be an eye-opening experience for the Wilson daughters, who got to watch him work as a vocalist and producer for the first time.

"It was otherworldly and awesome and just amazing to be in that kind of environment with him, sitting in first-hand," Wendy says. "We'd always heard about it in our childhood—Oh, your dad, in the '80s, you should have seen him producing, there was no one else like him.' And we got to actually experience it firsthand and see how he works. And it's just outrageous. He's just so mercurial and vivacious...

"And spontaneous," Carnie adds. "He'll be like, 'OK, everybody in the room. We're gonna do some clapping!' . . . You have to laugh. And he's very funny, because he's really insecure, and Wendy and I are very much the same way, so when we're all together, we all are kind of spontaneous and impulsive, but we all have this underlaying insecurity; this is in us.

"He would get really excited," Wendys continues. "What did he say that one day—This was the best vocal session you ever done—and then he would sit us down, trying to be really fatherly—'You know girls, I just want you to know that you guys are the best singers in the entire industry.' And we were like, 'No, Dad, come on! That's ridiculous.' And he would say, 'I can't sing today—you guys were too good for me!' We would go, 'What are you talking about? You're in there, and you said that Brian Wilson sound right now!' And he'd go, 'You inspired me! I'm going!'"

Brian ended up sharing vocals with his daughters on four of the album's 12 tracks: the first single, "Monday Without You," penning by Carole King, Mark Hudson, and Paul Brady and helmed by Hanson producer Stephen Lironi; "Miracle," which he co-wrote with Wendy, Carnie, and producer Dave Steward; and two numbers he co-produced with DAD & MAROONS. The first was "The Beach Boys number "I'll Die" and "Everything I Need," an extraordinary new song co-authored by "Pet Sounds" lyricist Tony Asher.

The album is not entirely composed of the type of pop associated with the Wilsons in the past. The sisters, who co-wrote much of the material (published by Get Out Songs/EMI Blackwood Music and Wendilhs Music/EMI Blackwood Music) essay numbers that utilize rock and even trip-hop backdrops.

Wendy says, "I think it was something that was a natural progression for us and that was always underlying, but we were never able to express it—that rebellious part of our nature...I guess when we started) we were very young, and we were kind of the girls next door, but now it's not that way. We've really grown up, and things are different, and we're our own people."

"I was very influenced by Alanis Morissette," Carnie says. "Talking about the early '90s and kind of combine the two and bridge (the generation gap)."

The harder-edged styles on the album could subsequently get an airing. Maidenberg says, "We want to see what happens at radio with 'Monday Without You.' We think it's gonna be huge. From there, we're going to talk to Wendy and Carnie and see what they're most comfortable doing."

TV will be key to promoting "The Wilsons." Maidenberg says that the group (including Brian) will appear Sept. 10, the day after the album's release, on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno." Other shows that have committed to covering the "Access Hollywood," "Entertainment Tonight," and "CNN Showbiz Today"; MTV News and VH1 News have also completed pieces.

Press outlets that cover the act include Newsweek, Entertainment Weekly, Mademoiselle, Vogue, and People.

Maidenberg says some promotional appearances are scheduled. "We're going to start them off doing some radio appearances. We're very interested in getting them in front of people, to see that they're not the same old group that they were. To that end, I think that we're going to have them play at a couple of our conventions. We have a (PolyGram Group Distribution) conference that we have one year in front of about 1,500 people from across the country in late August, and we're going to bring them out and have some sort of an acoustic set there."

Wendy and Carnie—who are managed by Michael Shapiro of MBS Enterprises and booked by William Morris—haven't finalized any touring plans, but both clearly hope that Brian will be part of those plans, though they acknowledge their father's reticence about performing.

"We need to really see how the single does and who our audience is gonna be," says Wendy. "Also at this point, I doesn't know if he's going to tour, so we'll see."

Carnie adds, "His involvement is really up to him. We wanted to do the whole record with him, we wound up only doing four songs. We would like to join him and participate in all of this. He may not do it all. So it's really up to him, but we feel that the album is strong enough on its own. If Dad decides not to do anything, that's the way it goes."
GRANT SET DIFFERENT, BUT HEARTFELT
(Continued from preceding page)

the good and bad bubble to the sur-
face.
Being a public figure, Grant has ex-
periences the exasperation of rum-
blers, tabloid controversy, but she refuses to
let that have any effect on her music
writing or worry what people might
think about her sales. "I feel like we've
got the rug pulled out from under us, and
some of these songs were written years
ago," Grant says. "We had a tour 14 years ago with Wayne (Kirkpatrick)
and the book was Wayne's idea... The
beauty of music is that it finds its own
caratel and the fans who like that will
not listen to it. Someone's opinion of
me, who I will never meet, it would be
silly for it to matter.
A&M executives are excited about
the direction Grant is taking on
"Behind The Eyes" and expect it to fare
well in the marketplace. "I took the
career out and put a number of
songs just to give people some idea
where Amy was going musically, and
the goal was simply one of positive surprise and
real delight," says A&M senior VP of
promotion Rick Stone.
A&M has made a concerted marketing
strategy to increase the album's
airplay, in addition to Grant's unique
style. The band's name was
registered at triple-A radio, in addi-
tion to Grant's usual stronghold---top 40, adult top 40, and
AC. A&M released the single plus
Grant's stark ballad "The Feeling I
Had" and the Glen Ballard/Sheikah Gar-
rett penned tune "Nobody's Home" to
the nation. The album has been
launched with a major marketing
campaign, and was promoted with a
video. An impressive array of artists
have joined Grant on the album, and
the collaboration of Grant and her
cowriters is apparent throughout.

"We're waiting with baited breath
for that album," says Skip Young,
senior music buyer for the Amariolo,
Texas-based Houston radio station
that's been playing her single over
the past few weeks. "It's a really
great album, and I think that's going
to be the best one she's ever made.

In terms of tour support, Grant is
visiting Germany and Japan to pro-
 mote the album before its street date. She
will embark on a Christmas tour
this winter that will take her special
"Tennessee Christmas" concert, which
has become an annual sold-out event in
Nashville, on the road to 19 cities. She'll
tour behind the new album in 1998.

A&M TO CO-MARKET MXP WITH TOOTH & NAIL
(Continued from page 9)

No. 22 on the Dec. 14, 1996, Heat-
seekers album chart, has sold more than 10,000 copies, according to SoundScan.

Still, Herrera says that part of
what precipitated the deal with
Tooth & Nail was the band's growing
interest in the rock market. "We deci-
sed it was time to have Tooth & Nail
as partners in this," Herrera says. "We
didn't want to go to market with
any single effect. The label will be retained to perform these duties on future

MXP albums and, according to Cafa-
ro, may be put in charge of pro-
tro-MXM acts, such as new
artists. The band's name was

"We have a permanent display we
have put in the stores which will be
used by our distribution company after
Amy's project is done," Chaffee says.
"We launched the permanent display
with Amy's catalog in July. It also
announces the street date for the
record. In August it will feature the
catalog plus the maxi-single. Then the
third month it will feature the new
album, and we will have that display in
the stores until Thanksgiving, at which
time that permanent display will then
feature catalog and a promotional pro-
gram that will coincide with our Chris-
tmas tour, with specials on the Christ-
mas record and the new project.

Other elements of the marketing
campaign include a promotional CD
to radio that includes 12 of Grant's
radio hits, guitar giveaways in select
markets, and an America Online chat
session, as well as contests over the
Internet.

Though Grant's new album is less
oriented towards the religious than
most of her previous efforts and deals with some
themes Christians may not
understand, she has been able to
make her point. "I think it's going to be
a blockbuster," Chaffee says. "Amy has
really worked on this project, and
she's been able to make her point.

Grant has long been the most visible
artist to emerge from the contempo-
rary Christian scene and still has this
solid base in that market. Myrrh's
VP/GM Jim Chaffee says the company
plans an extensive campaign that
includes the release of an enhanced
maxi-single to the Christian Book-
sellers Assoc. market that will include
"It Takes A Little Time," "Somewhere
Down The Road," and a new version of
Grant's classic "El Shaddai," as well as
interview footage regarding the songs
and video of "El Shaddai."
NOT A HOUSEBOY: Fatboy Slim, aka Norman Cook, may be better known as the former bassist for '80s Britpop act the Housemartins, but make no mistake about it, he says, that experience was a "hickup" in an otherwise electric career.

After being invited to join the group by Housemartins vocalist Paul Heaton, Cook remembers being unceremoniously sucked into the pop vortex.

"I'm driving around with them, getting free drinks every night, and the next thing I know we're on TV and then on the U.K. charts," says Cook. "It was too nice of an opportunity to turn down, but it was never me. I've always been more of a club DJ."

Cook's spirited Fatboy Slim album, "Better Living Through Chemistry," which will be released Sept. 30 by Astralwerks, as well as various other projects, such as Mighty Dub Kats, Pizza Man, and Freakpower, reflect his aesthetic.

Cook recently finished a U.S. promotional tour and is expected to return in the fall. He notes several inadequacies in the club scene here, including venues more concerned with "I'm here because of the equipment and a relative problem with audience members.

The whole American club scene is in its infancy," says Cook. "Without a doubt so too sound too long a period, the emphasis seems to be on good to good and be seen).

"In England, it is more simple and just happens to be what people do on a weekend," he adds. "They dress up less and just dance more."

Train A Comin'. Asylum bows "Like A Train" by new country artist JD Myers Sept. 23. The first single from the artist, who continues his radio promotional tour this month, is "When I Think About You." The song arrives at radio Tuesday (5), while an accompanying clip was worked at video channels starting July 30.

Big Boy: Capitol Nashville's Roy D. Mercer, who is actually a fictional comedian dreamed up by mainstream rock KMOD sisters Tula, Okla., TMs Phil Stone and Brent Douglas, has retailed ticked pink with two-volume set titled "How Big A Boy Are Ye?"

The album is at No. 20 and No. 6 on the West Central and South Central Regional Roundup charts this issue.

Unlike its previous comedy recordings from real-life comedians Jeff Foxworthy and Bill Engvall, Capitol has not promoted the Mercer titles at radio. Instead, the albums, which are best described as countrified versions of the Jerky Boys phone-prank collections, have been promoted through unusual channels, such as handing out cassette samplers at truck stops.

With the ice broken, Capitol is hoping that Vol. 2, which is due Oct. 21, will have an even greater impact.

Taz-Mania: DJ Taz, who continues his 20-week summer run on the Hot R&B Singles chart, is now on the "That's Right" radio tour to jump to the next level when Priority releases his latest album, "Worldwide," Aug. 12.

The artist, whose real name is Tino Santron Mcnytosh, has been getting significant exposure on the Box and MTV, as well as in his home state of New York.

Roadwork: Former Black Uhuru front man Michael Rose kicks off a West Coast tour in support of his Heart

the Heatseekers chart lists the best-selling titles by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of the Billboard 200 chart when an album makes chart. The album and the artist's subsequent albums are automatically eligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart. All albums are available on cassette and CD. Information indicates only UP is available. 

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FRANKIE BARES HIS EPIC ‘HEART’
All-Star Cast Joins 19-Year-Old Vocalist

By J. R. REYNOLDS

LOS ANGELES—So So Def/Columbia hopes its debut R&B quartet Jagged Edge will have just the right mix of smooth “urban crooners” and chart power grooves when it releases “A Jagged Era” Sept. 23. The act’s debut set marks the first all-male R&B group released on So So Def since 1990.

“There’s a void out there for male R&B groups like Jagged Edge, which has a rough-around-the-edges feel but can deliver vocally,” says So So Def founder/CEO Jermaine Dupri. “I think they have the right creative mix and are especially interesting since they wrote the songs on the album.”

Dupri produced the majority of the songs on the project. “A Jagged Era” mashes rugged, hip-hop tinged midtempo tracks with creamy, laid-back ballads that often tap gospel influences. The resulting effect yields a set positioned nostalgically to attract teenage and young adult consumers. Thematically, the album’s pop approach while maintaining its street edge.

“As a group, we keep God first, but we want to make history by releasing a project that will work in the radio and on TV,” says Jagged Edge member Brisco. “It’s a new era, a new quality,” says Jagged Edge member Brisco.

The group got together in 1995 while attending the same church. “One of the most challenging things about this whole thing was moving from singing spiritual to recording secular music,” says Brisco’s twin brother, Case Dinero, who is also a band member.

“Fifteen years ago, we were singing and now we’re asked to sing on a R&B record,” says Dinero. “The experience has been amazing.”

Frankie’s first single, “If I Had You,” which was serviced June 24, received 324 spins on 46 stations for the week ending July 23, according to Broadcast Data Systems.

The angle hit retail July 29. The video, directed by Darren Grant, was serviced to MTV, BET, and local and regional video shows the week of June 30.

Coinciding with the album’s early September release, BET will participate in an “If I Had You” promotion, in which female fans submit ideas for a fantasy date with Frankie. The winner will spend a day with the vocalist.

Another key element of the label’s marketing strategy is the artist’s promotional tour. Frankie was scheduled to perform July 23 at New York City’s City Hall, as part of the city’s Harlem Week celebration opening events. He was slated to participate in various other components of New York showcases commemorating the end of July. In August, Frankie is conducting promotional visits in his home market of Washington, D.C., and in Baltimore. The biggest date is on Tuesday (5), when he will perform on BET’s stage show in Washington.

“We’re planning on pushing Frankie in his home market because that’s... (Continued on page 30)
Puffmania: If I were a gambler, I’d bet high stakes that former Uptown Records chief Andre Harrell never imagined that his one-time intern would also turn out to be his biggest talent find and a mogul in his own right. Puff Daddy’s first foray as an artist in 1997, “No Way Out” (Bad Boy/Arista), naturally wins Greatest Gainer on Top R&B Albums for its S-1 move following last week’s street-date violations. He also gets to wear the crown for being No. 1 on The Billboard 200 to the tune of 561,000 units, earning the chart’s Hot Shot Debut in the process. The largest sales markets include New York (107,000 units), Los Angeles (38,000), and Philadelphia (30,000), according to SoundScan. The album has the year’s third-largest first-week tally (see Between the Bulletts, page 70).

On the Hot R&B Singles chart, Sean “Puffy” Combs boasts five singles to his credit at Nos. 2, 3, 7, 35, and 50, respectively. The Notorious B.I.G.’s tribute single, “I’ll Be Missing You,” still headlines the Hot 100 for the ninth consecutive week and maintains weekly sales in excess of 100,000 units at the overall SoundScan panel. Meanwhile, “Momma Money Mo Problems” by the Notorious B.I.G. (Featuring Puff Daddy & Mase) lands its first week atop Hot Rap Singles. To date, Combs has been affiliated with nine No. 1 Hot R&B Singles hits between his Uptown and Bad Boy tenures.

Kings of the Hill: Dru Hill’s “Never Make A Promise” (Island) rockets 9-1 on Hot R&B Singles after a retail leak of 2,500 units at R&B core stores forced the song onto the chart a week early. Explosive sales of more than 29,000 units at the R&B core-store panel shoot the chart 29-1 on Hot R&B Singles Sales. Retail consists of 69% of the song’s total Hot R&B Singles chart points. Aiding the sales factor is the record’s B-side, which contains the Jermaine Dupri-produced remix to former No. 1 “In My Bed.” The remix gave the song new life and has become a mix-show and club anthem. Since Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) merges remits points with those of the original track, “In My Bed” has been able to remain in the top 15 of Hot R&B Singles after 32 weeks on that chart, based on new airplay from the remix. Meanwhile, airplay for “Make A Promise” stands at 31 million listener impressions from play at 88 BDS-monitored R&B stations. That song increases 13% in audience and jumps 15-9 on Hot R&B Airplay. Station leaders include WXFX Augusta, Ga. (71 plays), WEDS Baltimore (61 plays), and KDJA Dallas (45 plays).

Here’s Boney: After spending 10 weeks on Top Contemporary Jazz Albums, Boney James’ “Sweet Thing” (Warner Bros.) enters Top R&B Albums at No. 49 as the Hot Shot Debut. Boney has supported strong core-store sales since his album hit stores back in June, but as noted in this column in the June 14 issue, airplay at R&B monitored stations is also a factor in qualifying an artist for the R&B list. Since that time, Boney’s first single, the title track, has garnered airplay at 17 R&B outlets, which led to the song’s debut on the R&B adult/BD impact page in Billboard sister publication Billboard: R&B. Airplay Monitor. Every album assigned to a specialty chart, such as Top R&B Albums, is on a per-project basis, since musical styles can change. Given the new airplay and continued core-store sales, Billboard felt it fitting that “Sweet Thing” should join the R&B album list.

Growing up in Queens, N.Y., Myrick says he was in music and sports from a young age. “I played roller hockey, basketball, football, baseball, stickball . . . I was a sports fanatic,” he says. “And I used to listen to people like the Bee Gees’ brother Andy Gibb and Kiss while my mom was into soul music [Motown, etc.] My mom taught me how to speak English and my grandmother listened strictly to gospel.”

“My stepfather was a DJ, and he played records all day long,” he continues. “Me and my brother used to beat drums on his records of all time, so when I was 4 or 5 I bought a drum set. Six years later, my mom bought me turntables for my birthday.”

Later, Myrick formed the group the Sticks & Stones with two friends who would later work for Empire Management, which represents Gang Starr and the A&R department at RCA Records.

Through Sticks & Stones, Myrick met Clark Kent, who produced the group. He became “like a big brother,” Myrick says.

Besides Kent, Myrick learned the art of production from watching Combes, whom he met through Kent and credits as a visionary.

Myrick initially honed his production skills by making “passes button” tapes. “I used to take an old record, loop it up, then I’d put other sounds on them using another tape deck,” he recalls.

“I picked up points from just watching other people’s techniques and approaches, and before I got with Puff, I was a beat-maker. Now I’m a producer.”

An Urban Active Wear: clothing line that grew out of the record company that such hip-performers as Coolio and De La Soul soul call home, Tommy Boy Records has ceased its production until the label that spawned Coolio (the label can regularly be seen sporting its bylines). But four years after its formation, items from the Tommy collection—such as DJ bags, loose gear, prates, fitted tennis skirts with reflective piping, and sized-to-fit cotton T-shirts with bold graphics and “Tommy” printed down the sleeves—were available at small retail chains and cool specialty shops. Among them are Against the Wall in Washington, D.C., Yellow Rat (Continued on next page)
Bustard in New York, and Beat Non-Stop in Los Angeles.

“Our clothes are fun, hip, and for anyone with a sense of style,” says Deich. “It’s up to you to keep pushing the envelope and marketing to Tommy Boy Gear. The company is located in the same space as the label, and its items are created by a collective of independent designers “so that our flavors stay fresh and different and maintain that ‘you never know’ quality.” Haizlip says. However, to ensure that everything works well together, a design committee that includes Tommy Boy president Monte Lynch is also part of the creative process. Quality control responsibilities fall on Ottilia Tanner, who “brings a classic touch to the line,” Haizlip says.

Besides its own acts, Tommy Boy Gear has outfitted the cheerleaders from Team Tyson in the popular Backers basketball tournament in New York, and soon Tommy Boy Gear will be seen on the backs of stars from television’s Melrose Place, “The Parenthood” and “In The House.”

RAP CONFAB: The fifth annual How Can I Be Down? (HCIBD) Hip-Hop Power Summit is set to take place Oct. 5-7 in Montego Bay, Jamaica. In previous years the event was held in Miami’s Little Havana. The summit is now focused on enhancing existing panels while adding additional ones that reflect the theme of Each One Teach One,” says Britto. “We’re carefully picking panelists and coordinating panels so that everyone disseminates the knowledge and tools necessary to aid attendees with the armor needed to penetrate the area of entertainment that intersects them.”

Besides providing jewels of information and experiences, HCIBD will also offer registrants a celebrity golf tournament, an all-day concert called Splashdown that will highlight a combination with Reggae Sunsplash; the Fashion Extravaganza, which will feature top designers displaying their wares alongside up-and-comers; a celebrity basketball game; and, of course, the Salute to Excellence dinner and Big Willie Awards.

Those interested in being involved in HCIBD or on its panels should contact Britto at 212-977-6772.
# Billboard Hot R&B Airplay

**AUGUST 9, 1997**

**Hot R&B Airplay**

Comprehensive national sample of airplay supplied by Broadcast Data Systems' Radio Track service, 50 R&B stations were surveyed, with a total of 4,172 airplays. The Hot R&B Airplay charts are compiled by the same methodology used by Billboard for the Hot 100 and R&B/Pop charts, but limited to the Hot R&B Singles chart.

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Sisqo</td>
<td>BMG Nova</td>
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<td>MCA</td>
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<td>Bad Boy / Arista</td>
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<td>Interscope</td>
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<td>&quot;What You Want (Take My Breath Away)&quot;</td>
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<td>Chrysalis, ASCAP / Warner Bros.</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>&quot;When I See You&quot;</td>
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<td>Mercury</td>
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<td>BMG Nova</td>
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**R&B Singles Sales**

Complied from a sample of about 100 R&B and contemporary R&B retail stores which report number of units sold to SoundScan, Inc. This data is used in the Hot R&B Singles chart.

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Records with the greatest airplay gains. © 1997 Billboard/BPI Communications and SoundScan, Inc.
Hollywood's JTQ Puts the Pedal Down on 'Creation'
(Continued from preceding page)

will focus on bringing “Starsky And Hutch” to what Hollywood product manager Dyana Kass calls “a cross section of people.”

In accomplishing that goal, she will focus on the fact that "Creation" is not filled with "laid-back flowy music," but is "aggressively funky and unique," with an approximately thirty-second video for "Starsky And Hutch" that will go to a variety of music video outlets and clubs.

JTQ is tentatively planning a concert tour of the States later this year. "Aggressively funky" is a description that suits the band's virtually incomparable sound, which makes you feel like you are locked in a high-speed car chase one minute and at the edge of your seat in an action-packed suspense film the next. It's a sound that the band has honed over the course of a decade and 11 U.K. albums that have widely been accepted in the dance community. "Creation" in JTQ's second release for Hollywood.

Taylor says he is not trying to kill the dance-genre perception of the band with this new "cock-funk" sound. In fact, he says he doesn't care where the music is being spun, as long as people like it and the band is able to perform. Since his school days, Taylor has always loved being in front of an audience. He was a fan of punk-era British groups like the Sex Pistols and was fascinated by their ability to "get the whole room aching... that's what we are trying to do with JTQ's live shows."

The James Taylor Quartet has a devoted following throughout Europe. Taylor says that the band has managed to keep it together for more than 10 years "because of a genuine love of music. The greatest thing that I can do is get together with a bunch of people and make live music."

Taylor is philosophical when pondering the notion of JTQ reaching a large mainstream audience.

“We're cult artists, no disrespect to what we've done, because we have managed to hold it together for so long,” he says. “And if at one point we were ever to cross over [for us], it could be the undoing. I've seen it when groups last ages and ages, and then they hit massive success and it all falls apart.”
Asylum Has Big Plans, High Hopes For 3rd Set

Thanks A Million. Curb Group chairman Mike Curb, left, and Country Music Hall of Fame fund campaign chairman E.W. "Bud" Wendell examine Lefty Frizzell's boots in the storage area of the Hall. Curb recently donated $1 million to the Hall's campaign fund for its move to larger quarters in downtown Nashville.

NASHVILLE—Though his first two albums have made Bryan White one of country music's most successful newcomers, with four No. 1 songs out of eight released singles, White feels like he's just hitting stride with his third album, "The Right Place," due Sept. 23.

"A lot of people mention the jinx of the third album. They say a lot about the second and third album," White says. "Usually, people are real pressed, but none of that stuff ever bothered me. I go in with a clear mind and try to make a good record. This time, I feel like this was the album where I was able to voice every opinion, every creative idea I had, and use it to my advantage. And I played on a lot of the record. Obviously, I sang every song on the album, but I also got to do a lot of percussive and background vocal stuff that I've never had time to do. This is the first time I've been in town enough to really do the record the way I wanted to do it...I'm real proud of it."

White co-wrote several songs on the new disc, including "Never Get Around To It" with his friend and guitarist Derek George. He and George also co-wrote the uptempo tune "A Bad Day To Let You Go," with White co-writing it.

White, George, and John T urno co-wrote "Call Me Crazy." We wrote it a couple of years ago, and I've been dying to record this song since the day we wrote it," White says. I think it's one of the best songs I've written, and I can't wait for the public and the fans to hear it."

"That's the beauty of writing with friends," White says. "It's tough to be focused enough to be creative when you're on the road, because it's a weird setting." He adds, "I've been writing a lot of music and trying to keep developing. There's been a lot of music I've written over the past few years that I've been doing more of it recently, and I think maybe I could get used to it."

White says the set includes the Skip Ewing songs "Leave My Heart Out Of This" and "Tree Of Hearts." Ewing is responsible for penning such previous White hits as "Rebecca Lynn," "I'm Not Supposed To Love You Anymore," and "Someone Else's Star." There's also a tune by Steve Wariner and Bill Ander son, "Our Turn," that White is excited about.

"Steve Wariner is my idol," White says. "I've just basically worshiped him since I was about 15 years old. Steve came in and sang on it, and that was a big deal for me. That's one of those (Continued on page 27)

ARTISTS & MUSIC

Bryan White In 'The Right Place'

SATISFYING STONES TRIBUTE ROLLS OUT NEXT MONTH, SALUTING GOSPEL, PART 2

A ישראל TRIBUTE ALBUM? Just what the world needs! Well, maybe, maybe not, but "Stone Country" is a pretty interesting venture. The album, coming from Beyond Music (a new Left Bank label) Sept. 16, features a dozen Nashville acts performing some of their favorite Rolling Stones songs, and the results are all over the map.

Hearing Nanci Griffith tackle "No Expectations" with a mountain string band and a Hammond B-3 organ is well worth the price of admission, as is Tracy Lawrence's 'lady Paint It Black,' Deanna Carter's breathless "Baby Tuesday," George Jones's solemn recitation during "Time Is On My Side," Sammy Kershaw's soulful interpretation of "Angie," and other tasteful renditions done by the Cicadas, Travis Ritt, Ronnie Milsap, Blackhawk, Little Texas, the Tractors, and Collin Raye.

Actually, it's not such a stretch for country Stones fans to circulate an album. Keith Richards singing Jones songs, and the Stones have done country songs over the years in some. But before they worked with the late Gram Parsons, Mike Jaggard and Richards have become friends with Jones and often talk over the phone. Jones has said more than once that the country music tradition gets more respect from rock 'n' roll legends than it does from certain quarters of the industry in Nashville itself. Plus, as the Tractors' Steve Ripleys says, "Everybody wanted to do Stones' songs. When I was starting out, I would sing 'Tiger By The Tail' along with 'Satisfaction' and 'Get Off Of My Cloud.' Which is maybe why I couldn't get work in big cities. I'm sometimes baffled at how some people think it's odd to be singing Rolling Stones one day and Webb Pierce the next."

The Tractors' version of "The Last Time" is a sightly one, and they obviously had fun doing it. "We've got a sign up here that says, 'The Tractors groover a Rolling Stones song,'" says Ripleys. It will be the first single off the album, with a late-August release, says Beyond Music senior VP of A&R Randy Nicklaus. "Tim Dugger, Dean Arista, and I presided. They've given us single rights for the Tractors," Nicklaus says. "We'll be doing a lot of press for this and we will take it to country radio and up to Triple A. A lot of their songs already hits, and all the artists are special. Our job is just to take it to the public. This will be the coffee-table album of the year."

Ripleys says that, in typical Tractors fashion, what the group thought would be a one-day session for the song stretched into six weeks. Meanwhile, die-hard Tractors fans will have to be satisfied with this one song for now: Ripley says the long-awaited second Tractors album will not see release before early 1998. "We've become consumed by the album," he says.

Also on the tribute front, Sparrow is readying an Oct. 7 release of "Amazing Grace: A Country Salute To Gospel." The first "Amazing Grace" sold gold and won a Grammy in 1996 in the best Southern gospel, country gospel, or bluegrass gospel album category. Participants on the new set include Bryan White, John Berry, Lari White, Kim Richey, Béla Fleck, Marty Raybon, Charlie Daniels, Billy Ray Cyrus, the Cox Family, Ricky Van Shelton, Gary Chapman, and Trace Adkins. David Corlew is the executive producer. Sparrow will work it to country, Christian, and gospel radio, with an emphasis on the Southeast, where the first album was very strong.

SEAGAL’S COUNTRY CAREER HEATS UP WITH WB’S ‘FIRE’

NEW YORK—While martial arts movie master Steven Seagal’s new movie, “Fire Down Below,” is typically action-packed, the plot, involving the illegal dumping of hazardous waste in the Appalachian Mountains of southeastern Kentucky, is custom-made for country music.

Hence the Warner Bros. soundtrack album, which Seagal executive-produced, is almost entirely country music. And other country video outlets as soon as possible to pre-sell the Warner Bros. movie, which combines a movie premiere and a star-studded party at which Seagal and country artists from the movie are set to perform.

Other contributors to the album are Travis Tritt, Marty Stuart, the Lynns, Kosstas, Randy Scruggs, Randy Travis, Alabama, Russ Taff, Marty Greb, Rhonda Vincent, Taj Mahal, and Harry Dean Stanton. In the film, Seagal also performs in a bluegrass festival sequence; the actor’s songwriting and performing tie into his lifelong love of music. He was also involved musically in his last picture, “The Glimmer Man.”

“The long and the short of it is that I love music, composing it and performing it,” says Seagal. “I’ve written hundreds...of songs and wanted to do the soundtrack, and the studio heard some of the songs and said, ‘Great.’”

Seagal had a hand in three other soundtrack songs besides the title track and says, “I’ve always had this idea that I could write ‘Dark Angel’ with Marty Greb and perform it with Taj Mahal. ‘Desert Breeze’ was written by Seagal and Rafael Escudero and performed by the pair along with Randy’s father, the pioneering banjo picker Ralph Stanley. Another song on the album is the Johnny Cash song "Butterfly Kisses." Publication is set for November. Signings: the Lynns to Sony/ATV Tree Publishing, Bill Kirchen to High Tone Records, and Michael Peterson to Flood, Burnstead, McCready & McCarthy Inc. for business management. Vince Gill signs with the Country Music Assn. to host the CMA Awards show for the next two years. He has hosted the show for the past five years... Trace Adkins signs with Chevrolet as spokesman for Chevy trucks in the South.
## Billboard Top Country Albums

### Agust 9, 1997

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<th>Week</th>
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<td>BMI/6735638 (1/91/15.96)</td>
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### Pacesetter

- **Kenny Rogers** with *What I Do Best* (10/91/15.98)
- **Lee Ann Womack** with *Lee Ann Womack* (5/91/15.98)
- **Reba McEntire** with *What It Is* (10/91/15.98)
- **Brooks & Dunn** with *Bordeline* (10/91/15.98)
- **Sawyer Brown** with *Six Days On The Road* (10/91/15.98)
- **John Berry** with *Faces* (10/91/15.98)
- **Kenny Rogers** with *Across My Heart* (10/91/15.98)
- **John Michael Montgomery** with *What I Do Best* (10/91/15.98)
- **Kevin Sharp** with *Measure Of A Man* (10/91/15.98)
- **Clint Black** with *The Greatest Hits* (10/91/15.98)
- **Chris Ledoux** with *Live* (10/91/15.98)
- **Collin Raye** with *I Think About You* (10/91/15.98)
- **Alison Krauss & Union Station** with *So Long So Wrong* (10/91/15.98)
- **Billy Ray Cyrus** with *The Best Of Billy Ray Cyrus Over To Cover* (10/91/15.98)
- **Lonestar** with *Crazy Days* (10/91/15.98)
- **Wynonna** with *Collection* (10/91/15.98)

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**Catalog entries:**

- **MCA**: This chart includes Top Country Albums reported by Billboard/BPI and compiled by SoundScan as of August 9, 1997. The chart ranks albums by total weekly sales based on data compiled by SoundScan. Each report is based on sales of albums from the previous Sunday to Saturday. The chart is updated every Friday. For the latest chart, visit www.billboard.com. All information is subject to change. For more details, visit www.billboard.com.}

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**Compiled from a National Sample of Retail Store and Rack Sales Reports Collected, Compiled, and Provided by SoundScan.**

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**Notes:**

- **No. 1** albums are marked with an asterisk (*) in the chart.
- **No. 1** albums are marked with a double asterisk (**) in the chart.
- **No. 1** albums are marked with a triple asterisk (***) in the chart.
- **No. 1** albums are marked with a quadruple asterisk (****) in the chart.
- **No. 1** albums are marked with a quintuple asterisk (*****).
**BILBOARD AUGUST 9, 1997**

### Top Country Singles & Tracks

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<td>10</td>
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**Compiled from a national sample of retail store and radio sales reports collected, compiled, and provided by Billboard.**
A TRIP WITHOUT A SUITCASE: With an increase of 4,000 units, George Strait's "Carrying Your Love With Me" moves more than 56,000 pieces and holds on for a second consecutive week at No. 1 on Top Country Albums (No. 2) and bulleted at No. 17 on The Billboard 200. Although Strait's set lags 14,000 units behind Tim McGraw's "Everywhere" (Curb), it sells 16,000 more units than "Blue" by LeAnn Rimes (Curb), which holds the No. 28 slot.

Meanwhile, despite a decrease of 71 singles, the title track from "Carrying Your Love With Me" shows no intention of pulling up stakes at the top of Hot Country Singles & Tracks. With 5,616, Strait's song leads Trace Adkins' "41 Left Something Turned On At Home" (Capitol Nashville) by 218 singles (1-2). Both songs are airing on all of our 161 monitored stations, but Adkins' title decreases by 110 singles. Lonestar's "Come Cry To Me" (BNA) shows the biggest gain in its chart position, rising 6-5 with an increase of 846 singles and may pose the greatest threat to Strait's chances at a fifth No. 1 week.

"We're definitely in a new climate of assessing chart impact based upon longevity, and not just whether a record [peaks at No. 1]," says David Haley, president ofigt Resources, a leading country music industry executive. "I think the current format of awarding No. 1 status to a song is just accentuating the problem and not solving it. We have a lot of songs in our charts that we're not really hearing much of.

The only way to fix it is to change the format of the charts, and I don't know if we're ever going to do that. But I think the greatest need is for more of us to understand that what we're doing is not working. We're not getting the hits we want, and we're not getting the hits we need.

COUNTRY SINGLES A-Z

BRYAN WHITE IN THE RIGHT PLACE
(Continued from page 2)

moments when you want to jump up and down and scream and thank the Lord you're alive when you hear Steve Wariner singing on your record. It's a big honor.

"I Live Is The Right Place," was written by Marcus Hummon and Tommy Sims. "That song is just one of those you look forward to with me right now, and that's why I recorded it," White says. "Lyrically, it's a song that talks about finding your way, being a little bit lost and searching for it. I think I'm doing that finally. I've gotten to a point in my career where everything just seems to work like clockwork, everything is going so well... I have a great family and a great bunch of friends, and that's what I try to capture in the video.

The single has been released for sale commercially, an unusual move for Asylum. "I don't believe in commercial singles," says Asylum's president Joe Mansfield. "I think it takes away from the cassette or CD sales. However, Mansfield was persuaded by Asylum president of marketing Bill Lardi that it could be the right move.

"He told me what he sold on Tim McGraw and it was probably a mistake, and he thought he could do a similar sales job on Bryan White. So I said, 'Well, we'll give it a shot.' So we are going to try and air this on Adult Contemporary to try to push it toward the marketing of the album.

Skip Young, senior buyer for the Amarillo, Texas-based Hastings chain, says White's single is selling briskly, and he doesn't see it having a negative impact on album sales.

"They're hotter than a pistol," Young says. "He's a new trendsetter in the country field, and his records are selling incredibly well. We're really looking forward to his new album. We're going to give it endcap status, and some of the stores are already talking about doing events, special listening parties and in-store appearances.

Young says White's audience is a wide demographic that includes children, the college crowd and an older audience. White is hoping the new album will appeal to all segments of his audience.

"I think this record that might be a little reminiscent of the first album I did," White says. "You don't listen to it and go, 'Hey, that's just like the first album,' but there's kind of a hit. If the album had a little more magic about it because we weren't really able to make a deal after we released the single. But now, we're seeing a couple of songs that kind of take you back to the first album.

This album was produced by Billy Joe Walker Jr. and Kyle Leehn, and White says they were receptive to his input. "I think they're doing a great job. I'm about and enhancing it," White says.

And they have a lot of neat ideas. We collaborate on almost everything. If they think I have an idea to run by me, or if I have an idea I run it by them... Kyle and Billy are really passionate about making music, and we've become such good friends over the past few years.

To maximize the potential of White's new release, Mansfield says, Asylum is launching the biggest marketing campaign in the label's history. "We are planning to ship this album gold and concentrate on price and positioning, especially with the record, he says. "We expect the album to achieve multi-platform success. It's loaded with "Bryan White" and country radio will be more than satisfied with Bryan White's third release.

But he, who is booked by the William Morris Agency, says he will continue touring with Vince Gill until September. "Then I'm doing some dates in the fall and then I'll probably take some time off, he says. "I love music and I love playing it live. I think that's what it is for the people. Then next year we are talking about doing some more television and movies, but I hope it'll be a lot of fun. I really love my music a lot. Then it's for the year for us, and then next year we are talking about doing some movies."

White says he's been performing some of the new record during shows this summer, and he is excited by fan reaction and hopes that positive reaction will translate to radio and retail. "I had a great time making this record," he says. "It's a hot album."

"I have a lot of fans at retail, the main promotional thrust will be the Nashville movie premieres.

"We're planning to get it carried on as a major buy-in on TNN primarily," says Saporiti, who envisions a live show from Nashville's Planet Hollywood. "We'll invite the top dogs from the music community and government and other people who benefit from Nashville's connection with Hollywood. The movie is about the fans and the movie is about the fans.

Saporiti was very "hands-on" and "totally involved in every aspect of the soundtrack as well as the movie." Sapor- iti says, also crediting Warner/Reprise Nashville president Jim Ed Norman and film execs for their album input. He adds that Saporiti also new Warner/Reprise artist Anika Cochran to do some music (which was too late to make the soundtrack) and ensures them working together to the greatest extent possible.

Saporiti says he plans to do a solo set in the fall and that he is evaluating several "vocalists and management firms." He says he "play every day and write too much." he says. "I have too many songs and have to figure out what to do with them."
Artists & Music

Latin News

by John Lannert

DAYLIGHT AHEAD: John Ganoe, VP of member services for the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA), has confirmed that the U.S. trade group will publish sales data of the U.S. Latino market around the middle of August. Included in the report will be the 1996 sales figures of the RIAA member companies, plus their share of the RIAA member company sales in the corresponding period. The company's data will be divulged. Thus, no market-share breakdowns will be available.

For its part, Fonovisa already is revealing its sales tally for 1996 and midyear 1997. The label has announced that its 1996 revenue came in at $25.99 million on sales of $11.63 million. Fonovisa's 1997 January-June sales numbers are markedly higher than its 1996 figures for the corresponding period. The company's midyear revenue is $41.14 million, up 46.5% from midyear 1996, when sales reached $28.27 million. Fonovisa's 1997 midyear unit sales of 9.62 million are 25% higher than 1996's midyear unit sales of 5.4 million.

ACCOUNTABILITY PART 2: As the RIAA prepares its sales missive on the U.S. Latino record market, Tom Hunter, president of MTV Networks Latin America, reports that research company Nielsen and IBOPE are working on a reliable ratings service for cable networks in Latin America. Saying that initial ratings reports will be released by the end of this year, Hunter notes that there may be a few operational wrinkles to be ironed out in the early going. "It will be rough for a year [in that] we will not have a high level of confidence in some data," states Hunter. "But I would definitely say that over the course of the next couple of years, we will be moving to a much better system.

While there are a handful of research companies offering ratings information in various Latin American cities, few industry observers profess confidence in their numbers. Certainly, any sort of dependable ratings service would be preferable to a network-crowing about its tally of subscribers, rather than the number of viewers who are actually tuned in.

RMM'S BIRTHDAY Bash: RMM Records is celebrating its 10th anniversary with the 22nd edition of the New York Salsa Festival, an all-star concert slated to be staged Aug. 30 at New York's Madison Square Garden. The multi-artist revue is being produced, of course, by RMM president and longtime concert promoter Ralph Mercado. More than 30 of RMM's pantheon of recording artists are expected to perform, including Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, Oscar D'Leon, Marc Anthony, India, Manny Manuel, Tony Vega, Tito Nieves, Giovanni Hidalgo, Dave Valentin, Hilton Ruiz, and Humberto Ramirez.

Mercado says the highly anticipated happening, "which will be more like a TV show than a concert," will be filmed for a 90-minute video. A live recording—either a single or double CD—is slated to drop at the end of February 1998. "We are going to have a lot of the artists singing together, and they will be doing new material, with some surprises."

(Continued on next page)
prizes,” says Mercado. “This probably will be the only time I can get all of these people together to perform on the same evening.”

Mercado adds that the singers will be backed by Manuel’s orchestra and the RMM Band.

Apart from the musical proceedings at the concert, Mercado is going to take advantage of an expected sellout crowd to publicize “Yo Soy, Del Son A La Salsa,” a documentary about the history of the evolution of Cuba’s vernacular music. She recently introduced a new line of lingerie, which is sold at Mexico’s top department stores. In addition, the star of the television series “María La Del Barrio” and “Marimar,” is working on a line of cosmetics and preparing the launch of a doll bearing her name and likeness.

As for her recording activities, Thalía is slated to tour Uruguay, Chile, and Argentina later this year. She also is scheduled to do a promo jaunt to Brazil, the U.S., Spain, and France. Her next teléfonica and Mexican concert tour is not expected until ’98.

Thalía’s New Ventures: Even as her new album continues to pop at retail, EMIX Mexico’s actress/singer Thalía is branching into other business concerns. She recently introduced a new line of lingerie, which is sold at Mexico’s top department stores. In addition, the star of the television series “María La Del Barrio” and “Marimar,” is working on a line of cosmetics and preparing the launch of a doll bearing her name and likeness.

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Música Expands: To coincide with Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 16-Oct. 15), “Música Para Todas,” its national Latin music education program founded by Columbia House Club Música Latina and National Reforma, is being augmented with music/culture/kids called Música Y Cultura Packs.

These educational sets, which contain activity sheets relating to music and culture, will be distributed to the 24 libraries participating in “Música Para Todas.”

Also to be shipped to the “Música Para Todas” libraries are audio-visuals and speakers and 50 new albums by artists from the pop, tropical, and regional Mexican genres. “Música Para Todas” was established in 1994 as a vehicle for promoting awareness and pride in Latino sounds.

Stateline Briefs: BMG is not to drop “Fabulosos ColaVera,” the label debut by Los Fabulosos Cadillacs, Aug. 12.

RMM is setting up for the fourth quarter with its strongest slate of product so far this year. Due in September are albums by India and Domingo Quiñones; in October, new sets are expected from Marc Anthony and Tony Vega.

PolyGram Latin has signed Mexican singer/songwriter/producer Laureano Brizuela. His label premiere is due in August.

On Sept. 16, Rhino is slated to ship “El Rey Del Timbal! The Best Of Tito Puente And His Orchestra” and “Azuar! The Best Of Celia Cruz Con La Sonora Matancera.”

After having made inroads into the southern South American marketplace last winter, “No Te Enamores,” a booming remake of Matthew Wilder’s 1983 hit “Break My Stride,” Fonovisa’s El Simbolo is attempting to stride out in the rest of the region. On July 29, the Argentinean vocal quintet acetate” embarked on a monthlong promo tour of Ecuador, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. in support of its self-titled album. Upon returning to Argentina in August, the group is releasing its next disc, which will be supported by concert dates in Chile, Bolivia, and Brazil.

Spanish music channel HTV has named Miriam I. Hernández advertising sales manager. She previously held the same position with SUR Network.

Sony’s Mexican teen sensation Fey has embarked on a six-date swing of the U.S. and Puerto Rico that concludes Aug. 30 at the Universal Amphitheater in Los Angeles. Claudia Fernández, Hernández & Associates is promoting the shows.

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Rhino Gives Deluxe Treatment To Mingus’ Atlantic Work; Al Grey Is Back Onstage

PASSIONS OF MINGUS: Rhino has announced plans to release the music of Charles Mingus into a premium package. Following in the label’s tradition of releasing boxed sets featuring the Atlantic work of Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane, “Passions Of A Man: The Complete Atlantic Recordings (1956-1961)” is a comprehensive set of the composer/bassist’s prime work. It’s slated for release Oct. 28.

The six-CD package will consist of music from the original LPs “Pithecanthropus Erecutus,” “The Clown,” “Blue & Root," “Oh Yeah,” “Tonight At Noon,” and “Mingus At Antibes.” The pieces on “Tonight At Noon,” some of Mingus’ most volcanic, have never been released on CD. Also included are four tracks from a ’56 session that was issued under vibist Teddy Charles’ name as “Word From Bird.” Four alternate takes of Mingus’ staple “Five Out Of Four,” “Flat’s Flat, Ah’s Flat, Too,” “My Jelly Roll Soul,” “Tensions,” and “Wednesday Night Fountain Meeting” are also part of the set.

The Atlantic work might be the most important group of Mingus recordings done in one label in sequence, says Joel Dorn, who contributes an introductory essay to the set. “When you look at all the labels that he worked with over the years, it was at Atlantic where he made a highly concentrated body of work, stuff that really shows his musical personality,” says Dorn. Working with Mingus in the ’70s and produced the Coltrane and Coleman sets for Rhino, perhaps the most interesting component of the record will be the 76-minute Mingus interview with Nesuhi Ertegun, who originally produced the sessions. A 24-minute segment of their conversation was part of the 1988 “Oh Yeah” CD. In it Mingus speaks of his problems with bass playing and the way he teaches his pieces to his band members. The gruff persona that he’s known for having is absent, here instead is a garrulous, gregarious guy.

“The thing you got to remember about Mingus is that he wasn’t only a genius, but a guy,” says Dorn. “A wild guy, but a real guy.” The interview should amend some of the historical perception. The Christmas season has become the music that should help Rhino’s numbers. According to SoundScan, Coleman’s “Beauty In A Rare Thing” has sold 5,800 units, and Coltrane’s “The Heavyweight Champion” has sold 14,000. “Passions Of A Man” will carry a $74.99 list price.

In another Mingus reissue news, Rhino is bringing back the master’s 1956 CBS sessions—previously offered by Mosaic Records—during spring 1998.

HEALTH WATCH: In the hospital for more than five months after suffering complications from diabetes at the end of 1996, Al Grey recently rebounded with his first club date. The 72-year-old trombonist had a mid-July stay at New York’s Birdland club that went particularly well. Grey lost two toes to the disease but is otherwise doing great. In August, he will be part of the crowd participating in the Benny Carter Birthday Celebration at the Hollywood Bowl. A new Grey record is due soon from the Arlows label. Trumpeter Nat Adderley, in his mid-60s, had his right leg amputated below the knee in an emergency operation July 11 in Lakeland, Fla. He too suffers from diabetes. Adderley is undergoing rehabilitation and is expected to make a full recovery.

JOHNNY ‘Hammond’ Smith, a highly skilled organist who came to prominence during the 1960s, died of cancer June 4 in Victorville, Calif. Known for his deep blues feeling on the Hammond B-3 organ, he recorded for Prestige for most of the decade. One of his classic discs is 1969’s ”Soul Talk.” Smith was 64 years old.

FRANKIE (Continued from page 17)

where he’s born and bred, and that’s where Chuckie Providence was based,” says John. “It’s a great market to start building them. They’ve got IEB in addition to a lot of urban outlets, and there is a lot of support for him there.”

The label also plans to run print advertisements in Vibe, Right On, and Black Beat. Plans are also in the works for appearances on such TV programs as “The Kool & Easy Ways” Show and “Soul Train.”

Meanwhile, Frankie—who is influenced by a combination of classic Motown sounds and more contemporary R&B—is taking his budding music in stride and trying to remain focused.

“There’s definitely a lot happening right now,” says the vocalist, who used to perform for schoolmates in his high school livery. “I’m still finding my own voice. Even when I started in the recording studio, I had to establish my own comfort zone. Being a professional artist requires putting on another hat. In addition to being a performer, I also have to be a businessman, while trying to stay true to both. It’s all coming together.”
The advance CD designates "My My Broken Heart," "Lightning Storm," and the title track as "suggested As I Am." In Time magazine, Terry Teachout said the opera "sounds a bit like a Broadway show, but one composed by a pop-culture channel surfer on uppers" with jackie as a sweet-toned soprano, and Todd5 as "a Everyman leaping lizard." The show, which features members of the Houston Opera Studio, is conducted by Christopher Larkin.

SPEAKING OF FIRST LADIES: The London Symphony Orchestra gave the world premiere of "A White House Cantata," an edited concert version of the Leonard Bernstein/Alan Jay Lerner show "1600 Pennsylvania Avenue," which bombed on Broadway in 1969. The show was an "Upstairs-Downstairs" look at the American presidency, and the cantata presented scenes from 11 presidencies.

SUZZY ROCHÉ STEPS OUT SOLO ON RED HOUSE

(Continued from page 13)

"And the Roches had such a special thing and were so loved by the fans that to try and discover a side of me that was a bit different than my function in the group made me insecure. I wasn't sure I had it in me at this age, when I'm not singing anymore."

"One of the delights of being 40 now is to be real and not pretend to be somebody other than who I am, though I wasn't sure if anybody would be interested. But I've found that there's a folk circuit and community which is interested in what other people are writing, just like the Roches, and Red House is tapped into that market and can make money from records without spending a lot, which is a really good place for me to be right now."

Red House has already sent out CD advances of "Holy Smoke" to the media, including radio. "What we're trying to do with Suzzy is basically the biggest campaign we've ever done for a record," says president Bob Feldman.

"Suzzy is a lot of Roches fans out there who love the 20-year longer, and we think that an appeal to that audience will be a good fit for a while, but now I'm listening to it again, and it gets better and better."
NEW YORK—The writing and production team of Full Force is back behind new tunes, 10 years after coming up with the idea for UTFO’s classic “Roxanne, Roxanne”—the track that introduced them and a song that inspired at least 22 answer-back singles, including “Roxanne’s Revenge” and “Sucker.”

This new activity comes after a life-threatening automobile accident involving two of its six members 4½ years ago.

“There’s definitely a Full Force resurgence taking place,” says Bowlegged Lou, a member of the group along with Paul Anthony, Baby Gentry, Curt, B-Fine, and J.R. (formerly Shy-Shy). “It all started with us working on Selena’s last album, arranging vocals and singing backgrounds for her.”

Next, the collective stepped into working with new-jill singer Yvette Michelle and the Backstreet Boys. Currently, a Full Force song is being covered by girl group on the rise, Allure.

In the ’80s, Full Force was regularly

syndicating hit for UTFO and such acts as Lisa Lisa & Cult Jam (“I Wonder If You Take You Home,” “All Cried Out”), Samantha Fox (“Naughty Girls [Need Love Too],” James Brown (“Static”), and Cheryl Pepsi Riley (“Thanks For My Child”), as well as for itself (“Love You Just For Me”). At the time, the Full Force repeated catch phrase was “Full Force got busy one time!” Now that the crew is back, it is
demonstrating the existence of a second
capacity in theater of hip-hop/R&B music-making.

“We’ve always believed and never stopped believing in ourselves,” Lou says. “And even though after the accident involving me and Curt we kind of chilled, we always knew we’d be back.

Full Force, whose material was registered through Zomba’s publishing division, is behind five songs on Michael’s for the coming Louis record, “My Dream,” arriving Sept. 16. And a cover of “All Cried Out” is the third single from Allure’s self-titled album, “Reminiscing.”

“At first we had come back from Cor-

pus Christi, Texas, where we worked in Selena, we couldn’t think of things, we said aloud,” says Lou. “‘Mojo’ (Nicosia, the label’s VP), who knows the whole Full Force legacy, said, ‘Man, you guys were always great with melodies, with all that stuff you did with girl singers.’”

“Then [CEO] Steve Ruffin jumped in, ‘Let’s just do it, Lou.’ So we met with her managers and Frankfurt Master, who was overseeing the Force project, and we started with her. One song turned into two, then three... We ended up doing five altogether.”

Full Force collaborated with Michelle on three of the cuts, and the others were created entirely by the group and its associates. This aspect reflects a new twist in Full Force’s creative approach. “We’re opening up ourselves a lot more than before, working with other writers,” Lou says.

This past—DJ Keep Playing,” for instance, was composed by Lou’s 15-year-old son, Bowlegged Jr. “We got the idea from a book, and he came up with a great idea,” Lou recalls.

Another cut, “Let’s Stay Together,” was started by a Florida songwriter named Mashuda Tiferes. As for the Allure cover of “All Cried Out,” Lou had was “The Answer. Originally, it was inspired by “the heartbreak situation a young lady we knew was going through. She said to Paul, ‘You know, I’m sick of crying; I’m all cried out.’”

Anticipation. Singer/songwriter Carly Simon has signed a global administration deal with PolyGram Music Publishing Group. The agreement gives the publisher the right to control the licensing, exploitation, and collection of income in her catalog and future songs. Shown, from left, are lawyer Howard Siegel, Simon, and PolyGram Music president David Simone.

THEY’RE PLAYING MY SONG’

WRITTEN BY DEBRA GRAM PIRCH

“LOVELY BOY” Written by Andrew Gold

“LOVELY BOY” Published by Luckyru Music

Henry Paris, Dave Robbins, and Van Stephenson, the writers of Aristar Records trio BlackHawk, have forged a successful niche writing or finding songs that showcase their distinctive vocal blend and harmonically driven sound with listeners. On its just-released third album, “Love & Gravity,” the trio once again turns in what fans consider a fine collection of material, and the group also serves up a hit of 70s pop nostalgia by covering The Association Gold’s hit “Lonely Boy” which peaked at No. 7 in 1977.

“It was [producer] Mark Bright’s idea,” says Dave Robbins. “I immediately jumped on it because of the piano [element], and I loved the record. I was always more drawn to piano [acts like] Billy Joel and Kansas, bands that were keyboard oriented. So I hit hard when he brought it up. It’s just a fun song. It’s not a heavy life message. Every singing who has had a younger sibling to come along and push them out of the nest has, I think, experienced that song. It’s a thing of many people relate to.”

“Plus Andrew was very instrumental in creating what we know as country/rock,” says Henry Paul, “(along with) Linda Roostaid, Don Henley, J.D. Souther, Glenn Frey, and Chris Hillman. This list all together is not huge, but it’s not small either. He’s a member of that community in a particular way and is basically overloved, and I loved the idea of doing the song. Although it was a top 10 hit, it was somewhat of an obscure record.”

The members of BlackHawk feel that Brooks & Dunn “kicked the door in” with their recording. “That was the cover of the B.B. Stephenson hit ‘My Mari,”’ says Barry Cowsill. “It opened a lot of people’s eyes, and we had all the backing vocals back and reviving some great songs, says Van Stephenson. “That started a lot of artists thinking about some great songs on ideas that could be played on country radio today.”

WHEN THE LION SANG

MGM showed New Yorkers how it got to Carnegie Hall: perform, perform, perform. In the case of Mickey Rooney, it was talk, talk, talk.

Rooney was among about 20 song-and-dance veterans of MGM in its musical heyday, from the mid-1930s to the late 50s, who celebrated Leo the Lion’s 75th anniversary July 18-18 at Carnegie Hall.

Accompanied by film clips, he rambled on about his life, his career, and, the good luck of them all, the late Judy Garland.

Everyone reminisced happily during “A Celebration Of The Glorious MGM Musicals.”

Accompanied by film clips, most performed a gem first polished on the studio lot decades earlier. Some examples: Betty Comden and Adolph Green sang “The French Lesson” from “Good News”; Gloria Dehaven, “Who’s Sorry Now?” from “Three Little Words”; Celeste Holm, “True Love” from “High Society”; and Donald O’Connor, the title song from “Singin’ In The Rain.”

The high note of the show, hosted by singer/pianist Michael Feinstein and Roddy McDowell, was hit by the agile Tony Martin, who at 83 is still touring. He brought the house; so did his wife, Cyd Charisse, whose looks and electricity are undiminished.

The tribute, part of Carnegie Hall’s third annual “American Popular Song Celebration,” was timed to coincide with Turner Classics Movies’ broadcast of MGM musicals.

FILLING voids: True, the first batch of DVDs that arrived six weeks ago were grace by two warhorses from MGM-UA, “The Wizard Of Oz” and “Singin’ In The Rain.” But in nearly six months of releases by Warner Bros., MGM-UA, and TriStar, those titles are all that are out there so far, though MGM-UA has set “Brigadoon” and “An American In Paris” for release soon.

Varese Sarabande Records, however, is making a contribution of its own. Not in terms of movies, but from a source to which movie musicals have often turned: the Broadway stage.

The label is issuing “Jerry Her-
Drawing from its strength as one of the industry’s most widely respected manufacturers of digital filters, Apogee Electronics of Santa Monica, Calif., has introduced the AD-8000, an eight-channel converter system aimed at a cross section of users, from world-class recording and mastering studios, to multimedia production houses, to project studio practitioners.

The unit features eight channels of 24-bit analog-to-digital conversion, with 114 dB dynamic range; a “soft limit” feature on each channel, which allows users to get more level on tape without digital “overs”; Apogee’s UV-22 encoding process, which translates a 24-bit signal to 20 or 16 bits; and comprehensive format conversion and busing between channels.

Scheduled to ship this month for a suggested list price of approximately $6,000, the unit also features a comprehensive light-bar metering system with six modes, including average and peak ballistic and two-second and infinite peak hold. Furthermore, the unit indicates digital overs via a seven-segment display that can be set to clear automatically.

Among the AD-8000’s other features are an oscillator, a choice of various synchronization sources, source or destination monitoring, and a headphone monitor.

“I’m looking forward to using the AD-8000 because I can do a simultaneous stereo mix to DAT or a 20- or 24-bit mix to DA-88 using the unit’s bit-splitting feature,” says renowned producer/mixing engineer Bob Clearmountain, who is a consultant to Apogee.

The unit offers either a stereo digital-to-analog mode or an eight-channel AES/EBU input card, which allows the conversion of separate left and right analog sources into stereo programming, and transferring audio between all the leading formats. In addition, four slots allow users to plug in Apogee Multimedia Bus (AMBUS) digital audio interface cards for A/E/EBU, ADAT, TDF, Digital, SDP/PF, eight-channel glass fiber, Sone Solutions, and MADI formats. Future AMBUS cards may include SSL HiWay, Yamaha, Dolby AC-3, DTS, SDF-2, and audio networking formats, according to Apogee literature.

The AD-8000’s UV-22 chip—combined with its bit-splitting feature—steps down 20- or 24-bit digital signals to 16 bits, allowing modular digital multitracks to capture audio resolution beyond the 16-bit threshold.

The first version of the unit will offer sampling rates of 44.1 kilohertz and 48 kHz, with varispeed to allow for variable clock sources, according to Clearmountain. However, future versions may have the capability of sampling at 96 kHz.

“We want to eventually have a 96-kHz version when some standards are set for it,” says Clearmountain. “But we didn’t want to get into something half-baked for now.”

Renowned for its high-quality D-A and A-D converters, Apogee has established itself as a leader in that niche, supplying converters for digital reel-to-reel recorders and marketing its own line of units to recording and mastering studios.

Clearmountain envisions a wide market for the AD-8000, from mainstream recording and mastering facilities, to post houses, to “people making records at home who want high-quality digital converters.”

He adds that one of the unit’s greatest strengths is that it converges audio between digital formats. “If you have Digidesign Pro Tools and Alesis Adat, you can easily and transparently go between those two formats, or any other format you may be using,” he explains. “The AD-8000 becomes your automatic eight-channel format converter.”

Anticipating an increased demand for multichannel mixing, Apogee is toting the AD-8000’s eight-channel features to mixing and mastering facilities.

“If people start doing surround mixes for audio, they are going to want high-quality converters but won’t necessarily stack up a whole bunch of converters where they’ll have to worry about clocking,” says Clearmountain.

### Production Credits

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## Audio Track

### Los Angeles


### Nashville

At Masterfonic, Patty Loveless mixed an Epic Records album with Emory Gordy Jr. producing, John Guess engineering, and Patrick Murphy assisting; Faith Hill bid farewell to Warner Bros. project with producer Dann Huff, engineer Jeff Balding, and assistant Mark Hagen; and producer Mark Bright mixed albums for Cactus Choir (Soundstream) and Rick Orzech (Arista) with engineer Csaba Petoeces and assistant David Hall.

### Other Locations

At Criteria Recording Studios in Miami, Elektra Records group Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers tracked and mixed their latest album with producers/engineers Steve Thompson and Mike Barbiero and mixing engineer Errol Brown; they were assisted by Chris Carroll and Scott Kielkla. Also at Criteria, Argentine pianist Raul Di Blasio was beginning recording his upcoming release for Bmg International; the 48-track digital session was produced by the artist with engineering from Joel Numa, Eric Schilling, and Mike Couzzari; they were assisted by Steve Kohlberg and Carroll... and at Sea-West Studios in Pahoa, Hawaii, veteran recording artist Bradlach Watau cut a new album for Po’Alluma Records on the studio’s 24-track analog recording system to a digital hard-disc recorder; Rick Armer Keffer and Joe Miller produced with Watau, and Keffer mixed. The album is distributed in the U.S. mainland by Navarré Corp.

Please send material for Audio Track to Paul Verna, Pro Audio Technology Editor, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036; fax: 212-566-5585; E-mail: Pverna@billboard.com.
HONG KONG—The realities of life here in the wake of the handover to Chinese rule are becoming more apparent—and what is obvious so far is that one of the biggest factors having an impact on business is not the new communist rulers but a law passed as one of the final acts under the British administration.

New legislation clamping down on parallel imports (Billboard, July 12) has meant rising CD prices in stores here, less choice for consumers, and a new set of business practices for retailers.

In a city where many people were hoping for business as usual in the wake of the handover, the first month of Chi-nese rule has yielded some gristy realities, not the least of which is the clampdown on activity on the courts.

A more practical effect on business in the first month has been the new restrictions on parallel imports, which means that buying music will be harder on the consumer, at least in the short term, as market controls take hold, fewer CD titles are being imported, and those that are on the shelves are being priced higher. While parallel imports have always been subject to control here, new copyright legislation has now outlawed any parallel product brought in without the approval of the local label licensee.

The new law has directly affected long-standing retail import practices here; it criminalizes parallel imports for the first time and reinforces anti-piracy statutes. The changes affect the sale of all copyrighted goods sold in Hong Kong (a sector valued at up to 15% of Hong Kong's $1.7 billion gross domestic product), from toothpaste and lip gloss to wristwatches and recorded music.

Irene Chu, financial controller for Tower Records in Hong Kong, says the new, tougher restrictions may cause problems for retailers. She notes, "With the locally available stock, I don't think we can fill our stores."

That problem will be aggravated for Tower after July 24, when the chain opens a new 1.200-square-meter store in the city's Diamond Hill district. The store will be in the Plaza Hollywood, the largest retail mall on the Kowloon Peninsula.

Chu says that Tower's operating philosophy is predicated on providing a wide consumer choice but notes that the company's intentions are now being frustrated by the labels. "They have the rights, but we can't buy particular titles from them if they determine that the music is not popular here," she says.

HMV's managing director for the Chinese Asia region, Philip Kong, says management at his Hong Kong stores is already planning how it will fill consumer requests by the absence of parallel imports. While the new law "has 'not yet affected shelves," according to Kong, "the fact that we are buying a very wide range of product on a day-to-day basis" means that it will "soon." We are stocking some extra product to give us a bit of a buffer in the transition period," he adds.

The chain has begun notifying consumers that the stores may experience a delay in stock intake because of the duration of supply. "Every customer that buys something from us gets a written notice," Kong says.

The major record companies, which lobbied for the tighter restrictions, are unimpressed. BMG senior VP A Pacific Michael Smellie says the law is a necessary step in establishing the concept of intellectual property here. "Hong Kong has a history of people who sail close to the wind on matters of copyright. The wider community seems to be understanding and making a step in the way that exists in other countries in the world." Smellie adds, "Probably there are some out there who think parallel-importing goods is just the nature of Hong Kong trade."

J.C. Giouw, Singapore's and Southeast Asian president and region al director for the International Federation of Phonographic Industry, was one of the few major companies that expressed support for the new law.

"The parallel-importation restriction in the law will actually make sure the Chinese companies develop their own market rather than develop the Hong Kong market and for profit," Giouw says. "So far, parallel imports from Hong Kong into China is not a problem. But at least our companies in Hong Kong will now be more bold about exporting titles into China. It will help to increase the number of titles being imported into China, which will help companies in both markets."

Peter Cheung, assistant director of intellectual property with the Hong Kong government's Intellectual Property Department, brushes aside criticism of the new law, calling it "a very important step for Hong Kong. It is very modern, a very altruistic law in its view of intellectual property."

Under the new law, any product imported into the territory by any entity apart from the local licensee or the copyright holder within 18 months of obtaining registration is automatically classified as an illegal copy.

Every infringement of the law carries a maximum fine of $45,000 for the first offense and $100,000 for a second offense. The law does not distinguish between parallel imports and pirated goods, though Giouw described the new importation law as "a clause that states that if the local licensee cannot supply or chooses not to supply the title, then the retailer's liability is waived."

Other significant changes are en-

(Continued on page 38)

Singapore Instagram Problem

BY PHILIP CHEAH

Singapore—The authorities here have responded to music industry calls to curb the growing piracy problem with a July 18 police raid on a major pirate syndicate. The action resulted in a seizure of more than 70,000 counterfeited CDs worth $460,000 (S$645,000).

Altogether, 13 arrests were made, including the alleged syndicate leader and a marketing manager of a CD plant here.

Leong May See, regional counsel for Asia of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), contends that "the syndicate supplied about half of the pirated CDs in the Singapore market."

The raid was carried out by the Criminal Investigation Department was a culmination of six months of investigative work, says Leong, who represents the department's director, Chua Chkin Kiat. He comments, "We are taking a serious view of piracy, especially futile dealing in manufacturing and distribution of CDs."

Those infringing copyrights can be fined up to $100,000 and jailed up to five years.

The raid comes at a time when there is growing evidence that pirated CDs are being exported to Europe from Singapore.

The music industry here, represented by the Singapore Phonogram and Videogram Assn. (SPVA), a group of 27 record companies, and the IFPI have expressed their view to the government that foreign nations will soon call for action on Singapore's part.

The music industry here, represented by the Singapore Phonogram and Videogram Assn. (SPVA), a group of 27 record companies, and the IFPI have expressed their view to the government that foreign nations will soon call for action on Singapore's part.

The law was introduced by a European country," says IFPI's regional director Giouw Jui Chian, "that they estimated that 60% of the pirated CDs were imported from Singapore in the last six months."

Giouw adds that there are eight CD manufacturers here who have a total capacity of 84 million discs per annum. Of that total, he estimates that 4 million to 5 million are manufactured without appropriate licenses.

As a result, SPVAs chairman Peter Lau says, "pirated versions of new CDs are released within a few days of the advertisement announcing the new album."

The IFPI reports that pirate product accounted for 30% of the Singapore market in the first six months of this year. This is nearly double last year's figure of 16%.

About 20,000 pirated CDs were seized in the first six months of this year, while 17 CD pirates were convicted and fined a total of $470,000 Singapore dollars ($292,000). Three were given jail sentences.

While the fines and seizures of pirated CDs this year have already increased over 1996, the music industry believes that the Singapore authorities can do more.

For instance, the labels propose that:

• police should investigate distribution and manufacturing sources of pirate product instead of targeting only the retail sector.

• CD manufacturers should use identification codes to help customs officers seize unauthorized product; and

• convicted pirates should be barred from founding new operations, as they often reopen at the same site a few days after a raid.

The music industry had been lobbying the authorities hard throughout this year for greater action on the issue. Labels and other areas of the industry are concerned that growing piracy will stifle investment.

Stuart Fraser, HMV's regional operations manager, says, "The continuing piracy problem in Singapore seriously jeopardizes future expansion plans for companies like HMV."

MIIDEM Unhappy With U.S. Cuban Ban

BY HOWELL LLEWELLYN

MADRID—A ban on Cuban residents and their third-party representatives from Sep tember's MIDEM Latin America and Caribbean Music Market is "regrettable," says Xavier Roy, chief executive of organizer the Reed MIDEM Organisation.

But in MIDEM's first official reaction to the controversial ban, Roy says that a local anti-Cuba res olution makes it impossible for the Reed MIDEM Organisation not to invoke artists or industry executives based in Cuba.

According to Mayco Villafana, VP of communications with the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau, the resolution supports federal legislation limiting trade with Cuba and states that the country will not provide funding for any company doing business with Cuban companies.

The resolution prohibits the Metropolitan Dade County government, which comprises Miami Beach and 29 other Florida cities, from entering any contracts with firms violating the federal Cuban Democracy Act of 1992.

The city of Miami Beach, which is located in Metropolitan Dade County, runs the convention center where MIDEM will be held Sept. 8-11. According to Villafana, the local government is providing approxi mately $125,000 in funding to MIDEM from the local community.

"The majority of that funding is coming from the government," says Villafana. "The resolution may put us in jeopardy MIDEM receiving that" (Continued on page 38)
BMG’s European Execs Get Up To Speed At Crete Conference

CRETE, Greece—BMG Entertainment International brought together its European managing directors, combined with many of their marketing and A&R staff, for a conference June 8-12 near Elounda, Crete. Approximately 150 people attended, including guests from BMG’s affiliated labels, for a round of product presentations, workshops, and artist showcases. Among the performing acts were La Bouche, Olly, 'N Sync, the Soweto String Quartet, Deni Hines, and Aika. The conference was hosted by BMG’s three European chiefs: Arnold Bahlmann, senior VP of central Europe; John Preston, chairman of U.K. and Ireland; and Thomas Stein, president of the GSA territories. (Photos: Larry Busacca.)

Testing a local brew or two, from left, are Frank Aeriot, GM of BMG Ariola Belgium; Matthias Gibson, managing director of BMG Ariola Munich; Susanne Schuleenburg, deputy managing director of BMG Ariola Munich; Mike McCormack, A&R director of RCA Records U.K.; and Ronnie Meister, international repertoire marketing head for BMG Ariola Hamburg.

‘N Sync sang during one of the BMG product presentations, then spent time in the company of its hosts. Shown in the front row, from left, are the group’s Chris Kirkpatrick, Lance Bass, and Joey Fatone. Behind them, from left, are BMG Entertainment International president/CEO Rudi Gassner; J.C. Chasez of ‘N Sync; John Preston; Arnold Bahlmann; Justin Timberlake of ‘N Sync; Louis Pearlman, the group’s manager; and Thomas Stein.

BMG execs get up to speed at Crete conference.
### Japan

**WEEK 15**

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<th>Artist</th>
<th>Week 15 Rank</th>
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<td>Hidamari Ura</td>
<td>Uruhaha</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Nobody</td>
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<td>C U When You There</td>
<td>Coolio Feat</td>
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<td>No Heart</td>
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### U.K.

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<td>Sex</td>
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HITS OF THE WORLD

EUROCHART 07/03/97

MUSIC & WEEKS

NEW ZEALAND

MUSIC & WEEKS

THE LATEST MUSIC NEWS FROM AROUND THE PLANET

EDITED BY DAVID SINCLAIR

TURKEY: Tarkan, the boy wonder of Turkish pop, released his third album, “Olurum Sana” (“I’ll Die For You”), July 18, and according to Uyar Atas, production assistant at Tarkan’s record label, Istanbul’s Plak, retail orders have already exceeded the initial pressing of 1 million audiocassettes. In addition, 80,000 CDs are ready for distribution. It has been three years since Tarkan’s last album, “Acapulco” (“You’re Worth It”) and the last time, press interviews have been rare and performances even rarer. But the singer’s absence from the spotlight has only added to his mystique. The new album is marked by better production values and Tarkan’s growing confidence in his abilities. But, musically, there are no changes to report and “Olurum Sana” draws on very much the same lilting waltz style that made “Acapulco” such a spontaneous success. Tarkan co-wrote two of the tracks on the new album with Sezen Aksu, the grande dame of Turkish pop, who wrote last album’s most successful song, “Hepsi Senin Mis?” (“Is It All Yours?”), and even the cover artwork of the two albums is noticeably similar. Tarkan is planning a huge success. But whether it becomes the defining album of the summer here remains to be seen.

ADRIAN HIGGS

DENMARK: Taking his lead from American shock jock Howard Stern and UK’s radio/personality Chris Evans, the country’s premier DJ, Casper Christiansen, has stirred up a storm with his Friday-morning show on pubcaster Danmarks Radio’s main channel, PL. Accompanied on-air by his three mates, collectively known as Taksesholdet (goon squad), Christiansen regards nothing as sacred and everything a fair game for satire. Many references are below the belt, and among the less questionable catch phrases that he has popularized here is the old Beavis & Butt-head “stupid,” “kink.” Now Christiansen and his chums have become recording stars in their own right. Taksesholdet’s “Vi Sparkrer Raw” (“We Kick Ass”) on the Universal label, went straight to the top of the chart upon its June 11 release and was still No.1 on the chart dated July 19. Certified gold (25,000 copies) upon release and platinum (50,000) after three weeks, the album was made in conjunction with Danish radio and TV, and has taken more than 1,000,000 to capitalize on the show’s massive success. The album features tracks played on the radio show, telephone conversations with people as far afield as Kenya and Japan, and several sketches first aired by the squad on what has become the most popular radio show in the country.

CHARLES FERRO

SOUTH AFRICA: Few artists typify the struggle for an authentic musical culture more than the late Johnny Phillips. Just two years after his untimely death in a road accident, Shifty Records, through licenses Tie Bang!, has released a collection of solo performances by Phillips, recorded in 1994. The 11 songs on the album, titled “Soul Or” (“you being an Afrikaans word for “man”), were previously unavailable, and such tracks as “Africa Is Dying” and “Light Me A Light,” featuring Phillips accompanying himself on either guitar or piano, reveal the artist in an intimate, introspective mood. During the turbulent 1980s, Phillips was an unswerving believer in the possibility of an authentic South African culture, one in which even the Afrikaans language moved out of the apartheid leper and into a home-grown cultural consciousness. As part of this, Phillips adopted the persona of Bernoldus Niemand, and for the album “Who Is Bernoldus Niemand?” (“nienmand” or “no one”) formed the landmark and signature song “Hou My Vas Korporal” (“Hold Me Tight, Corporal”). Many of Phillips’ songs were banned by the South African Broadcasting Corp. during the apartheid years, preventing him from winning the critical acclaim he deserved. “This album shows the real depth of talent he had,” says Tie Tie Bang!’s co-founder William Hesselman. “It’s a fitting tribute to James.”

DIANE CORZIER

JAMAICA: The achievements of producer Leo “Scratch” Perry are celebrated with a magnificently done three-CD box set, “Arkology” (Island Jamaica), covering his greatest work from the 1970s. The man who set up his Black Ark studio in Kingston in 1974 marks the release of the lavish set, which comes with a 48-page booklet, by returning to the stage after a lengthy absence with a headlining appearance Sunday (5) at the Essential 97 Weekender Roots Day in London. The boxed set includes reggae classics produced by Perry for the Upsetters, Max Romeo, the Congos, and Junior Murvin, alongside numerous rare outtakes and unreleased songs. The collection shows how Perry used both the finest Jamaican session musicians and his mastery of studio technology to create rich, dub-laden, multilayered sound textures still not bettered today despite the huge technical advances of the past 20 years. Remarkably, it was all done on rudimentary 4-track equipment. “But I was picking up another 20 tracks from the extra-terrestrial squad,” Perry says, mysteriously.

NEIL WILLIAMSON

NETHERLANDS: Mecado is best known as a label that concentrates on compilation albums in various dance genres such as house, acid and trance, but recently the company has been living up to its name (Mecado is an acronym for Music and Entertainment Co, and Artist Development Organisation) by developing the careers of “real” artists on its subsidiary labels, notably the Movement imprint. One of its most striking successes has been Amsterdam-based act PM Project, which Mecado brought up in house and hip-hop, then signed to Independent Leap Records, PM Project’s New York-style dance track “You Know I Want You” topped the dance chart here for three weeks. Produced by Reijerse & Bervoets and remixed for radio by Jean & Peran, the number and its accompanying video received substantial media attention at home, while licensing deals have been secured with Mega Records in Scandinavia and Foul Air in France. Deals are being negotiated in Germany and Asia.

ROBERT TILLI

MALAYSIA 07/03/97

HONG KONG (FBI Hong Kong Special) 07/03/97

IRELAND (Irishcharts.Net) 07/03/97

SWITZERLAND (Media Control Switzerland) 08/03/97

AUSTRIA (Greek IEK/Kosmopolita Top 40) 07/03/97

SINGLES

1. I’LL BE MISSING YOU PUFF DADDY & FAITH EVANS (FEATURING 112) 1995
2. EVERYBODY (BACKSTREET’S BACK) BACKSTREET BOYS 1995
3. 10 NEW
4. SAMBA DE JANARDO BELLINO Virgin 1995
5. 3 MIDDYB KARLIE MUSIC
6. 10 NEW
7. 10 NEW
8. 10 NEW
9. 10 NEW
LOVELY NANA Virgin 1995
10. 10 NEW

SINGLES

1. I’LL BE MISSING YOU PUFF DADDY & FAITH EVANS (FEATURING 112) 1995
2. NANNY HASSEL HANSON 1995
3. 1 MIDDYB KARLIE MUSIC
4. 2 WEE JAY STAY ALIVE OYDEEZ JEAN 1995
5. 7 BITCH MIDERD BY W. BRACKS 1995
6. 9 NEW
7. 9 NEW
8. 9 NEW
9. 9 NEW
10. 9 NEW

SINGLES

1. I’LL BE MISSING YOU PUFF DADDY & FAITH EVANS (FEATURING 112) 1995
2. ECUADOR SASH! 1995
3. 2 WEE JAY STAY ALIVE OYDEEZ JEAN 1995
4. 9 SAMBA DE JANARDO BELLINO Virgin 1995
5. 7 BITCH MIDERD BY W. BRACKS 1995
6. 9 NEW
7. 9 NEW
8. 9 NEW
9. 9 NEW
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9. 9 NEW
10. 9 NEW
BERLIN—BMG is consolidating its Berlin-based labels into a new business unit, BMG Berlin Musik GmbH, to be run by André Sellienheit, currently managing director of Hansa Musikproduktion, one of the major labels in Germany. Hansa is also the home of internationally active acts: BMG UK Music Publishing, headed by managing director Hartwig May, has a significant interest in the German market and has signed many local songwriters. BMG’s chief deputy in Berlin will be Christian Wolff, previously head of marketing and promotion for Hansa.

**MIDEM UNHAPPY WITH U.S. CUBAN BAN**

(Continued from page 24)

money” if the trade organizers choose to allow Cuban artists and record companies to exhibit at the event.

Even if MIDEM chooses to forgo its funding from the local government, the country’s economic woes and artists to the event, problems still might arise because the convention center and other facilities are a turnkey event so they are either owned by the government or they have their own facilities. “They could explore that option,” Villafana says, “but it means a high legislative hurdle.”

U.S. legislation limiting trade with Cuba, such as the Helms-Burton Act, has attracted opposition from the European Union, Canada, Mexico, and many other nations that trade with the government of Fidel Castro. Roy refers to the “especially sensitive situation” in Florida, and particularly Dade County, “where there is a high concentration of Cuban exiles.”

He adds that MIDEM is obliged to respect local policies. Villafana says the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau notified MIDEM in early July that it “will not support any participation at the Reed MIDEM Latin America and Caribbean Music Conference in the Cuban government, Cuban music industry, Cuban musicians, and/or third-party representation of the Cuban music industry or government.”

According to Villafana, the issue will be discussed with the trade organizers at preliminary meetings held this past winter during the MIDEM convention in Cannes. One man with links to the Cuban industry who will be attending is Teddy Bautista, executive president of Spanish publishers’ rights society SGAE, whose 41,000 members include 400 Cubans.

He has already reflected the feeling of many Spanish labels that a trip to Cuba could benefit Cuban resident artists, such as multimodal BMG Ariola, by saying that a Latin American and agricultural event without Cuban input would be “incomplete and impoverished” (Billboard, July 20).

Roy says the MIDEM organization is deeply unhappy about being in a position where it is obliged to exclude Cuban participation. According to Roy, the attendees’ “Music is international and knows no borders. On top of this, MIDEM has never been a policy group and it is an organization which validates each and every musical trend and talent; MIDEM is in favor of cultural exchanges in all areas.”

Roy adds, “As organizers of MIDEM, we find ourselves, for the first time, in a most regrettable position where we are not able to welcome all the professionals—musicians, artists, and authors—who would like to be present. We certainly hope that the cultural side of this situation, with particular emphasis on music, will change in the near future.”

Villafana says the bureau recognizes both sides of the issue. “We empathize with the record companies, who have legitimate concerns about the translation from label to record company comes at a time when Hansa Musik Produktion is looking back on its most successful fiscal year ever. Hansa has tripled its revenues in five years.

It has been able to establish itself internationally with three national acts: No Mercy, La Bouche, and Real McCoy, the latter having sold more than 1 million records worldwide, all closely followed by No Mercy, which has moved 6 million units, says the company. La Bouche, which like No Mercy is produced by Frank Farian, spent weeks at the top of the German singles charts and also entered the U.S. top 10.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s, the Berlin company succeeded in making acts such as Boney M., Milli Vanilli, and Modern Talking international stars. Established in 1964 as the first independent label to be modeled on a U.S. format, Berlin was the first label for German pop for many years. The careers of Drafi Deutscher, Gunter Gabriel, Frank Milli, Juliane Werdling, Bernd Chervey, Roland Kaiser, and Wolfgang Petry were all built in Berlin.

In recent months, Petry’s career has hit an all-time high, with his album “Alles’ selling more than 1 million copies and making it to the top of the German charts.

Among the labels in the new unit, which includes BMG-Austria, and the 1992/1993 international hit is “Midnight Express” by Spanish singer Nena, who has also recorded under the name of American singer Nena. The album has sold over 1 million copies and has been certified gold in Spain.

In addition, the new unit has a significant presence in Germany, including the new BMG label, BMG Berlin Musik GmbH, which is run by André Sellienheit, currently managing director of Hansa Musikproduktion, one of the major labels in Germany. Hansa is also the home of internationally active acts:

**MIDEM UNHAPPY WITH U.S. CUBAN BAN**

(Continued from page 24)

money” if the trade organizers choose to allow Cuban artists and record companies to exhibit at the event.

Even if MIDEM chooses to forgo its funding from the local government, the country’s economic woes and artists to the event, problems still might arise because the convention center and other facilities are a turnkey event so they are either owned by the government or they have their own facilities. “They could explore that option,” Villafana says, “but it means a high legislative hurdle.”

U.S. legislation limiting trade with Cuba, such as the Helms-Burton Act, has attracted opposition from the European Union, Canada, Mexico, and many other nations that trade with the government of Fidel Castro. Roy refers to the “especially sensitive situation” in Florida, and particularly Dade County, “where there is a high concentration of Cuban exiles.”

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**IMPORT LAW HITS U.K. STORES**

(Continued from page 41)

hanced border measures to enable copyright owners to keep suspected products from entering the market. Local licensees and copyright owners also have been able to delay inbound and outbound traffic so that search and seizure can be carried out.

The author of parallel importation in Hong Kong’s $200 million record market varies from retailer to retailer. HMV’s four Hong Kong stores say they have always been forced to handle the situation because of the large volume of stock that is at risk from confiscation at the border authorities.

Although the recent raid by Hong Kong border authorities was a shock to the music industry, it was not unexpected. In 1993, HMV’s Hong Kong stores were granted special powers to search and seize products, and it has been estimated that the raid was a public demonstration of the new powers.

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WEA Lays Foundation To Build Base For Kingston's Weeping Tile

**BY LARRY LeBLANC**

TORONTO—Warner Music Canada hopes to expand the cult fan base here for the Kingston, Ontario-based alternative band Weeping Tile with the group's sophomore release. The album, "Valentino," is due Aug. 26 from WEA. Its first single, "South Of Me," will be serviced to Canadian album rock, modern rock, and college radio Aug. 11. A video of the track, directed by Jeff Silbersky, is being serviced to Canadian video channels MuchMusic and Quebec's Musique+.

Plus on the album's release date, there are no plans as yet to issue the set outside Canada.

To set up "Valentino" in Canada, Warner Music Canada put up street posters in major cities in the month before release and will distribute fliers at four Great Big Picnic festival dates: Aug. 1 in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Saturday (2) in Moncton, New Brunswick; Sunday (3) in Halifax, Nova Scotia; and Aug. 16 in St. John's, Newfoundland. The shows will also feature Canadian labelmates Great Big Sea, Wide Mouth Mason, and Blue Rodeo.

Closer to the album's release date, Warner Music Canada will launch a print advertising campaign that will include ads in mainstream newspapers in major Canadian cities and such national youth magazines as Chart and Campus Canada. There will also be a three- to four-month ad campaign in several street publications, according to Candy Higgins, marketing manager of domestic repertoire for Warner Music Canada.

"We've always done well with Weeping Tile," says Gary LaValle, owner of Zap Records in Kingston. "They’re local favorites. [Lead singer Sarah Harmer] certainly has star quality. She’s sweet and endearing but can get onstage and rock. They’re going to do well with this new album."

According to Higgins, the band's 1996 WEA album, "Cold Snap," has sold 10,000 units in Canada. Released in the U.S. by TAG/Atlantic, it barely broke the surface.

Warner Music Canada's marketing and promotion of "Cold Snap" was restrained because the band had wanted to focus more on touring to build a Canadian fan base. Still, the track "UFO Rosie" received widespread airplay at college and modern rock radio.

"They wanted to develop musically in an organic way to get a [national audience] foothold with a [follow-up album to] expand beyond that," says Higgins.

In support of "Cold Snap," Weeping Tile toured for 18 months. This included dates opening for fellow Canadians the Watchmen and Blue Rodeo and doing its own Canadian tour last year.

"We put about 150,000 clicks [kilometers] playing in front of other bands’ crowds and doing our own tour," says Harmer. "Having our own [Canadian club] tour was great because people came to see a Weeping Tile show."

"We’re now looking to raise the profile of the act [in Canada]," says Higgins. "They now have a national audience, and this is a commercially acceptable and radio-friendly record. Their fan base is a very strong and [is] growing to immediately [buy] this record, but it’s now time to introduce people who haven’t been aware of their music to the band."

"Valentino" is a contending record,” declares Kim Cooke, VP of A&R at Warner Music Canada. "In many ways, it’s the band’s first [label] record because they began to record "Cold Snap" before they were signed [with Warner Music Canada]. There’s been tremendous growth [with the band] since that album."

Cook signed Weeping Tile in 1995 after being impressed by the band’s independently released cassette "veep," issued a year earlier. "I heard ‘veep,’ and Sarah just got me as a vocalist and a songwriter," he recalls.

"‘veep’ was recorded six months after I got together with a few musicians as a trio," recalls Harmer, the band’s member of the original lineup. "I had these acoustic-based narrative songs and wanted to get them on tape and had no real ambition of anybody hearing them. We sold 400 or 500 cassette copies at our shows around southern Ontario and with local vinyl vendors. Just as we were preparing to release ‘Cold Snap,’ we signed with Warner. We went with a major label because we wanted to be able to concentrate on [making] music."

Warner Music Canada released a CD version of "veep" in 1996, which has sold 4,987 units, according to Higgins.

The members of Weeping Tile live near Kingston, far from Canada’s traditional music centers of Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, and Halifax. Kingston’s potent alternative music scene, however, has given birth to such acts as the Tragically Hip, the Mahones, the Hellbilies, the Inbreds, and Van Allen Belt.

Harmer and guitarist Luther Wright share a farmhouse outside of the city; the members who joined since “Cold Snap,” drummer Camille Giroux and Sticky, live in Kingston and nearby Coburg, respectively.

As with the band’s previous records, "Valentino" is self-produced. The album was recorded in April at the Funhouse Studio in Kingston and mixed last May at Phase 1 Studio in Toronto. The album was engineered by Mark Haines—whom the band met while mixing “Cold Snap” at the Smart Studio in Madison, Wis.—and mixed by Eric Ratz.

"We haven’t ruled out ever working with a producer because there’s so much to learn from different people, but it hasn’t seemed to be the thing to do yet," says Harmer. "We’ve got enough opinions going on between us that we figure we can sink or swim on our own."

For "Valentino," the band members sought to record in analog as much as possible. "The album really has that fat analog feel," says Harmer. "We recorded [directly] on 2-inch tape on a Studer recorder and used Neve outboard amps, and I mostly used an AKG-47 microphone for my vocals. We listened to [the results] on the Sprint Soundcraft [console] board after it went on the tape. We got a real solid, warm sound."

With the exception of "Chicken," co-written with Wright, "Valentino" was written by Harmer. Many of the songs were developed through freestyle, stream-of-consciousness songwriting. Once Harmer came up with a rough-edged version of a song, band members then contributed to arrangements “through jamming-out ideas,” according to Harmer.

"A lot of ‘Valentino’ is me singing words that go with music rather than coming up with the words first and then putting it to music,” says Harmer. "I generally get the melody pretty quickly. My thing is scrambling for lyrics. When we came to do the vocals, I was definitely piecing a lot of things together. Random thoughts are grammatically joined, but they are still quite personal. Country songs like ‘Judy G,’ ‘Old Perfume,’ and ‘Goin’ Out’ were fairly realized by the time I played them to the band. Songs like ‘Chicken’ and ‘I’m Late’ are more throwaway fun."

Referring to the album title, Harmer says, "We did our first demos [for the album] on Valentine’s Day weekend, so when we made dubs of our first seven songs we called it ‘Valentine.’ For the album cover, we’ve used a photo Luther took of me in the studio—it’s really blurry, showing me playing guitar—and there’s a heart-shaped record on the wall, upside down in the background. When we were thinking of a name, ‘Valentino’ came back to us."

Pursuing dialogue, listening to one another, reacting correctly, finding common ground – something that often seems so simple for music-makers is not so easy in other areas of classical music: good harmony.

That’s why musicians, composers, music educators, representatives of record companies, music publishers, the music retail trade, broadcasters, concert organizers and cultural politicians all meet at Klassik Komm., to discuss new opportunities and strategies and to create the scope for activities and initiatives.

You should be there too.

The radio station Echo Sound records would like to congratulate Klassik Komm. on its 20th year, and wish good wifness to the conference and the Klassik Komm. The conference runs from 26 to 28 in Hamburg Messe, the convention for classical music September 26-28, 1997

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Congratulations on 10 years of Hits...and you're Still Smokin'

From your friends...The Epic Records Group

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n 1987, a pint-sized, Jamaican-American rapper named Eric “Eazy-E” Wright started an indie label, Ruthless Records, that aimed to rock the world with its extreme poetic discourse and tense lyrical madness. Its first albums invented an alternative sound within a genre that was already on the rise. The records, recorded in a garage on the outskirts of Compton, California, were an instant hit.

The records, released in 1987, were a sensation. The world was taken by surprise as it listened to the rise of the N.W.A. and its founder, Eazy-E. The group's sound was raw and unapologetic, and it was a reflection of the inner-city streets where the group was raised.

Eazy-E's career was marked by controversy. He was the focal point of the documentary “Straight Outta Compton,” which explored his rise to fame and the impact of his music on society. The film was a critical and commercial success, and it brought Eazy-E's story to a global audience.

Eazy-E's legacy is still felt today. His music continues to influence new generations of rappers, and his influence on the music industry cannot be overstated. Eazy-E's story is a testament to the power of music to bring change to the world.
Dear Friends

The words "thank you" can sometimes seem futile, but there is no better way for me to express my gratitude for your help in making Ruthless Records the label it is today.

So as Ruthless Records celebrates its 10th Anniversary, I would first like to thank all the Ruthless artists, producers, and my wonderful staff for your relentless efforts and contributions to this milestone.

Thank you to radio and retail for your tireless and consistent efforts on behalf of our artists. A special thank you goes to all of our consumers whose support and commitment to Ruthless' artists has been the most vital part of our Ruthless legacy.

As the Ruthless family continues to grow, you can be confident we will continue to supply you with quality music and cutting edge artists for decades to come.

Sincerely,

Tomica Woods-Wright
President/CEO

TENTH ANNIVERSARY
www.americanradiohistory.com
BEYOND GANGSTAS

Ruthless gained much of its notoriety from the reality-based rap style it invented and thoroughly marketed by digging deep into the asphalt and rubbing against the grain. It successfully sold a crew of self-described "Compton hard heads" who kept it real by being their own raw selves and releasing other hard-edged artists such as Tanie B., Hoes With Attitude and Above The Law. But the Ruthless reputation was also built on the backs of less controversial artists, a fact many critics (and fans) of the label fail to remember.

They forget that back in its early years, the Ruthless roster also featured the likes of soulful shouter Michelle (whose first single "No Hooch" opened the valley of rap rhythm preceded by Princess of hip-hop soul Mary J. Blige's by several years); J.J. Fad and whose popcorn poetry supplied bassy escapism in the darkened land of the good groove; and the D.O.C. (whose lyrics sounded rough without giving off the impression of pure sonic assassination).

Ruthless Records stuck a middle finger in the face of authority and started a sonic revolution that came to be known as West Coast "gangsta rap."

Following her husband Eric "Eazy-E" Wright's death, and amid rumors and conflicting legal battles, Tomica Woods-Wright is holding strong in the center of a storm. As the president of Ruthless Records, she's keeping the business he founded in the family and maintaining his legacy.

Since Eazy-E's passing, Wright hasn't spoken much to the press. Unlike her husband, her face isn't peering out of hot press video screens or in sensational tabloid headlines about gangsta-rap mayhem. Without fanfare, she has quietly handled business, carrying the torch her husband lit while attempting to spark a few flames of her own.

What special projects do you have planned to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Ruthless Records?

We'll have a compilation album that's probably coming out around Christmas, although I haven't decided yet what we're gonna do with that. We'll also have a video compilation, and there's a documentary about Eric's life that's almost completed. Also, we'll probably throw a big party at the end of the year. So we have a few things planned. I also want to introduce people to me as well as the new people in the company, letting them know what we have in store for the future and making those business contacts that will go to the next level.

Since Eric's death, you haven't been very visible. No one really knows who you are.

I haven't given that many interviews because of when he passed and how. I never planned to be in this position, and there were a lot of court things that were going on. Also, I was pregnant with my third child. I had a lot of issues in addition to the mourning process. I really didn't have time to speak. And all that really brings is more tension, with all the situations surrounding Eric's death and this company, and people wondering where the hell I came from. That really wasn't needed. I plan to be a little bit more visible now, to give people an understanding of my background, where I come from and what my experience is in this industry, as well as what I plan on doing with this company. But I'm really a private person.

Where do you and the company stand in terms of the lawsuits?

It's at a point now where things are under control, but there are still a few issues that need to be dealt with. For the most part, though, there's no one issue with someone from nowhere saying, "I own half of the company" or something like that. There were a lot of accusations and a lot of things jumped up, but the stressful things are gone. There's naturally gonna be litigation going on when you deal with a company in this type of business. But, for the most part, the headaches are gone with one exception. That's a Jerry Heller suit. He claims he's owed money from this company. He doesn't accept the fact that he was fired by my husband before my husband passed. In cases like this, some people look for settlement value, but I don't. There's a battle that's gonna be taking place, but it's not something that's gonna interrupt the function of this company. That's just basically someone trying to get something they're not entitled to, in my opinion. If the suit wasn't against me it would've been against Eric.

What was your career before assuming the role of president of Ruthless?

I was the executive assistant to the president of Motown, Clarence Avant, since 1988. I started off as his receptionist, went on maternity leave and came back as his assistant on a trial basis. It stayed that way until 1995. That's like an on-going joke between me and him. But I sat under him as his assistant, and at the same time I was Eric's girlfriend.

I figure you were gaining a sort of dual education about the music business from these two very different men.

From Eric, I basically learned game—street

Continued on page R-14
1963 - 1995

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ENDLESS CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH THE WORDS IN YOUR MUSIC TO THE HIP HOP CULTURE.
FROM YOUR FAMILY AT PRIORITY RECORDS.
N.W.A

The fathers of what is now termed "gangsta rap," N.W.A (Niggaz Wit Attitude) consisted of Andre "Dr. Dre" Young, Eric "Eazy-E" Wright, O'Shea "Ice Cube" Jackson, Lorenzo "MC Ren" Patterson, Antoine "DJ Yella" Caray and Tim "Arabian Prince" Nazzal. The group popped up on the scene with the 1988 debut of "N.W.A & The Posse" and the runaway hit album "Straight Outta Compton." Both sets candidly espoused the harsh realities of street life in Compton and South Central L.A. and set the West Coast ablaze with singles like "Straight Outta Compton," which was banned from MTV, and the nationally controversial — Tha Police. The group's subsequent sets were 1990's "100 Miles And Runnin'" and 1991's "E.F.I.L.4ZAGGIN." Its successful run helped pave the way for the solo careers of Eazy-E, Ice Cube, Dr. Dre and MC Ren.

Bone Thugs-N-Harmony

Cleveland natives Layzie, Krayzie, Wish and Bizzy Bone were immediately signed to Ruthless after performing for Eazy-E backstage following his concert in their hometown. All other projects were shifted back to the back burner, and the 1994 EP "Creepin On Ah Come Up" shook the rap world and made Bone the highest-selling rap group of the year. The set featured the singles "Thuggish Ruggish Bone" and "Fo Tha Love Of Money," which guested Eazy. The group's first full-length set, "E 1999 Eternal," debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 chart in 1995 and spawned the hits "First Of The Month," "E 1999" and "Tha Crossroads," whose video was inspired by and dedicated to the late Eazy-E. "Tha Crossroads" marks the group's biggest single to date, debuting at No. 1 on the Hot 100 Singles chart and remaining on the Hot 100 chart for 102 weeks. Bone's crossover success continues with its inclusion on soundtracks: "Set It Off" ("Dayz Of Our Lives") and "Batman & Robin" ("Look Into My Eyes"). Continued on page R-8

It Wasn't Always Easy, But Eric Wright Built A Legacy That Lives On

asked in 1993 what he would be doing at age 40, rap entrepreneur Eric "Eazy-E" Wright replied—slowly, softly—"I don’t know," before adding, "I wish I had me a big company, as big as Motown. My own. Doing everything—distribution, pressing...everything.

Ultimately, Wright would never get the chance to realize his pop-life dream. On March 26, 1995, at the age of 31, he died from complications associated with the AIDS virus. At the time of his passing, however, the innovative West Coast businessman and rapper—he was the owner of a high-pitched, street-savvy voice—was firmly on his way toward reaching his ambitious goal.

As the founder and president of Ruthless Records, as well as the leader of N.W.A, Eazy-E was recognized by fans and peers as a restless visionary. He was the spark that ignited the sound revolution that came to be known as "gangsta rap." And just before his death, he was still actively discovering and developing next-level talents like Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, whose song and video "Tha Crossroads" is, perhaps, the most explicitly spiritual cut ever to emerge in hip-hop.

Eazy-E never compromised, always living his life the way he wanted, always doing and saying whatever was on his mind without regard for what anyone thought. Of his and N.W.A.'s creativity, he once offered, "We just wanted to do something new and different and talk about what we wanted to talk about. People [used to say], 'You can't talk about things like that [or you won't] get a [record] deal.' I’d be like, 'Fuck the deal; I’ll just wait.' I’d rather take nothing and do what I want to."

His upfront honesty was evident even when he announced to the world that he had AIDS. He was unaware of the disease's horrific presence, attributing the breathing difficulties he was having to an asthma condition. His condition was already terminal when he was admitted to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. It was too late to do anything to prolong his life, but almost immediately he went public, via a letter to his fans.

In a hip-hop world where many felt AIDS didn’t affect them, Wright's announcement was a serious wake-up call. He wasn’t gay; he wasn’t an intravenous drug user. The message was that he was a brother from da block, and he still got AIDS.

A self-described former drug dealer, Wright went from the street game to the rap game after forming N.W.A and Ruthless Records. His first record was the Ice Cube-penned "Boyz N Tha Hood," and he has said that another jam, "Dope Man," was all about him and his former career. After those tracks went ghetto gold, he negotiated a distribution deal with Priority Records and put cut a solo set, "Eazy Duz It," and N.W.A.'s groundbreaking "Straight Outta Compton," albums that were packed to overflowing with vivid, third-generation Staggelee poses. Wright and Co. were detailing varied street scenes, including gang wars, pimp boldness and grimy gangsta games. "Straight Outta Compton" spawned more hits and went on to sell more than 1 million units in less than a year.

Fame suited Wright to a tee, but stardom wasn't exactly a joyride for him. While other gangsta rappers, like Ice-T, were being condemned by right-wing conservatives, Wright was listed as a contributor to the Republican party after paying $2,500 to attend a fundraising dinner. "I was curious," he said simply, when asked about the contribution. His hard-edged credibility wasn't harmed. His honesty is what made it all good. —HN
Bone
thugs-n-harmony

THE ART OF WAR

DOUBLE ALBUM IN STORES JULY 29TH
J.J. FAD
The Los Angeles-based trio of Juana “M.C.J.B.” Burns, Dana “Baby-O” Birks and Michelle “Sassy” Franklin perfected the bubblegum style of rap with the release of the gold single “Supersonic” in 1988. The breakneck rhyme delivery on the single earned J.J. Fad (which stands for Just Jammin’ Fresh And Deej) crossover success and a Grammy nomination—the label’s first. The group has produced two albums: the platinum-selling “Supersonic” and “Not Just A Fad.”

ABOVE THE LAW
As N.W.A forged the path for the gangsta rap scene, Above The Law—Hutch, aka Cold 187um, KMG and Total K-Oss—pioneered the player rhyme style and baller scene with the release of “Livin Like Hustlers,” which spawned the hit “Murder Rap.” Utilizing mostly funk samples, the trio’s subsequent projects, 1991’s “Vocally Pimpin’,” 1993’s “Black Mafia Life,” 1994’s “Uncle Sam’s Curse” and 1996’s “Time Will Reveal” set the standards for the G-funk musicality today. A new project from the act is forthcoming.

THE D.O.C.
The D.O.C. gained notoriety after penning lyrics for N.W.A’s “Straight Outta Compton” and being featured on the track “Parental Discretion.” The Texas rapper’s solo project, “Nobody Does It Better,” was released in 1992 and peaked at No. 1 on the Top R&B Albums chart. The D.O.C.-produced set spawned the hits “It’s Funky Enough,” “The Formula,” and “The D.O.C. And The Doctor.”

MC REN
N.W.A alumni MC Ren was recruited by Eazy E straight out of high school to be a part of the group. Ren was the only member to stay on the label after the group broke up, and his solo EP “Kizz My Black Ass,” was released in 1992 and peaked at No. 10 on the Top R&B Albums chart. His second project, “Shock Of The Hour,” reached No. 1 on the same chart and spawned the hit “Mayday On The Front Line,” which was featured in the rap-spoof film “CB4.” His upcoming album, produced by Suave House in Houston and featuring Ice Cube, is slated to be released later this year.

BLULIGHT
Crowning themselves the “vibe squad,” this two-male, one-female trio from Los Angeles is the label’s first R&B act since the release of Michel’le in 1990. Vivian Davis, Cory Cook and Suaman “Swoop” Brown signed to Ruthless in 1996. Singing hip-hop-laced R&B, the act contributed “Sex Is On My Mind” to the “Set It Off!” soundtrack. Its as-yet-untitled album is slated to drop in September.

N/X (NATION UNKNOWN)
This Dallas-bred duo represents the masses of faceless, voiceless youth with their socially poignant raps. Riddled with provocative social commentary, the singers’ soulful, Southern-tinged rhymes relay the mindset of their generation through songs like “Problem Child,” “Change For The Better” and “Get Up,” the first single off their yet-to-be-titled album.

BIG CHAN
LeChan Gaines, a native New Orleans rapper, studied modern dance, acting and music at the Marla Gibbs Performing Arts School and was featured on YoYo’s “You Better Ask Somebody.” Her solo debut is expected to be released in 1998.

Recently, Ruthless Records also inked deals with Compton-based rapper Big Roc and comedian Chris Tucker.
Thanks for the memories...

Tomica, Cassandra, Don

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY FROM ALL YOUR FRIENDS AT RELATIVITY RECORDS & RED DISTRIBUTION.
DECADE OF REALITY
Continued from page R-4

The Ruthless reputation was also built on the backs of less controversial artists. Critics (and fans) of the label forget that in its early years, the Ruthless roster also listed the likes of soulful shouter Michelle F. Fat and the D.O.C.

For Cassandra Ware, VP/general manager at Ruthless Records, the biggest asset of the independent label is the entrepreneurial example it sets for its artists. "By dealing with us day to day, the artists get to watch [their projects] grow in front of them, so it doesn't seem so massive. At a large company, they never get to see how they can do it on their own. Here, the same person who is helping [the artist] on promotions may also be helping in the studio. They get to spend quality time with people who have the knowledge that allows them to grow. We are one of the few black-owned independent record labels—and the only one owned by a female—so we try to operate like a close-knit family."

Ruthless is built around a core of 15 staff members and consultants, who are expected to go beyond fulfilling their respective job descriptions and perform any other tasks that may arise.

"I do everything from mopping floors to living with artists," says Ware, who was local, regional and national promotion director at Motown prior to joining Ruthless. "When Eric ["Eazy- E" Wright] brought me in, there was a change in the air toward taking more control. He wanted to have more control over the day-to-day running of the company, so he started bringing in people who would help him have more control."

Wright's widow, Tomica Woods-Wright, is now president/CEO of the label and is utilizing the same jack-of-all-trades work ethic. "The only difference [in the running of the company] is that Eric was an artist and Tomica is a businesswoman," says Ware. "Her duties are different, but the goals are the same. She is very aware of what he was trying to achieve. Everyone that works here wears many hats and is multitalented. We try not to pigeonhole people into any specific situation, because the people here possess a lot of new, fresh and creative ideas."

BEHIND THE SCENES

For their part, the majority of the label's employees have held previous positions at other labels or hold degrees in the fields they service.

Sean Williams, the label's product manager, worked in MCA's promotion department and has an MBA. Jason Wimborne, street promotions director, has spent the past 14 years working in the field.

Jacob and John Tovio, both product coordinators, have worked with the company since N.W.A's heyday, fulfilling numerous positions, including road and artist management.

Lisa Collins, management director, worked as human resources administrator at PolyGram and Motown. She also worked as a product coordinator for ABM Records.

Lucky Nantana, director, A&R, administration/production, worked in A&R administration at Motown, while Donald Cunningham, national director, marketing & creative services, started at Motown in the marketing department. Cunningham went on to become an independent consultant for its MoJetz label.

Graphic designer Giulio Costanzo served as art director for Time Bomb Recordings, The Album Network and Graphics Plus.

Danielle Jordan, executive assistant to Woods-Wright, holds an M.A. in communication studies and worked in the business development department at Motown. Dawn A. Walker, product manager and international coordinator, worked as director of manufacturing and inventory control at Bellmark Records.

Director of financial services, Steve Sica, served as director of systems development and assistant controller of royalty and licensing at EMI Music.

Frances Hale, office receptionist, holds a degree in communications.

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

With the combined experience of the staff, all facets of an artist's career are catered to. "One of our abilities [as a small company] is to be involved in every aspect of the..."
Tomica:

Congratulations on the Company’s first decade. Those of us who knew Eric will never forget him – nor will any of the millions of people who heard the music of Eric and NWA. Because of your hard work, the dream of Ruthless Records lives on. The best is yet to come...

Best Wishes,

Jamie Broder, Bob Dudnik, George Stephens and all of us at Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP
CONGRATULATES

FOR 10 YEARS OF
TRUE RAPP GAME
REPRESENTING THE STREETS

MUCH LOVE AND RESPECT ALWAYS 2

EAZY E

FROM THE KINGPIN FAMILY

CURBCYDE

NytOwl

AND

FEATURING DJ U-NEEK A.K.A. M.D.M.)

E.W.F

BomBAY

ERIC WRIGHT

RIP

1 1 5 2 3

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game. I gained a lot of insight into the rap world and the street-level hip-hop community. Then from Clarence, I learned about business affairs by dealing with various managers, artists like Johnny Gill and producers like Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis. So I kinda got the best of both worlds.

Had Eric not passed, what would you have been doing instead of running Ruthless?

I had already put in my resignation at Motown (when Eric died), and I was coming over to be GM at Ruthless. I'd already begun dealing with the artists and helping to put some sort of business structure in place. There are things that Eric should've been doing in-house as opposed to allowing a distributor to do—things like artwork, A&R, video production. I was already involved.

Besides the RIP logos that are on every piece of Ruthless product, how else is Eric's legacy being reflected?

Eric's legacy is pretty much reflected in every way. In terms of the groups we're signing, I'm still going ahead with plans we had already decided on. We're moving ahead and always maintaining, "This is Ruthless." It's still in the family, and we're keeping his dream alive by developing groundbreaking new artists and staying more or less to the streets. But, yes, this still is a full-service label. Everybody gives it the label "gangsta rap," but our first group to come out and put gold up on the wall was J.J. Fad. They weren't gangsta rap, and Michel'le was R&B. People forget that. I don't want to take anything away from this label but to add to it, keeping the essence of what it is because I'm proud to represent it. I want people to know that this is not a glorified production company, but a bonafide label that's been here 10 years and is still going.

Since you've taken over the helm of Ruthless, you've been criticized and become the subject of rumors; some people even question the legitimacy of your marriage to Eric and your right to the title of president of the label. Does all the gossip ever get to you?

Sometimes it gets to me, because it's like judging a book by its cover. You must read what's inside the pages. It makes things hard, but I do my best to stay focused on what I have to do. I talk to a lot of people about things and I spend a lot of time with my kids. That's like therapy to me. And the people that I have around me, whom I work with, are like a family to me. We work together as a team.

So what's next for Ruthless?

Aside from Bone [Thugs-N-Harmony], we still have Ren, who has a name and a distinctive voice and skills. It's just a matter of getting him with the right production, and I feel he's coming back stronger. He's been with Eightball & MJG from the Suave House family, and hopefully he'll be going in with Easy Mo Bee. The life is gonna be brought back into Ren's career, and he'll always be here because he helped put this on the map. We also have a couple of new artists lined up: Big Chan, a female rapper; N/X, a male rap duo; and the mixed-sex R&B trio BluLight.

How does Relativity, your distributor, fit into the whole?

At this point, it's purely distribution, and it's been purely distribution for a while. Sometimes they say if you don't have anything good to say, don't say anything at all, but then people who know me know I speak my mind. It's a business relationship that I didn't have a choice with. They provide a service, and if I can change it, I will. I can and I am. [At press time, Ruthless was preparing to change distribution from Relativity to Epic.]
Ruthless Records' first 10 years have been marked with much success. The list that follows is a year-by-year review of the label's top-charting singles and albums. The peak positions for singles refers to Billboard's Hot R&B Singles chart, while the peak positions for albums refers to The Billboard 200 and Top R&B Albums chart, respectively. The peak positions represent each title's ultimate peak and do not necessarily correspond with the peak registered during the chart year.

Rankings for each chart year were determined by the same methodologies used to calculate Billboard's Year In Music charts. For albums from chart year 1988 through 1991, and for R&B singles from chart year 1988 through 1993, Billboard used a complex inverse point system, in which titles were awarded points, based on rank, for each week they appeared on the weekly chart. The data base from Hot R&B Singles was used to calculate rankings for the singles, while the points from The Billboard 200 were used to determine album standings.

The album lists from chart year 1992 through this year reflect an accumulation of units sold, based on SoundScan data; for each week the title appeared on the Billboard 200, Top R&B Singles recaps from chart year 1993 through the current year are an accumulation of sales and airplay points for each week titles appeared on Hot R&B Singles, with monitored airplay registered by Broadcast Data Systems and sales compiled by SoundScan. Information for chart year 1997 is based on year-to-date points from Dec. 7, 1996, the start of the chart year, through this year's July 12 issue.

The recaps were prepared by Anthony Colombo and Michael Cusson.

**1990**

**SINGLES**
1) Michael Le, "No More Lies" (22)
2) Michel'le (with Michael Holmes), "Can't Get Enough" (35, 5)
3) N.W.A, "100 Miles And Runnin'" (51)

**ALBUMS**
1) N.W.A, "Efil4zaggin" (1. 2)
2) N.W.A, "100 Miles And Runnin'" (27. 10)
3) Michel'le, "Michelle" (35, 5)

**1991**

**SINGLES**
1) N.W.A, "Efil4zaggin" (1. 2)
2) N.W.A, "100 Miles And Runnin'" (27. 10)
3) Michel'le, "Michelle" (35, 5)

**1992**

**SINGLES**
1) Po' Broke & Lonely?, "Funky Vibe" (71)
2) N.W.A, "Paid The Cost" (76, 28)
3) N.W.A, "Efil4zaggin" (1. 2)

Continued on page R-18
CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE
RUTHLESS RECORDS FAMILY
FOR GIVING US
REAL HIP HOP CLASSICS
FOR THE LAST TEN YEARS

AFTERMATH
ENTERTAINMENT

www.americanradiohistory.com
FOR THE RECORD
Continued from page R-16

1993

SINGLES
1) Eazy-E, "Real Muthaphukkin G's" (31)
2) MC Ren, "Same Ol' Shit" (82)
3) Above The Law, "V.S.O.P." (97)

ALBUMS
1) Eazy-E, "187um Killa" (EP) (5, 1)
2) Eazy-E, "Eazy-Duz-It" (70, 15)
3) Above The Law, "Black Mafia Life" (37, 6)

1994

SINGLES
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Thuggish Ruggish Bone" (17)
2) Eazy-E, "Real Muthaphukkin G's" (31)
3) MC Ren, "Same Ol' Shit" (82)

ALBUMS
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Creepin On Ah Come Up" (EP) (12, 2)
2) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "E.1999 Eternal" (1, 1)
3) Frost, "Smile Now, Die Later" (119, 36)

1995

SINGLES
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "1st Of Tha Month" (12)
2) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony Featuring Eazy-E, "Foe Tha Love Of $" (33)
3) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Thuggish Ruggish Bone" (17)

ALBUMS
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "E..1999 Eternal" (1, 1)
2) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Creepin On Ah Come Up" (EP) (12, 2)
3) Frost, "Smile Now, Die Later" (119, 36)

1996

SINGLES
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Tha Crossroads" (1)
2) Eazy-E, "Just A Lil' Let U Know" (30)
3) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "East 1999" (39)

ALBUMS
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "E.1999 Eternal" (1, 1)
2) Eazy-E, "Still On The Streets Of Muthaphukkin Compton" (3, 1)
3) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Creepin On Ah Come Up" (EP) (12, 2)

1997

SINGLES
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "Look Into My Eyes" (4)
2) Frost, "What's Your Name (Time Of The Season)" (90)

ALBUMS
1) Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, "E 1999 Eternal" (1, 1)
We congratulate Ruthless Records on their 10th Anniversary.
We would like to congratulate the company on its 10 years of success. The growth of the company has been substantial, and we support the whole team in every aspect of the business. “Eazy E’s” objectives and creativeness live on. We are looking forward to the future in the Ruthless atmosphere. May this anniversary be the brightest and best celebration of the year. Keep up the hard work, it is all paying off.

My life is not in vain
Though I wade through the waters
In death there is no pain
Peace and love is left to offer
My spirit is left for respect
Guiding the way for my youth
Giving all that I have left
Acknowledge it, and put it to use...

Ultimate respect, for the late Eric “Eazy E” Wright is a simple phrase for the way the community feels about this man. “Eazy E” brought a lot of tussle up in the rap game. The most of us grew up listening to his music and still today lend an ear to the many talented artists he has put on the map.

Eazy introduced the rap industry to the youth with appeal and creativity. Aspiring to put rap music and rap lyrics on another level, he has influenced us all, and his contribution is greatly appreciated. Even in his death, nothing has been lost. Artists such as “Bone Thugs-N-Harmony” are committing themselves to reaching over the top - right where “Eazy” would want them.

One thing we know for sure, Eric Wright loved the music industry. He put his heart and soul into his work. This man committed himself to his artists and his projects he released. All throughout his sickness he continued to work hard. His death is a tragic loss and the respect we all have for him is greatly deserved.

The announcement of his death ripped the hearts out of newschoolers, oldschoolers, and music fans all over the world. Tears streamed from the eyes of many and still the loss of a prominent man is not justified. You never really expect the loss of a loved one, especially someone who has made such an impact on all of our lives, a tribute to his past and his future is only right. When we pay tribute to him, it must not be all in a day. We have to continue to pay tribute to him, and live on in his joy.

“Eazy E lives in us all...”
All who love the rap game, all who have stepped into the music industry, all who have graced his label and continue to work with the artists he made a way for...

...Eazy simply because life is never over. We drift from this earth. with our spirits on a higher plain, where we are greeted in Heaven through God’s opening gates.

“Eazy’s” accomplishments continue on. His wife, Tomeka Wright, has stepped into his shoes and held up Ruthless Records without missing a beat. She has proved that his life is worth living for. She continues, to bring to the table a score of talented artists and impressive projects. She is admired for her strong will, and her intelligence. Tomeka uplifts “Eazy E’s” success and carries it on. The future looks brighter everyday. In his wife’s actions, and the artists’ faces, we see the legacy of “Eazy E”.

C.E.O./President Suave House
Tony Draper
Musical Offering Serves As Key Early Music Outpost

BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER

BERKELEY, Calif.—As the classical music business struggles through a particularly dark age, profiting from the art seems as elusive as alcohol.

But one of the few remaining strictly classical indie retailers in the country, Joseph Spencer—manager/owner of the Musical Offering, classical music shop and cafe here—sees his gold not in crossover but esoterica.

“Our specialty is early music, and, let’s face it, that’s a pretty rarified interest, even around here,” Spencer says. “So success for us stems from being unique. I keep a select stock and make sure we have excellent service and do everything I can to get the word out to people who are looking for what we have and those who are just searching for something different.”

The Musical Offering carries classical music from every period, but its specialty is the Baroque and early music in general.

For an early music enthusiast, the shop is more than just a unique boutique—it’s an oasis of sound. The store stocks a cornucopia of media; Renaissance, Baroque music discs as well as an uncommonly adept staff, who can run consignments, and shepherd novices with equal aplomb.

The Musical Offering classical music shop and cafe is located at 2430 Bancroft Way near the University of California Berkeley. (Billboard photo)

Moreover, the Musical Offering is a key element in one of the most vibrant early music scenes in the country, with Spencer serving as president of the Berkeley-based San Francisco Early Music Society. He also runs the small early music label Wildboar from the shop and hosts the long-running weekly program “Chapel, Court & Country Side” on San Francisco public outlet KDFC.

Even before there was a Musical Offering or Berkeley Festival & Exhibition (a de facto early music event that rivals the Boston Early Music Festival), there was an enthusiasm for archaic sounds in the area, Spencer says. “If you go back 50-70 years here, people were running around the woods playing recorders and violins.”

But lest the uninhibited think early music is an academic pursuit, Spencer points out, “We like music educators but we’re definitely big on passion stuff.” So ardent tones play all day at the Musical Offering, with customers sold on the sounds of such early music stars as hitting local group Anonymous 4 (on Harmonia Mundi) and keyboardist/conductor Ten Koopen (Erato and Teldec). And in-store play of a potent Wildboar disc like “In Still Moderno: The Fantastic Style In Early 17th Century Italy,” featuring violinist Ingrid Matthews and harpsichordist Byron Schenkman, impresses aficionados and apprenices alike.

The Musical Offering sits across the street from the University of California’s “classical music hall at 2430 Bancroft Way, with the shop’s 4,000 square feet holding about 14,000 CDs. The store carries no other media, as Spencer says, “The longer we’re in this business, the closer we stick to what it is we do best.” However, the dozen or so handmade vintage Turkish and Persian rugs that line the walls like tapestries are for sale ($165-$1,500).

“We take the racks on consignment, so they’re free money,” Spencer says. “Plus, they make the shop look nice, like a gallery, and they improve the shop’s aesthetics.”

The original Musical Offering opened in 1970 on nearby Durant Avenue, moving to Bancroft 10 years later. Spencer got involved with the BBC’s Music Box outlet in ’80 after buying the cafe the following year. In ’89, he took ownership with his wife, Jean, who runs the café and son, Ian, who manages the shop, as well as the bar absorbed by Spencer, who serves as CFO.

In the past few years, the Musical Offering’s revenue has been split equally between the cafe and music sales. “But now it’s 52/48 in favor of the cafe, and the trend is clear,” Spencer says, adding that this volume for the cafe is down about 15% after being flat for a couple of years. The shop’s best year was in ’94, with $300,000 in CD sales. Spencer expects the figure to total about $400,000 this year.

A few blocks away, just off Telegraph Avenue, sits another notable tower, Tower Records & Video, with a large classical room that offers far more mainstream repertoire than the Musical Offering, as well as a greater selection of budget product and an array of listening stations, videos, books, and magazines.

But left Spencer says, “I’m glad Tower is just down the street—that way people don’t have to go out of their way and can get over there to the other side.”

Indeed, if you’re looking for a raft of Italian bel canto opera, un pérdine versions of Mahler’s 5th symphony, or the latest crossover hit, Tower is the place to go. Whereas the Musical Offering will have just that period-instrument Mozart opera or Handel oratorio you’re looking for among several versions, as well as a sales clerk with listening stations, Tower records a definitive recording of Bach’s “Goldberg Variations” (on harpsichord or piano) or help the figure you’re looking for a piece of classical musical路况 in what the cafe can.

Indeed, if you’re looking for a raft of Italian bel canto opera, un pérdine versions of Mahler’s 5th symphony, or the latest crossover hit, Tower is the place to go. Whereas the Musical Offering will have just that period-instrument Mozart opera or Handel oratorio you’re looking for among several versions, as well as a sales clerk with listening stations, Tower records a definitive recording of Bach’s “Goldberg Variations” (on harpsichord or piano) or help the figure you’re looking for a piece of classical musical路况 in what the cafe can.

With demographic research in hand, Rush was able to turn insights he gained as a consumer into a strategy for store management.

“We have found there are three distinct user groups, and the most important is the occasional or first-time user. If we can take them and make them into what we call a frequent user, then that store will become very successful.”

“Ficing, selection, and service are also fundamentally important details in building business, Rush says, but the quality of the titles is paramount, especially in converting

BBC Music Mag Makes Classical Consumer-Friendly

Special Issues, Including CD, Serve As Valuable Guides For All

BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER

With classical music over perhaps any other kind of music, people don’t know what they want, just what they want something good. But left to their own devices in a room stocked with 1,000 years of musical culture, most would-be classical fans are going to be daunted by the myriad periods, genres, styles, terms, and performers. And because few stores’ classical departments have auditioning clerks on hand these days, most shoppers will avoid venturing far afield for fear of missing out.

For a market in the doldrums, that’s no good.

Basaedecra to the field are essential. Expert, approachable classical music guides can help enlighten even the seasoned collector, ease purchase anxiety and point the way to the next composer, the next opera, etc. The staff at the monthly BBC Music magazine realizes this as well as anyone, having developed a series of quarterly special issues designed to provide a periodic atlas of the different areas of classical music. The summer ’97 issue, the Piano, is the ninth so far, covering the key com-
MUSICAL OFFERING SERVES AS KEY EARLY MUSIC OUTPOST (Continued from preceding page)

manances help generate sales to rival those during Christmas. In years past, the festival has attracted such acts as Anonymous 4, vidio virtuoso Jerdi Savall, Dutch master key-

board/conductor Gustav Leon-
hardt, vocal groups Sequenta and Ensemble Organsum, and young French harpsichordist Christophe Rosset.

Festival or not, live performance is the perfect mechanism, with local concerts boosting sales regularly at the Musical Offering. In February, Savall and his group Hesperion XX played the 750-seat First Congreg-

tional Church next door, and the music lovers who streamed into the Musical Offering for a post-concert coffee and...
Pam Tillis wants you to sell her new "Greatest Hits" release on cassette. She knows that her fans, like many country music fans, enjoy listening to prerecorded cassettes. In addition to sounding great, they are portable and a great value. And if they can't find it at your store, they'll go somewhere else. So carry Pam Tillis's "Greatest Hits" on cassette in your store and start selling more music.

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IT PAYS TO CARRY CASSETTES.
Analyzing Alliance’s Steps Prior To Its Chapter 11 Filing

During my last two weeks out of the office on vacation and at company conventions, the main story occupying the collective mind of the business side of the music industry has been the Alliance Entertainment Chapter 11 filing. Through voice-mail messages and informal conversations with label sales and distribution executives while at conventions, I have heard a lot of rumor, gossip, analysis, and misinformation floating around on the topic. So I thought I would add my two cents to the mix, offering my opinion on how Alliance arrived at Chapter 11 and making some predictions on what the future holds for the troubled company.

In my opinion, Alliance is in Chapter 11 because of two key mistakes: failure to consolidate the businesses it was acquiring; and piling up debt.

When Alliance Entertainment Corp., vice chairman Joe Bianco founded Alliance during 1990-93 through the acquisitions of Jerry Bassin Distributors, CD One Stop, Abbey Road Distributors, and Ezone, which eventually evolved into Passport Music Distribution, industry participants skeptically wondered if the ego of the four entrepreneurs who founded those businesses, Jerry Bassin, Alan Meltzer, Bruce Ogilvie, and Toby Knodel, respectively, would be able to live together under the same roof. It didn’t take too long to determine that the answer was no. The in-fighting that occurred while those four were the main music business executives at Alliance practically paralyzed the company, making it virtually impossible to consolidate the businesses. Soon, Meltzer and Ogilvie were gone, and Bassin had to step down from the presidency due to an illness. (He has since been serving as a consultant to the company.)

Even at that stage in 1994, Bianco’s vision of an integrated music company still could have been successful, if the company had a strong operating executive. Alas, even though his search for such an executive proved elusive, Bianco made the mistake of continuing to acquire companies to fulfill his vision.

In addition to Passport, Bianco formed another independent distribution company, AEC Alternative Label Distribution, and then, when that didn’t meet his expectations, bought the then largest independent distributor, Independent National Distributors Inc. (INDI).

Exacerbating the in-fighting, the purchase of INDI added another company that was put together by acquisition and was never properly rationalized. Malverne, Big State, and CRD each had maintained a fiefdom over their own operations to the degree that it was said that any question posed at INDI always had three right answers.

Back on the acquisition trail, Bianco also targeted the proprietary music business by purchasing Castle Communications, Concord Jazz, and One Way Records Inc. In addition, Bianco tried to become a force in Internet music sales by buying the All Music Guide as well as cutting a deal with Microsoft.

These acquisitions resulted in a huge debt load, which Alliance could have serviced, even without properly rationalizing its businesses to improve cash flow. Both problems could have been swept under the carpet if the music business had continued to enjoy robust growth. But such was not to be, and when the music industry experienced a sluggish two years, Alliance’s mistakes turned into huge problems.

While the departures of Meltzer, Ogilvie, and Bassin may seem like ancient history, the in-fighting between the executives at the various Alliance operating companies continued right up to the arrival of Alliance Entertainment Corp. chairman/CEO Al Teller in August 1996.

At that point, Alliance had only made the decision to consolidate the one-stop operation. The bad news is that in an effort to have an immediate impact on the bottom line, it chose to consolidate people first instead of warehouses. In moving to eliminate CD One Stop’s buying department, the company didn’t anticipate the obvious result—the loss (Continued on page 46)
Navarre Braces Itself For The Future At Sales Meet

THEM CHANGES: The phrase "change is good," while not quite a mantra during Navarre Corp.'s 1997 national sales meeting, was heard often enough to serve as the major subtext to the confab.

Held July 23-27 at the Minneapolis Marriott Southwest in Minneapolis, Minn., the meeting--Navarre's first since its 1996 get-together--came on the heels of a major restructuring of the New Hope, Minn.-based distributor (Billboard, July 12). Senior executives--some of them only recently arrived--frequently noted the dramatic changes that have been rolling within the industry.

The assembled salespeople were introduced to such new key execs as Tom Lenaghan, formerly VP of sales at the Hanleeman Co., who was brought in to head Navarre's alternative retail marketing division. Also in the house were some new hires: one of the field marketing reps, who will service accounts outside the top markets, and a retail development coordinator, who will be entrusted with raising retail awareness of airplay and tour activity for the company's distributed acts.

The old guard and the new both were on hand. Mike Gaffney, who recently exited as VP/GM of the music distribution side, was on hand at the company banquet July 25 to pick up an award for 10 years of service; his appearance drew two standing ovations and tears from many in attendance. Guy Marsala, appointed COO of Navarre only last fall, helmed several of the convention meetings.

Navarre president Eric Paulson took both catastrophic and positive change as the themes of his July 24 remarks before the assembled staffers. Paulson noted "typhoon-force" change has rocked the industry throughout 1996-97, a year that witnessed what he described as "the pop apocalypse." He illustrated the extent of the disaster with a slide listing more than a dozen music-business bankruptcies filed within the last two years.

"That financial pressure, my friends, includes us," Paulson said. "The industry is quickly moving into the last-man-standing syndrome."

To increase Navarre's chances in this unstable environment, the company is positioning itself as "the premiere provider of the future," Paulson said, through a campaign of product and supplier acquisitions.

Paulson noted that Navarre has signed a letter of intent to acquire 51% of Walmart, Calif.-based Thump Records, which may be the distributor's volume leader. The company already owns a 14.2% interest in Walter Yentloffs's Velvel Records and will own another 14.2% upon payment of a $5 million note.

In March, Navarre completed the purchase of the outstanding 50% of the Internet radio company NetRadio. The 100% acquisition of the company--which boasts an alliance with the home shopping entity ValueVision and will soon debut a direct-sales area called Hot Deals--will allow Navarre to augment its sales through conventional retail outlets.

"Are we re-creating ourselves? You bet we are, because the only way to survive today is by re-creating," Paulson said.

Much of Paulson's pitch was clearly designed to light a fire under his music sales staff, which has seen its share of Navarre's total revenue decline over the last three fiscal years. According to the company's most recent 10-K filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, net music sales slid from 58% of the company's total net sales for fiscal year 1996 to just 24.8% for fiscal 1997. Navarre's booming computer software division picked up the resultant sales slack.

"Music is an unacceptable percentage of the company's total revenues right now," Paulson said.

However, he noted that the recent reorganization of the company and the hiring of new personnel to fulfill non-sales duties at retail will help the sales staff maximize its time and its potential.

In an act symbolic of the chief executive's theme of personal empowerment, exemplified by the '97 convention's motto, "I own it," Paulson issued five shares of Navarre stock to every company employee.

"Each one of us makes a difference in the operation of our company," he said.

SALES CHAMPS: Navarre's music sales reps of the year were feted during the company banquet. Sue Manns, who works out of Cleveland, captured rep of the year. (Continued on next page)
THE A TO Z OF SUCCESSFUL SELLING

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DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENTS
(Continued from preceding page)
of-the-year honors; Joe Del Medico (Baltimore) took first runner-up; and Steve Stanley (Los Angeles) was named second runner-up.

MUSIC GALORE: Many of Navarre’s distributed labels were in the house at Minnetonka; here are some highlights. Thump handled samples of its “Easyriders Volume 1,” a new compilation series tied in with the popular magazine catering to motorcycle riders. The series, which features classic hard rock tracks, repeats a highly successful formula for the label. Thump has tapped custom-car freaks with its wildly popular old-school and oldies collections featuring the Low Rider magazine brand. Navarre will break into the black gospel market with the pickup of a new label, Majestic Communications. With offices in Atlanta and Woodland Hills, Calif., Majestic is headed by CEO James Bullard, former head of Woodland’s gospel division. It previewed offerings which included new recordings by Bill Medley, the Chantays, and Emmitt Rhodes.

Velvet mounted acoustic sets by Paul Rodgers, whose new solo set, “Eighties,” and “The Best of Me” were also previewed. on Pat DiNizio, whose self-titled solo set lands Oct. 7. Due this fall is a project by ex-Rolling Stones bassist Bill Wyman featuring Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck, Albert Lee, Paul Carrack, and others. Velvet’s film music imprint Real Sound bows in September, its forthcoming “Ice Storm” soundtrack will feature the David Bowie track “I Can’t Read.”

The convention’s closing celebration at the club Bravo included performances by Thump’s dance thrusters Katalina, Ebony Toy, a short-stop box rockers from L.A.’s Calabas Boys, and sister bands of the year. And Velvet’s dance goddess Reel Sound Records’ dance goddesses Antoinette Smirk, Michelle Robinson, who bumped energetically with MC/Navarre Eastern regional sales manager Mark Heyert, and Mid-night Fantasy will launch new Funtunes, currently touring hard behind its album “Wee Ooees.”

ONE PERSONAL NOTE: At some company conventions, reporters are greeted with the same enthusiasm accorded to hired assassins. But we were warned by the friendliness and accessibility of Navarre’s executives and sales staff. Joe del Medico, standing for a better thing to do than gab with a newcomer. Our thanks to all, and we hope to see you same time next year.

The good news is that even though the company went about it the wrong way, the consolidation finally has been completed, and the one-stop operation can prove itself is a healthy business if it has a chance.

Moreover, Apollo Advisors is said to be sitting on the sidelines, waiting to propose a “new value” reorganization plan for the company, centered on the one-stop operation. The other potential suitors, A.C. Nielsen Capital Corp., which is said to also operate under the name Whitehall Financial (not to be confused with the similarly named Goldman Sachs investment firm), has reportedly bowed out of the picture.

Recently, Billboard published a story pointing out that a one-stop-based company has never filed a Chapter 11 before and survived (Billboard, July 26). Many of Retail Track’s reporters tell me that with that realization, they have come to the conclusion that the Alliance One-Stop Group is a dead duck. But those readers missed an important story. Never before has a one-stop operated debtor-in-possession (Continued from page 65)

BY DON JEFFREY

IF YOU’RE A RECORD company trying to promote a new act or album to 16-year-old girls, where do you go? Seventeen magazine, “The Ricki Rider magazine brand,” and “Playboy” are the top selections. For the males, it’s Concan O’Brien with the 32-42s, David Letterman for the 35-42s, and Larry King for those 35 and over. King also scores first with older women and consumers with the highest household incomes ($75,000 and up).

Strategic also correlates TV show selections with radio format preferences. For instance, modern rock listeners like Conan, country fans prefer Regis and Kathie Lee, R&B lovers watch Ricki Lake, and classical radio devotees are Larry King viewers.

The top TV choices are ABC in Concert (12-17 and 45-54), “Soul Train” (18-24), and “Saturday Night Live” (25-34), “Late Night with Conan O’Brien” (35-44), and “ABC In Concert” (45-54). For the females, the results are not too surprising. Active male music consumers’ top pick is Sports Illustrated with 14.3%, nearly twice as many as the No. 2 choice, Time. Sports Illustrated is No. 1 for the 12-17 and 51-44 year-olds. For the older demos (35-54), Time is the top selection.

Females who are active music buyers select People magazine first (10.9%), then Rolling Stone (7.2%). For females, there is less uniformity across the age groups. The 12-17 choose Seventeen, 18-24 like Cosmopolitan, 25-44 go for Rolling Stone, and 45-54 favor Good Housekeeping.

The study also focuses on entertainment publications, which is where record company ads are most likely to turn up.

For females, Spin is the leader amongst the 18-24-year-olds, and TV Guide is the choice of the older demos. For males, the hip-hop magazines The Source and Vibe are most popular, and 12-24s pick People, and 35-44s opt for Good Housekeeping.

The study also focuses on entertainment publications, which is where record company ads are most likely to turn up.

Which Magazines Reach The Active Music Buyer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALES</th>
<th>FEMALES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports Illustrated</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rolling Stone</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ebony</td>
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<td>Rolling Stone</td>
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<td>Jet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vibe</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
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</table>

SOURCES: STRATEGIC RECORD RESEARCH

www.americanradiohistory.com
Graeme Kay, "although they aren’t assembled as academic tracts. Our mission, within a colorful magazine format, is to stimulate people’s interest in classical music and then give them the knowledge to deepen and broaden that interest."

Although developed to enhance BBC Music’s statewide profile, the past few special issues have been available in the U.K. through subscription and at newsstands, primarily mainline news chain W H Smith. In the U.S., the specials are available via subscription and at such outlets as Borders Books & Music, Barnez & Noble, Tower Records, and various mom-and-pop shops via the New York-based Eastern News Distributors, a division of Hearst Corp. (Circulation for BBC Music was 120,874 in the U.S. and U.K. as of December ’96, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation.)

The manager of periodicals for the 180 Borders stores around the country, Steve Simon, says the BBC Music special function as both quality products and effective cross-promotion. "Borders is a place where a lot of classical lovers come, and the BBC name is one they know and trust. So the specials do well for us, especially considering their relatively high price. And I think it’s obvious that their content steers people toward the music department."

The fall BBC Music special issue will cover Baroque music, with the winter ’96 special devoted to the operas of Puccini and the spring dedicated to the great conductors. Issues featuring musical theater and the operas of Verdi, Mozart, and Wagner are being planned. According to special issues publisher Jonathan Gifford, BBC Music is considering packaging some of the past specials together as thematic sets to be sold at a discounted price at retail, and the magazine is also developing a program to offer the specials in a systematic way to schools and libraries. Eventually, all the special issues may be collected onto a CD-ROM.

Kay stresses that with the traditional means of introducing people—espe-
cially young people—to classical music dissipating in both the U.S. and U.K., it’s increasingly important for there to be an instructive, involving over-the-counter resource. "These days, classical music hits the general public in a diffuse way—films or TV usually," he says. "So we want to be there not only for the core collectors but for the people who have not thought classical music was for them, yet were intrigued by something they’ve heard in a film and want to investigate it further. The special issues are educational, although it’s education with a small ‘c.’"

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**Billboard** AUGUST 9, 1997

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EARFUL OF BOOKS

(Continued from page 12)

Once people are hooked on audio-books, they tend to gravitate toward the longer unabridged titles, and about half of Earful of Books' stock is in this category. He says when a title is released simultaneously in abridged and unabridged form, he will buy much more heavily in the latter.

Earful of Books stocks many titles that are generally only available through specialized mail-order rental companies and libraries, due to their high price point. But, Rush notes, major publishers are beginning to release more unabridged titles at lower prices, and it's a trend he welcomes.

With such diverse types of customers, having a helpful and knowledgeable staff that caters to its clientele is another fine point that Rush says keeps customers coming back.

"When you're selling the same product as barnes & Noble and Borders, you have to have it in stock and you have to have exceptional service. Most retail bookstores, particularly the larger ones, don't want to mess with special orders and that attitude is conveyed to their customers, but we do it all day long, because that is a very significant part of our business."

Earful of Books also has a mail-order division that accounts for about 10% of the company's business, Rush says. "It was never our intent to develop it, it just kind of evolved. By and large, it's made up of people who have stumbled across one of our stores, and live somewhere else."

While Earful of Books does not spend money promoting the mail-order aspect of its business, Rush says, consistent advertising on talk radio is a very effective way to reach consumers. For a new store, Earful of Books will buy up to $50,000 worth of radio ads over a 30-day period.

Earful of Books also targets its mail-order list with a six-panel, tri-fold flyer and advertises in high-quality direct-mail coupon programs aimed at specific areas within each market.

A high ratio of books per household is the key factor that determines in which markets Earful of Books will open stores, Rush explains.

"There is a misconception that people who listen to audio are not readers, but that's not true. Our best customers listen to audio because they can't read everything they want to."

Earful of Books is expanding through company-owned stores, as well as joint ventures and license agreements. Outlets are scheduled to open in Denver and Houston by the end of 1997, but Rush says cash flow and bottom-line results are what count. He says a "very successful" store will do $500,000-$600,000 a year by its third year in business.

"We have a rate of return that we like for each store to attain. Some have, some haven't, but I think the difference is that we believe that audio is going to continue to expand market share, and if you believe that, then you won't be scared of average results at this point in the life of the industry."

For the most part, Earful of Books stores have a larger inventory and square footage than other audio-only stores, and the greater selection of titles is key in keeping up with a growing market, Rush says. "We want to continue to be the largest audiobook retailer in the country."
LAS VEGAS—Hollywood believes the trend of releasing more titles to the sell-through market will benefit beleaguered video retailers.

Mitsubishi and other manufacturers attending a studios' perspective panel at the Video Software Dealers Assn. (VSDA) Convention in Las Vegas last month have been worried before. Whether video stores, still uncomfortable with sell-through, will accept the premise this time isn't known. But, given sluggish rentals, they're more inclined to listen.

The studios argue that the lower wholesale price on sell-through titles—$15-$20 vs. $70-$75 for a rental release—means retailers can afford to buy more copies for their stores, which will give them a depth of inventory that will translate into more customer transactions. Supposedly this becomes an attractive scenario at a time when open-to-buy dollars for new and catalog product have been attenuated.

Michael Karaffa, executive VP of New Line Home Video, said, "If you purchase tapes at a lower price, you can do more depth. On a title-by-title basis, there's an opportunity for increased profits, although turns are down."

During the panel, Karaffa and others presented statistical evidence of a sluggish video industry. Some observers have suggested that one reason for the rental slowdown has been consumers' move toward buying rather than renting.

"There are more blockbuster releases going to sell-through this year than we would have gone to rental," said Jeffrey Fink, senior VP of sales and distribution for Live Home Video. "That impacts rental transactions." Panelists said customers are turned off when they cannot find the title they are looking for and that greater depth of inventory could solve that problem.

According to BMG Video president Al Reuben, "The problem is the consumer's inability to find product because of a smaller number of titles and store displays. Titles don't turn, so there's no buy-to-open. The merchandising issue becomes self-fulfilling."

Panelists agreed that the increasing number of entertainment options available to the consumer has also crimped video revenues. They cited satellite TV services, pay-per-view channels, and Internet surfing.

Pay-per-view (PPV) was a hot topic at the session, specifically the subject of windows—the amount of time it takes for a movie to appear in a different medium. Retail is traditionally the first stop for a movie after its life in the theaters. What has become more common, however, is an earlier opening of the PPV window.

Retailers complain that this limits the effective shelf life of a title, a point emphasized on anti-PPV letter bombs worn during the show. Several panelists sympathized, suggesting that stores indicate their displeasure by not buying endangered titles in depth.

Reuben decried applause from the retailers in the audience when he said, "If windows are not long enough, take economic action. Windows are the most important thing you have. That's your lifetime—if product's not in store long enough, make your investment."

Panelists conceded that determining PPV windows is the most difficult task they have. John Quinn, senior VP of sales for Warner Home Video, said that negotiations with the PPV companies are a balancing act between "how much will I lose on 30 days vs. how much will you make on 45 days."

Research was cited indicating that while consumers are generally not aware of windows, they believe that movies come out on video roughly 2-3 months after their theatrical debut. Actively, the video window is more like five to six months.

Some retailers called for uniform windows on all titles. But panelists responded that each title has to be analyzed separately as to the length of

(Continued on next page)
**CAN SELL-THRU BOOST STORE BIZ?**

(Continued from preceding page)

The window and whether the video should be priced for sale or rental. "The video business is not isolated," said Quinn. "It's one of a series of revenue streams Hollywood needs to make movies.

Quinn and colleagues agreed that there was a need for more aggressive marketing by studios and retailers to inform consumers of the advantages of renting and buying. They felt that the VHS/DVD industry was still stuck with many unaided copies. "They have not cleared out of the market," he adds.

As a result, Williams notes, retailers continue to shy away from the category and "only look at it once a year." With a new approach, stores can profit from it if the category is merchandised year-round, he says. "We're sharing our sales data with retailers, and as a brand, even the old 'Buns' tapes outsell celebrity tapes every day of the week."

"Buns" and the Jane Fonda and Kathy Smith fitness series have made WarnerVision the top supplier in the category. It's followed closely next by PFI Entertainment, which has the Denise Austin line, and BMG Video, with "The Firm."

**OSLENS SEE THE LIGHT:** Based on the success of the Olsen twins' videos, Lightyear Entertainment is looking to place Mary Kate and Ashley's audio efforts into video stores.

The New York-based company recently picked up the entire line from BMG, which had distributed three audio titles. The first release under the new arrangement will be "You're Invited To Mary Kate & Ashley's Sleep Over Party," featuring music from the video of the same name.

Street date for the title is Aug. 12 at $15.98, as listed for the CD and $9.98 for the cassette. All releases go through Lightyear distributer WEA, whose sister company, Warner Home Video, handles the Olsen twins on VHHS.

Lightyear will ship at least two more titles, the next one coming in February, and has an option on future releases as well. VP of sales and marketing Don Spievogel says Blockbuster Video and West Coast Video are expected to stock the audiocassette next to the video. "Both came to us with the idea based on the fact that the video titles are so strong," he says.

The duo's previous audio titles, "I'm The Cute One" and "Give Us A Mystery," peaked at No. 22 and No. 24, respectively, on Billboard's Top Kid Audio chart.

In recent years, Lightyear has steadily increased its audio business while moving away from video. However, it still has a catalog of titles ranging from "Stories To Remember" to Elvis Presley titles, including "Aloha From Hawaii."

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**TONING UP: WarnerVision is perking up "Buns Of Steel," the popular exercise series.**

"We've done a lot of consumer research and found out that the exercise market is flat because of the proliferation of bad titles," says Warnervision's director of marketing, William Williams. "It just didn't make sense to relaunch 'Buns' without making some improvements."

According to Williams, consumers said exercise tapes in general were getting a bit stale. So the vendor has added pop songs, more instructors to lead the workout, and different degrees of difficulty in the new releases, which include "Buns Of Steel Target: Toning Workout," "Aim Of Steel Target: Toning Workout," and "Buns Of Steel Total Body Fat Burner."

Each arrives in stores Sept. 2, priced at $9.95.

"These videos incorporate sport moves, because the one thing consumers told us is that they didn't want to lie on the floor and lift their legs 50 times," says Williams.

The tapes will be supported by a direct-response campaign, a $1 bounce-back coupon good toward the purchase of another "Buns" video, and a certificate for a two-week free membership to any of the 500 Gold's Gym outlets across the country. Information about the offers will be inserted into each cassette package. Williams says the marketing budget for the new releases exceeds $1 million.

One of the factors contributing to the declining fortunes of exercise videos is celebrity tapes, which proliferated but didn't satisfy consumers dedicated to keeping fit. While the number of new entrants has fallen, Williams says retailers are still stuck with many unaided copies. "They have not cleared out of the market," he adds.

As a result, Williams notes, retailers continue to shy away from the category and "only look at it once a year." With a new approach, stores can profit from it if the category is merchandised year-round, he says. "We're
**Fox Is Taking Kids Seriously**

**by Moira McCormick**

**World.** But the earlier releases were not pushed with "as concerted an effort as they are this time. Fox Kids is now a much more powerful brand of television programing," says Fox Home Entertainment spokesman Steven Feldstein.

Feldstein had previously released children's videos, including titles based on such animated TV series as "Bobby's

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**Billboard**

**Top Kid Video**

**Compilied from a National Sample of Retail Store Sales Reports.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE (Ratings)</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Distributing Label</th>
<th>Catalog Number</th>
<th>Performance</th>
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<td>Dimension Home Video</td>
<td>Buena Vista Home Video 10499</td>
<td>New Campbell Organics</td>
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<td>Crew Entertainment/Elmstreet Entertainment</td>
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<td>Barbra Streisand/Jeff Bridges</td>
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<td>Howard Stern/Susan Wogan-Browne</td>
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<td>SLING BLADE (R)</td>
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©1997, Billboard/BPI Communications.
Sega ‘Fighters’ Shoot For Techno Presence
‘MegaMix’-Inspired Dance Single To Aid In Image-Building

By DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—Sega of America is tuning in to the electronics sounds of the 1990s by aligning to enhance its image as a cutting-edge game company. The entertainment technology company’s combat video game “Fighters MegaMix” has spawned a techno-charged dance single, “Fighters: The Sega Project,” created by Tom Weyer (a.k.a. Commander Tom) and Michael Robbins (aka DJ Mars).

The track includes sound effects from the game, which is available for the Sega Saturn game system. Robbins’ record label, Frequency—a name that also graces the San Francisco club—has been promoting promotions company run by the DJ—will release a 12-inch version of the song this month or in September.

Though Sega owns the promotional rights to the song, the company has already provided substantial support by servicing the track to radio mix shows and DJ pools.

The single debuted July 26 on modern rock KLYY Los Angeles’ electronic music format “Lighted.”

Sega spokeswoman Angela Edwards says that the project is not designed to increase sales of “Fighters MegaMix” or its 22-bit Next Generation system. Rather, the company’s interest lies in aligning itself with the electronic music scene.

The game maker has also moved to raise its profile among hip modern rock fans by announcing last month that it had enlisted luminous Jackson vocalist Jill Cunniff to supply the main character voice in its forthcoming alien adventure game “Enemy Zero.”

“We are not a label,” and we’re not pushing this because we need record sales,” says Edwards. “It’s not even a matter of promoting sales of ‘Fighters MegaMix’ or the game in general on the Sega brand thing. We want the Sega factor to be cool, to be underground, to be linked in a circle outside the core gamers.”

Both Edwards and Robbins, however, allow that many gamers are already fans of electronic music, making the

hub Music Online. America Online’s hub Music area was launched July 14 with an event at New York’s Knitting Factory. The event featured performances by the Lotion, Jackpot and the grooving dancecore from left, are Lotion members Bill Ferguson, Rob Youngblood, Jim Ferguson, and Tony Zajkowski; Hub Music associate producer Randy Silver, bottom; and Hub Music producer Joe Rosenthal, center.

Classic Music Hardware Resurfaces As Software

REBIRTH OF THE RETRO SYNTH: The pioneering music synthesizer and drum machine hardware of the past is restored via the medium of software. A single CD-ROM project known as Rebirth RB-338 Techno Micro Composer, digitally emulates the exact soundboard and synth modules of the classic Roland TR-808 drum machine and a pair of Roland TR-808 Bass Line synthesizers.

The program was created by Swedish development company Propellerhead Software and does not require MIDI, external sound samplers, or any special computer hardware.

The CD-ROM software, which is distributed in the U.S. by Steingberg Soft & Hardware, is already available at computer and music specialty stores and is expected to be in retail outlets in Europe. The hardware chops from the defunct hardware have become popular with creators and consumers of techno and electronic music.

“They are still used to create a lot of dance, techno, industrial, and house music,” says Fadi Hayek, North American sales manager for Steinberg.

“Because they are no longer manufactured, the prices have gone up considerably. You would pay $3,000 to get the equivalent in hardware.”

Rather than use samples, the product uses MIDI files to model the sound of oscillators, filters, resonance envelope and other hardware components of the original synthesizers.

“It emulates the characteristics of the analog equipment to get a warm sound that is just not possible through digital samples,” says Hayek.

Several of Younger America’s leading DJs, remixers, and record producers used the technology July 20 in a live performance to demonstrate the real-time applications of the software. Participants in the club event included Funk-O-Rama featuring DJ Dmitry and DJ Silver, DJ Chic Freez, DJ Wally, and Nick Rhodes of The Disposable Person Vs. DJ Del Mar.

“It’s a good and bad thing,” says Wally DeSefano aka DJ Wally. “For $250, anyone who buys this can cut their own tracks—which makes it harder for the rest of us to do this for a living. This technology makes it too convenient for producers to make too much music… The original synthesizers are antiques and are still highly sought after.

Users of the software can record compositions in the riff or .wav file format on their computers and distribute their music over the Internet.
**NO KNIFE**
Hit Man Dreams
Producer: Mike Tomatoes
Time Bumb 3508

The standout sophomore album from this sharp-witted San Diego rock quartet matches solid pop songcraft with sly guitars. Lead singer-songwriter Mitch Wilson's vocals have a pleasantly curious edge in the best-power punk, tradition, and they mesh well with the harmonies of the brilliant composer "Black-boot" and the frenetic, riff-grinding "Charades." Other highlights of a joyfully noisy act are marked by the catchy, off-kilter accents of "Lex Hit Rest," the manic, hardcore inflections of "Sweep Away My Shadow," and the punkish pop fans of "Your Allatross." Distributed by Artists.

**LIMINAL LOUNGE**
**PRODUCER:** Dana Byrne
**KNOCKING FACTORY WORKS 292**

An ad hoc electro-instrumental group developed by downtown New York guitarist Dana Byrne, Liminal issued its first disc in '90 as an entry in the Knitting Factory's pioneering "Loud Music, Silent Film" series. That original soundtrack to the classic horror movie "Nosferatu" was an inventive, haunting piece of work, serving as the inspiration for the disc's "Sightless" movement. But Liminal's follow-up disc, "Lounge," is rather bloodless. Some will warm to this ostensibly lively recording, but the disc tends to prove a fact of electro-dance music: Where there's an evocative background in a substance-fueled bar scene does not necessarily make for a compelling at-home listening experience.

**CLINT BLACK**
Notin' But The Talkin'
RCA 67515

Country star Clint Black's decision to forgo his usual practice of co-writing most of his material with his guitarist, Hayden Nicholas, and seek out new collaborators has clearly energized his recording. He still writes with Nicholas (yielding some of the album's high points), but Black's co-writer numbers with the likes of Kosta, Steve Wariner, Matraca Berg, Marty Stuart, Blake Todd, and Skip Ewing seem to have reveived his upturners. There's not a bit of fear on this tactfully written effort as the production collected first-rate turns.

**MICHAEHL PETERSON**
**PRODUCERS:** Robert Eslly Dean, Jeff Loo

Newcomer Michael Peterson is simple-handedly keeping alive the tradition of the delicate drinking song. That's not all he does, obviously, but that so well he should be encouraged to continue with the same style as "I Finally Finished The Bait," "Drink, Swear, Steal & Lie," and "When The Grass Is Greener." It's his inventing writer and expressive singer and has nothing but a bright future ahead.

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**VITAL REISSUES**

**JOE**
**PRODUCER:** Joe Lee

Joe Lee's deep voice is perfect for the bluesy funk in "Don't You Wanna Be Me Anymore." From the album's electrifying first track, "All The Things You Won't Do," the off the "Don't Be A Man..." soundtrack, young R&B phenom Joe Lee's soulful vocals are mesmerizing. Powerful vocals and lush arrangements highlight this project by the ferocious singer-songwriter-producer. Steady, melody-driven compositions provide a riveting stage for a young artist who vocally and instrumentally features himself.

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**

**HARPSITY**
**PRODUCERS:** Dana Stiers & Dan Acklom

**Imaginary World**

The harp isn't just for angels, orchestral glissandos, and Harpo Marx anymore. That's the message of this collection, which draws harpists working out of many traditions and countries, from Ireland to Venezuela. Largely composed of new, commissioned works, "Harplicity" features harpist plucker Deborah-Henson Conant in a more meditative mood, Andreas Vollweider set with an orchestra, and the Chelfains' Celtic harpist, Derek Bell. Michelle Sell's concert harp stands out in a sea of Celtic players, while producer Diana Stork's world fusion group, Celtic, and German harpist Rudiger Oppermann point to new directions. A revealing collection.

Coleman disciple James Blood Ulmer recasts items from the master's songbook in the light of his own bluesy six-string fixation. Sadly, the result is rather desultory. The instrumentals amble along with a ragged appeal, though the vocalic toughness of both the originals and Ulmer's recent Music Revelation Ensemble projects. He does the '60s and '70s melodic rock well. Improvising on one or more "You Can't Fight This Feeling." Highlights range from the reverent "How Sweet" to the insomniac "Sanitized Girl (Can't Fight This Feeling)."

**LATIN**

**SANDY & PAPO MC**
Olva Vox...

**PRODUCERS:** Parel de Jesus, Socrates de Jesus de Puerto Rico

In the among the more stylish players of merengue-rooted sounds, Dominican veteran saxophonist Sandy Carriero and Luis Deschamps run through a good-time set of bravaura-laced acedies highlighting "La Fleta" and "El Alacran."
The creative marriage of New York’s Vivid Swing singer/co-writer/producer Barrett Jones (who has worked with Fyo Fighters and Nirvana, among others) results in a breezily moody journey into grunge-pop catharsis. But don’t mistake it for another in a factory line of soundbites. "No Regrets" has the familiar elements needed to woo prog-staffers, but also has an instrumental depth and lyrical perspective that are unique to visionary hard leader Phil Vasil and pal. Have a listen and you’ll agree. And then you’ll be ruing yourself for a copy of the group’s impending debut album.

**MICHAELLE MALONE (Grave)**

**WRITER:** Michael Malone

**PUBLISHER:** not listed

**Visit:** not listed

**“I’m A Mess” is proof that this duo has come a long way from playing in the basements of the New York subway system. Written with emotional splash of toxic depression and despair, this anthem is a testament to the power of voice of the ear of modern rock listeners. For the uninformed, this song has an appeal similar to Elton John’s.**

**PLUMB Sovering (Don’t Turn Away)**

**WRITER:** Pat Stunnenberg, Dan Hawkins

**PUBLISHER:** not listed

**Visit:** not listed

**Sovering’s "Ess" album is named for this song, because "Ess" definitely will make you use it with hard-edged, fast-paced guitars and its forceful yet emotional lyrics. The tune is reminiscent of music of Halo, but toned down to have a softer, less piercing sound.**
**MUSIC**

**FREERIDER—THE MOVIE**

Cabin Fever Entertainment 105 minutes, $19.95

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the plane crash that took the lives of three members of the group Freerider, and there is no more commemorative to this band than the feature-length concert video/warranty release/review on video, the video makes its way to retail with a digitally remastered soundtrack, interviews with the band members and their parents, personal collection photos, and home movies. There's also a whole lot of rock'n'roll captured live and lost.

Among the Southern rock treasures are "The Three Stars of Music, Alabama ... ‘Saturday Night Special,’ ‘That ’Smell,’ and the legendary title track, ‘Fool is the Name.’ (The video title screen that accompanies the song is one word, but the song is two words.) A collector's item for several generations of fans.

**CHILDREN'S**

**THE SWAN PRINCESS: ESCAPE FROM CASTEL MOUNTAIN**

Warner Home Video 75 minutes, $19.95

The animated sequel to the 2.5 million-selling "Swan Princess" is sure to generate smooth sailing at retail. The story picks up one year after the marriage of waterfowl-cum-royal highness Odette and her prince Derek. The prince, though, is preoccupied with pesky forest events like fire forests occurring in the kingdom, which are being set by an evil magic bean monster who also gets his hands on a magic orb hidden in the castle. While Odette copes with the demands of being a princess, Derek is joined to the job of prince, Derek's animal pals try to lend a hand. But until Odette can transform herself into a swan that Derek really musters the strength to conquer his enemy. A clever plot with a few new songs adds up to an hour-plus of wholesome family entertainment.

**HEALTH & FITNESS**

**LA CHICA FITNESS**

Latin Fitness Productions Ltd. 54 minutes, $19.95

The undaunting beat of Latin music serves as the soundtrack for this comprehensive abdominal exercise program, an aerobic section, and cool down/meditation segments. The three sections, which feature an instructor and several pals shaking their bodies on the beach, can be taken together or individually as exercise/time-permits. Unfortunately, what cannot be squared is the audio mix, which is repeated in English and Spanish. The cumbersome narration renders the tape sluggish and annoying for speakers of either language and downright interminable for multilingual viewers. The video itself, however, boasts two markets are commendable, but the presentation belies the concept. The video might better offer off as two separate products.

**DOCUMENTARY**

**JAMES DEAN AT HIGH SPEED**

KraftWorks Video 50 minutes, $14.95

During his singing, well-researched look at what was likely James Dean's greatest passion offers the scenario that the rebel indeed have a cause after all—becoming a champion in sport rac-

**INSTRUCTIONAL**

**SEXY SOFTWARE PRESENTS WINDOWS 95 TRICKS**

55 minutes, $19.95

Here's an underlying combination. A bixi-chute "gospel-smoother"无所谓 whether the screen provides a detailed seminar on the inner workings of the popular Microsoft desktop interface. The tape is clearly for beginners, male beginners, that is, who don't min- guide the question of what the host is really referring to when she talks about the hard drive. Bill Gates is either chowing his chicken or trying to hide a monstrous grin, because his technology is flawlessly suggesting signs of reaching a mass-market audience.

**MADE FOR TV**

**RESCUE 111: WORLD'S GREATEST RESCUES**

Rescue Enterprises/Distribution Video/Audio 65 minutes, $14.98

From Belgium to New Zealand, North America to Austria, this reality-based drama is a best-of-collage culled from the popular television show. It's also full of proof that scary life-and-death situations intriguel TV viewers as well as home video con-

**ANIMATION**

**TELEVOD**

Millim 63 minutes, $19.95

This computer-generated animation fest is turned upside down when a science-fiction fantasy that jumps in and out of some pretty far-out landspace and is written and directed as an Orwellian social commentary on modern television and society's fixation on violence and negative energy. It's pretty much succeeds in hitting its point home. The storyline follows a day in the life of a "Skully," a living skeleton who has more in common with the narrator of "Tales From The Crypt" than with Gillian Anderson's character on "The X-Files," who shares a similar name. What makes the program even more interesting is its soundtrack—an original collaboration from the unlikely trio of Queen's member Scott Rockenfield, Paul Speer, and Sir Mix-

**POOH'S GRAND ADVENTURE: THE SEARCH FOR CHRISTOPHER ROBIN**

Disney 1 hour, 16 minutes, $24.99

Next to Mickey Mouse, Winnie-the-Pooh has become one of the most enduring Disney characters, and in this charming direct-to-video feature the lovable bear is likely to strengthen his appeal with kids as well as adults.

In this first direct-to-video feature from the franchise, Pooh's world is turned upside down when he thinks his best friend, Christopher Robin, is in trouble. He quickly gathers his animal gang, consisting of Tigger, Winnie, Rabbit, Piglet, Eeyore, and Owl, to figure out what to do. Owl may be wise, but in this case he misreads a note left behind by Christopher, sending Pooh and the gang into a panic.

Believing Christopher is in a "forbidden and faraway place," called "skull" instead of "school," they set out to rescue the poor lad. The only problem is that the map is ripped and Christopher, using it to guide them puts them into several hair-raising situ-

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AUGUST
Aug. 11, Rhythm and Bluegrass Festival Seventh Annual T.J. Martell Tailgate Challenge For The Martell Cup, Ridgewood Country Club, Passiac, N.J. 212-388-0612.
Aug. 14-17, MusicFest, Congress Center East, Cologne, Germany. 49-221-9115-050.
Aug. 19, Music For Film Panel Discussion, sponsored by ASCAP and the Independent Film Project, ASCAP Headquarters, New York City.
Aug. 29-Sept. 1, tomatoes, Seattle Arts Festival, Seattle Center, Seattle. 206-288-8546.
SEPTEMBER
Sept. 3-6, CCM Music Fest '97, Lincoln Center, New York. 516-498-3120.
Aug. 11, Texas Tejano Music Festival, Laura Hays Park, Kerrville, Texas, 210-367-3750.
Sept. 8-11, MDE's Latin America & Caribbean Music Market, Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach. 212-681-4270.
Sept. 11-14, National Assn. Of Record Merchandisers Fall Conference, Marriott's Laguna Cliffs Resort, Dana Point, Calif. 619-599-2221.
Sept. 11-14, Bud/Gin Music Conference, City Hall and Continental Auditorium, Burlington, Vt. 802-685-7168.
OCTOBER
Oct. 1, Program Director Seminar, sponsored by Astrobot, Atlanta Airport Hilton and Towers, Atlanta. 404-319-0511.

LIFELINES

BIRTHS
Girl, Hope Jeannette, to Ron and Lesley Howland, June 21 in Calgary, Alberta. Father is a promotion rep at Mercury/Polydor.
Boy, Kendall Vincent to Kevin and Kevina World, June 30 in Pasadena, Calif. Father is assistant new release promotion manager, pre-wrapping, at Warner Bros. Records.
Boy, Noah Levi, to Ed and Stacy Maxon, July 3 in Minneapolis. Father is regional sales manager at Navarre Corp.
Girl, Lindsay Idler, to Stephen and Lynn Johnson, July 15 in Wynewood, Pa. Father is owner of Masters by Johnson.

SO YOU DON'T LAUNCH TUNES BY JAGGED EDGE
(Continued from page 17)

to make Jagged Edge a success story in a way similar to Xcape by marketing the act as a hip-hop group. Earlier in the year, Dapati began taking the act on normal visits to clubs and other street-oriented activities to introduce Jagged Edge to consumers in various markets.

During the second week in June, the label began distributing a DJ Club mix tape containing track snippets from the album and the full-length version of "The Way That You Talk," the first single.

"That's what we were talking about the group, just like what happened with Xcape," says Columbia black music executive Vito Columbia Music Group senior VP Michael Mauldin. "Then we followed up in the streets with stickers, posters, and press material."

"The Way That You Talk" was serviced June 24 to mainstream R&B and crossover stations, with the video debuting July 15 to BET, MTV, the Box, and regional clip shows.

The single was released July 29 at retail.

THE CALENDAR

Gall Hotel, Louisville, Ky. 502-684-9205.
Nov. 5-6, Billboard/Airplay Monitor Radio Seminar & Awards, Orlando Renaissance Resort, Orlando, Fla. 212-536-5000.
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GOOD WORKS
LIFE CONTRIBUTION: The Elton John AIDS Foundation has announced that it will make a $20,000 contribution to the Angelica-Angelous AIDS Health Care Foundation (AHF), the nation’s largest HIV/AIDS medical provider. The contribution, made in support of AHF’s Treatment = Life initiative, will help AHF provide HIV/AIDS medication and related tests for people in Los Angeles County who cannot afford treatment. Contact: Ged Kesner at 213-880-5225 or Anthony Schulte at 213-880-5224.
UNICEF Envoy: Violinist Maxim Vengerov, who records for Teledec Classics International, has been named honorary envoy of UNICEF, the United Nations’ children’s relief organization. Contact: Lisa Knoet at 212-707-2609.
BLOK PARTY: The American Diabetes Assn. will hold a giant block party from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Aug. 17 in New York on Madison Avenue from 42nd Street to 57th Street. The event will include four entertainment stages hosted by DJs from New York’s WBLX, WHTZ (Z100), and WWVY/WWXY/WWZY (New Country W167), Contact: Catherine R. Laporre at 610-206-1212.
Radio Weighs RealAudio Benefits

Web Broadens Reach, But Does It Help At Home?

NEW YORK—Remember when having a World Wide Web site on the Internet was all the rage?

Today, that’s only part of the story, as more and more stations tap their audio lines for a RealAudio feed for increasingly savvy Web surfers. Everywhere, people are tuning in to stations from halfway around the globe on what has become the world’s most expensive radio, the personal computer.

While detractors still say that too much attention to a station’s Web presence takes away from its real battle at home, rock stations offering audio say it has been a valuable tool for dealing with national sales reps, record people, consultants, and more.

Three-A KGSR Austin, Texas, PD Jody Denberg cites regular listening to his Net feed from Dallas, Los Angeles, and Boulder, Colo. “I get a guy who calls in requests from Atlanta,” Denberg notes. While he admits saying “This one goes to 0 and 0 so in Atlanta” once or twice, Denberg remains cautious. “I don’t want to make a point of it, because then it seems [local] people think, ‘I’m here listening. Aren’t I important?’ But I will say by request.”

LOCAL BENEFIT

One local benefit Denberg has found is that “we can now tell people who call and complain about [the signal in 25 different buildings] that they can turn us on online and then they don’t have to mess with their radios.”

Denberg counts RCA’s Art Phillips as a fan. “He listens to us all the time. I guess, because he’s in Los Angeles, and there isn’t a triple A per se [in that market].” Even consultant Dennis Constantine tunes in via the Net. Denberg says, “It’s easier access to our station than phoning in to a listen line. He’ll actually say, ‘Hey, I caught the morning show.’ And he’ll give us some concrete feedback on things that he heard that day.”

Across the street, album KLBJ PD Jeff Carrol is counter-programming with the interactive video technology known as CU-See-Me, “because it sounds even bigger. You can listen to the station on your radio and see what’s happening” on the Web. He admits that having anyone peer into the studio was at first intimidating for the jocks. But “Internet listening... has become a bountiful source of ideas” altogether, he says, “when I talk to a lot of the record people, I encourage them to listen to us. They hear it, and they get it. And they go, ‘OK, I don’t want to bring this to you, because you’re not going to play this. But here’s what you’re going to love.’ And it’s great when you get guys that, instead of attitude you with 10 record people have three, and they’re serious about them. And they say, ‘I’ve heard your station. These will fit you.’”

REAL EDUCATION

Some have seen their RealAudio feed become an educational tool. Active rock KXXX/KXXR Minneapolis music director Bill Jones cited the example of a label person presenting him with a record and saying, “Hey, this fits perfect on your station,” to which Jones inevitably replies, “You don’t know what our station sounds like.”

But Denberg, via KGSR, is well aware of his station’s value. “On a 24-hour audio feed, following a one-day experiment last March, celebrating the release of U2’s recent album, it became U2 FM, playing nothing but U2 music for a day and feeding its programming over its customized U2 page on the Web.”

Says PD Shefile Hart, “We were

(Continued on next page)
blown away. I knew that RealAudio and special promotions with a Web page were huge, but I had no idea that it would be great business.

Hart cites 4,248 hits in 12 hours, with listeners in Canada, Norway, Australia, Brazil, Germany, and France, since KEJS was able to get specific breakouts of where log-ons were coming from. "We have clients asking about it all the time. Salespeople are constantly asking, 'Can we sell it yet? Can we sell it yet?' It's ready to explode," Hart says.

Hart also notes that when the audio does go online, the station will promote its address the same way it promotes its dial positions. WKLX/Ervin has used his RealAudio feed in conjunction with the station's New York-based rep firm. When sales is pitching a client who wants a sample of the station, Ervin says, "They'll say, 'Hey, tell them to pull up our Web address and then listen to our station every day.'"

Competition has made it a necessity. "We have a competitor of ours on our classic rock end, who, on a regular basis, attacks, "says a station as a blue station," Ervin says. He claims they tell potential buyers, "'Did you hear what their morning show did? I can't believe you'd advertise there.'" And some buyer in New York has no way of accessing the station. So, without hesitation I say, 'Tell them to listen to us via the Net if they have it in their office. And listen to us every morning and see we're not that station.'"

Allan Handelman hosts a talk show every Sunday on album WRFX Charlotte, N.C. The show is syndicated through Fox Syndications (the same company handling syndicated morning men John Boy and Billy) but has a Web presence with two years of webcasts under its belt. Handelman says RealAudio gives him a convenient way to close new affiliates. "When I have a new affiliate interested, they say, 'Can you send us a tape?' And I say, 'Sure. But, if you're on the Web, you can pick any show you want, because we archive all the shows.' And I give them the address, and it answers so many questions and saves a lot of work."

GO AHEAD, CALLER

Last year, Handelman did an experiment to gauge his Internet presence. He put together a few Internet-only broadcasts of his program and was surprised at the response. "We got calls continuously, and there wasn't even radio involved. It was all over the country, and we didn't even have a toll-free number, so I didn't expect a phone response just from a Web site," he says, adding that the quality of caller was better. "Maybe because it wasn't a toll-free number and people were paying long distance and paying for it." On a weekly basis, he continues to field calls from the RealAudio listeners. "It's amazing how many routine calls I get now from regular listeners who just listen on the Internet every week." And even within Charlotte, he says, the audio feeds appeals to listeners in the 25-34 demo who might not turn on the radio at night but do spend time on the Internet.

As a syndicated talent, Handelman is careful not to oversell his Web presence. "I don't want my affiliates who are picking up the show to feel I'm trying to drive their listeners away from their radio," he says.

Others are also concerned about overlooking the online aspect at the expense of local listeners. At classic hits WMGK Philadelphia, PD Dan Michaels notes the viability of RealAudio before deciding against it. "In order to get enough streams up to wrap the ear, it would be very expensive, and we wanted to make sure we were taking care of the people who are actually in our listening area more. "We're very careful to weigh how much we invest in time and monetary expenditures," WKLS/Ervin says, "because, hey, we've got 300,000 or 400,000 people a week timing us on the radio. How many people are tuning us on the Web? We can see from the amount of hits the KOSI Web page was racking up. "There's a lot of people there, so if you have quantifiable information about the amount of people hitting your site, it seems even more scientifically correct than the old Arbitron," he says.

Ervin waits for the day when the clarity of the Web signal is improved and tuning in a faraway station is as easy as turning on a conventional radio, free from "having to go through every hoop in the world for substandard quality. When those situations are removed," says Ervin, "and we can track these people and show that there's a whole other audience listening to us via the Web, then we'll have some value there for us, and we'll start to service those people."

Handelman says, "Right now, radio's still superior in quality and convenience. You can take it to the shower and the car and [listen on] a Walkman. (The Web is) so far away from what we do, but he adds, "the quality's getting better and better, so a year from now we might have different views."
When Radiohead began recording their third album last year near Bath, England, the setting couldn't have been more apropos to the music the band was working up. Out in the countryside, Radiohead converted a shed normally used for storing apples into a studio. The days were sunny, and the birds were singing—although the group took notice of a sign warning that the shed was an oxygen-free environment and if you couldn't breathe, you would die, recalls Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood.

"We fixed that, but the message set a rather ominous tone," he continues. "Also, we could see a power station's smoke stacks looming in the distance. So it was a rural area but not quite an idyll. And there were cows hanging about in a field next door, which was sort of nice, but we found out that they all had mad cow disease and were waiting to be burned—in the chimneys of the power station. So there was a disturbing undercurrent to the scene, to say the least, but you had to laugh. It was sort of darkly funny."

The album that resulted from those oddly set sessions, "OK Computer" (Capitol), has its hints of black comedy, albeit in a subtle, laugh-to-keep-from-crying shade. Overall, the record's range is grand, emotional and sublimely reflecting the disc's encompassing aesthetic, the tense mini-epic "Paranoid Android" backs the initial video release, while the hypnotic, gravely beautiful "Let Down" serves as the first single.

Billed for Modern Rock Tracks, "Let Down" is equal parts lament and lullaby, with images of dislocation and disappointment borne on an irresistibly human melody. "There is something strangely comforting about sad music," Greenwood says. "And it's not the release of saying 'life is rubbish.' It's the sharing and the relief it gives you. So whether it's ventured as a bug on the ground as in the song or like a mad cow waiting around to be incinerated, the pain and pleasure of common plights is the stuff of art. "Recognizing your own life in songs or books or pictures is what art is all about."

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Billboard

AUGUST 9, 1997

Mainstream Rock Tracks

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FAST TRACK: Don’t always believe what’s in a name. Take, for example, Artificial Joy Club.

The budding modern rock outfit’s first release is indeed both “Sick & Beautiful,” is anything but a faux attempt at woe-worn “I could be happier” lyricism. Instead, the track is an honest, woe-is-me mantra backed by an aggressive yet decipherrable grunged-out backdrop.

Already, the song, No. 18 this issue on Billboard’s Modern Rock Tracks—and an Airpower pick on the chart—has been showcased on MTV’s “120 Minutes,” while the band just peeked away from a month-long gig on the second stage of Lollapalooza. And we’re preparing to take off on its own three-month nationwide bar crawl.

“Just a few months ago,” says lead singer Sal, a musician who easily oozes star power with a bawdy but endearing vibe. “We were still editing our video when we got the call for Lollapalooza. We were thinking, ‘We can’t go…Oh, we have to go.’ Now, we’re getting organized for that (tour), booking new instrument cases and whatever. I think I finally have enough underwear to make it for three months.”

But again, don’t be fooled. The five-member, Canadian-rooted band has been readying itself for such a step since it assembled in 1992 in the spirit of the Seattle grunge scene hearing Nirvana and Soundgarden.

“It had just broken the new frontier barriers,” Sal says. “As a lyricist, I was able to say ‘fuck’ and stuff. That was a wonderfully freeing experience that wasn’t around in the ’80s. Now, if I feel like writing about a bowel movement or something, I’m going to do it, goddammit. That was my favorite part of grunge.”

The Artifical Joy Club independently put out its first album, “So Very Happy,” in ’93, when the group was known as the Something (after a “cheesy restaurant” in Rochester, N.Y., Sal says), produced by Artificial Joy Club’s guitarist Louie Howe. The project was picked up by MCA; it then “sold” double playback, Sal quips.

The band followed with “Nude Photos Inside,” which again failed to ignite. Still, they persevered, with Sal, Howe, and bass player Tim Dupont boling up in a Los Angeles hotel room for a month to write the songs that now make up their debut project on Crunchy/Interscope, “Sick & Beautiful.”

“We had a field day. The music was just flowing,” Sal says. “We’ve all known each other for so long. I’ve known [Dupont] for a decade and Sal says, serves up the theme that “any-thing that is good for you tastes lousy, and anything you actually like is what’s bad for you,” says Sal. “This song is about just wanting what’s best for you, because the same thing is true in relationships. For a lot of our women, we like that bad-boy kind of thing. This is about all my boyfriends wrapped into one person.”

Witness in the lyrics: “All the world’s your shitbag/I’m just your Marlboro/Light me up then bunt me/You’re sick and beautiful.”

In general, Sal says, her lyrics tend to take a turn toward the deri-sive side of life, however, usually with a slice of tongue-in-cheek.

“Deep inside, I guess I’m a really bitter person,” she says. “I used to work in lots of flash stripper bars and got a real depressed view of men in their lowest form. It think it’s wreaked my life. But I

Six Is The Magic Number For MAC America’s KOAZ

DOES PHOENIX HAVE room for six country stations? Owens Broadcasting Corporation is betting on it. That’s why his company formed a partnership last month with another family-owned firm in Phoenix, KOAZ, and announced plans to flip KOAZ from jazz to country in September.

That station will join Owens Broadcasting’s KXNX, the classic country AM KCCW, Chancellors Media’s KMRL, and New Century Media’s KBUQ, along with suburban FM KSWW, in the Phoenix country wars.

The new station will be built around morning hosts Tim Tight and Willy D. Loom, Owens says he first came up with the concept of launching another country FM in town when Hattrick and Loom hired him. It was available. They were the popular morning team at KMRL before defecting to Chicago last year to host mornings at the now-defunct WXXK.

“Our research has told us that even though they’ve been gone a year, there was a real cry for their return,” says Owens. “People missed them, and they were the top recognizable names.

Although both KMRL and WUSN (US 90) Chicago expressed interest in the duo, Owens says there was never much bidding. “It really wasn’t about money,” he says.

With the No. 1 morning show (Steve Harmon and Carrie Wilson) already on KNIX, launching a station at Hattrick and Loom seemed like the logical choice.

Because no stations were for sale in Phoenix, Owens decided to team up with MAC America, owner of KOAZ, KxzK, and KESZ, to form Owens/MAC Radio LLC, which will operate those two stations. Owens will be the managing partner of the new entity, in addition to his duties as COO and part-owner at Owens Broadcasting and his co-ownership stake in New Frontier Communications. Until the creation of Owens/MAC, the small company was an arm’s length away, already projected for late fall, Owens Broadcasting will operate and market KOAZ under a cross-owning agreement.

Owens says his business is based on KOAZ doesn’t call for any of the competitors to flip formats. “Our goal is not to build another country station,” he says. “There has been a 17 chase of country 25-64 in this market for the last 10 years and KOAZ has been very consistent.

“KMRL is a fine station, a good country station, and I’m not expecting them to go away.” Instead, he says, “I’m trying to create a niche that’s going to be — a niche that’s going to be unique. People who want to have something a little different.”

Owens says KOAZ will be “distinctly different” from KNIX, but his only other clue as to KOAZ’s future direction is to point out that Harmon and Wilson target a 35- to 54-year-old audience, while Hattrick and Loom’s strength is in 25-34. “The uniqueness is having Tim and Willy,” he says. “They’re going to do their thing, and I’m going to do my thing, but because he knew the Hattrick and Loom hiring would leak out, partly to help sell the station to potential advertisers it’s going to help make labels aware of what was coming. ‘It doesn’t take a brain surgeon to figure out that they’re going to do country,” he says.

With consultant Rusty Walker and researcher Bill Moyes, Owens is building his plan for KOAZ and expects to hire a PD imminently. KOAZ will have a program- air, and sales staff distinct from KOAZ but will be “very little consolid-ation,” Owens says. The September debut is contingent on building studios at the KOAZ facility.

The son of Owens Broadcasting founder and country legend Buck Owens, Michael Owens paid his dad’s name in the company. He started as a junior at KUZZ Bakersfield, Calif., when he was 15. He worked his way up to part-time, then full-time announcer and was later named music director.

He took a three-year hiatus from radio to serve as his father’s personal manager and director/producer of the syndicated “Buck Owens’ Ranch” TV show. Returning to radio, he became sta- tion manager and national sales manager at KUZZ, then later added those same duties at newly purchased rocker KKEK Delano, Calif., in the mid-’70s. In 1978, he moved to Phoenix to manage the family-owned properties there, adding the COO title two years ago.

Owens says the merger with MAC America made sense, because “we’re two locally, family-owned operations, and we’ve known each other for years.” Both firms, he says, realized that in the current climate, “it was necessary to get bigger or go away.”

A number of up-and-coming conglomerates has had its challenges but also a few tactical advantages, Owens says. “What we’re doing here is a lie. We’re small, compared to Wall Street, he says. “We don’t have the deep pockets of the publicly held and traded companies. We aren’t going to do wonderful things with that money. On the flip side, he says, “we can move pretty quick and can act and react to situations that we don’t have to go anywhere else for permission.”

Although Owens says there are always potential buyers for any newly formed company is evidence that he has no plans to sell. Besides, he says, after a lifetime in the family busi- ness, “I don’t know what I’d do if I didn’t do this.”

PHILLIS STARK

BILLOW, AUGUST 9, 1997

www.americanradiohistory.com
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DANGEROUS HOPES TO STOP THE VIOLENCE WITH 'Bullets'

By GINA VAN DER LIET

LOS ANGELES—Dangerous Records is getting ready to launch "Bullets Don't Have No Names," a project consisting of a music video, single, and documentary promoting nonviolence.

"I kept hearing about all these people dying every time I turned on the news," said the executive producer, Ronnie Phillips. "Many of them are just children. It just hit me one day that it's wrong."

Phillips decided that he wanted to stop talking about ending violence and start taking action. He asked Los Angeles-based label executive/ songwriter/producer preacher to co-write the track "Bullets Don't Have No Names" with Dillion Roper. The song features Atlantic frontman lead singer Jon and former motown group the Originals.

The song, which was recorded on a "5 Miles To Eternity" FM Rocks. Vicky Meyer produced the clip; Pat Darrin directed photography.

NEW YORK

Chris Thomas King’s "Impatiently" video was the work of director Miguel Delgado, who also directed photography during the shoot. Peter Cohen and Ralph Laucella executive-produced for Wonderboy Productions Inc.

MARC SMITZE directed the clip "Guardian Angel" by Wyelsey featuring Celia Cruz, which also stars Lauryn Hill and Pras of the Fugees. David Moscovitz produced, while Wellness Hackett directed photography for Notorious Pictures Inc.

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MOVIE VIDEO PROGRAMMING

DANGEROUS HOPES TO STOP THE VIOLENCE WITH 'Bullets'

The cast members of the "Bullets Don't Have No Names" video get together on the set. Pictured behind the brood of children are Allen, member of the group Troop; Ronnie Phillips, president, Dangerous Records; Duke-E Fingers, co-producer; rapper Lil' Honey and Leroy Dukes, co-producer.

The song is scheduled to be released in late August. The R&B-oriented set will feature Jon Jernon, the Originals, and Britian Reflection Records vocalist "Who Can Hear Me" and "Don't Do It Again." They "we're very proud of the project," says Originals vocalist Freddie Gorman out there to think twice before they get their hands on a gun and do something they may regret later on.

Music Video Programming

Fors weeks ending July 27, 1997

THE MOST-PLAYED CLIPS AS MONITORED BY BROADCAST DATA SYSTEMS

"NEW" ONS ARE REPORTED BY BOTH BBS AND BIDS ALONG WITH BANDS AHEAD

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LOVE SPIT LOVE GOES BEYOND PSYCHEDELIC WITH MAYERICK SET

opened for the Furs on tour.

Frank Butler, former bassist for the Furs, sat in on the recording of the band’s first album, “Talk Talk Talk,” and he had what Butler himself calls a ‘form

An occasional column highlighting albums of special artistic merit that Billboard editors regard as being underrated at the time of their initial release.

While most probably know the Psychotic Furs’ “Pretty In Pink” as the title track to the 1986 coming-of-age teen film directed by John Hughes and starring Molly Ringwald, the original and far superior version of the song is included on the Furs’ second and finest album, “Talk Talk Talk.”

Fronted by Richard Butler, now the leader of Love Spit Love, the Furs included three of the world’s best-known artists in their U.K. home base with their self-titled 1980 debut. The album, produced by Steve Lillywhite, manages to mix the rage and raw power of the Sex Pistols with the soulful yet at times jazzy and David Bowie and Roxy Music.

Love Spit Love, under the first record, Steve Lillywhite said he wanted to make a record that sounded like the band doing a great live show and would forever lend good to start a band’s career, Butler says.

“As the second record, we felt like we could be a little more experimental,” Butler adds. “Talk Talk Talk”—represented by four tracks on the forthcoming compilation album, “The Godforsaken” (see story, page 9)—the band once again teamed with Lillywhite. “He was the best possible producer that’s the only way that I can say I was at that time,” says Butler.

In the studio, the Furs—then still with its original lineup of Butler on vocals, his brother Tim on bass, guitarist John Ashton and Roger Morris on guitar. Duncan Kilburn on saxophone, keyboards, and Vince Ely on drums—paid the price for upping the ante on their musical ambitions.

“I do remember the songs taking a long time,” Butler says. “We were holed up in a studio in north London for months and months trying to come up with those songs.”

The band has, clearly paid off as “Talk Talk Talk” features a varied sonic assault few bands, including the Furs themselves, have been able to match. Especially notable is “Dumb Waitek,” a track that begins with the wall of Kilburn’s saxophone.

Butler says with a laugh, “It’s a real juggernaut, isn’t it? I remember getting that real low review, saying it was the cheesiest saxophone line ever.”

As for the group’s dense sound, Butler explains that it just came naturally. “There were six people in the

The hard work has paid off, as “Talk Talk Talk” is Butler’s best work. “I’d like to think that,” he says. “I couldn’t be more pleased with the way it turned out.”

On the album’s third track, “Trysome Eatone” features Butler’s trademark rasp, but the singer has added an eerie falsetto to his vocal arsenal on tracks like “Little Fist” and “Talk Talk Talk”.

“It was just something that happened on this record,” Butler says. “And it happened quite naturally. It wasn’t like I was thinking, ‘I should go falsetto on a couple of places.’ Most of these songs were written around my acoustic guitar with Steve and Fortus, a lot on acoustic guitar. When he played ‘Little Fist’ it just seemed natural to go into that voice.”

In the suburban neighborhood surrounding Butler’s New York apartment the album was also served as an inspiration for his lyrics, particularly “Little Fist,” was inspired by the various different words characters searching for meaning in their lives.

Butler says “Place” is like a Third World street in some ways,” he says. “There’s this hotel, the St. Marks Hotel, where there’s a death every four or five years and ‘Little Fist’ was about some of the people you see walking in and out of there.”

On other tracks, including the first single, “Long Time,” Love Spit Love naturally sounds a bit like the Psychotic Furs.

Lori Baldwin, a marketing executive for Mayerick (U.S.), says the label is acknowledging Butler’s past with the Furs, but isn’t necessarily playing it up.

“We feel this is more about the music than a whole lot of strategy,” she says. “This is the buzz is relevant, and Richard Butler is still relevant today. It’s an extra blessing that he comes with a new sound.”

Mayerick serviced the album to college radio July 22 and “Long Time” to Triple-A and modern rock July 30. The label also plans to run to work the song at the adult top 40.

Modern rock WNVX (the Nerve) Rochester, N.Y., Dick Erickson says the act “wants to break through record for Love Spit Love, it appeals to the format’s older and younger demos. “It sounds like a really great straight-down-the-middle record,” he says.

In addition, Paul Anderson, who’s my favorite hometown newspaper,” says, has directed a video for the track.

Mayerick also attempted to drum up support for the album by having the band play various markets in July and by holding listening parties for retailers and WEA staffers in key markets.

Bob Bell, new-release buyer for the 230-store, Torrance, Calif.-based Warehouse Entertainment, is also on board that the album could do well on the band’s breakthrough. “The last record did extremely well at alternative radio,” he says. “I would hope that this time, with Butler’s support, the record will build on that.”

Love Spit Love also has plans to do an acoustic radio promotion tour in August before heading out on a club tour in October.

Although Love Spit Love’s initial promo plans may seem like a step backward after the British transplant’s initial stormy reception, Butler says he doesn’t mind the back-to-basics approach.

Butler, the first Psychotic Furs record, the record company didn’t even want to come over and tour, so we did it under our own steam in a van and played around that way. ‘Love Spit Love’ hasn’t done anything as hellish as that.”

In fact, Butler seems to have come to terms with his past, while looking toward the future.

“We may do some Furs songs on tour, says Butler. “I feel I’m a part of the Furs, because we didn’t want people to think they were going to get their favorite hits from the Psychotic Furs. But having established this band, I think it’s safe to try a couple of Psychotic Furs songs if I feel like it.”

U.K. Database

(Continued from page 6)

collecting body Phonographic Performance Ltd. (PPL) and MCPS have thought, always disputed ownership of the material in that country. The labels argued it was theirs because they had supplied much of it; MCPS claimed ownership on the bases that it came from, creativity, and administration.

However, both sides say now that there is a desire to move forward towards a deal. John Hutchinson comments, “We’ve brought the whole thing to a point where discussions are possible.”

Scoping sides, both sides have moved very closely together over the last month. There’s a new understanding.”

Hutchinson notes that with the new deal there is little prospect of rapid progress. He says the first priority is to strike a service agreement with PFL to facilitate its distribution of artist performance royalties, a role it acquired in legislation enacted at the beginning of this year (Billboard, Dec. 31, 1995). Hutchinson argues that the complicated structure between the MCPS and PPL/BPI to market the database.

Hutchinson says that the database manager, John backstage, works place for 12 months and that the joint marketing venture will not be considered until after the service agreement is in place.

When the database is available, though, it should prove a valuable tool and a fascinating distraction.

The database manager, MCPS head of repertoire Malcolm Tibber, says the database, which he believes will eventually be adopted the entire music industry. The American National Discography—consists of parts:

- The works file, which is a record of all works registered by composers and publishers;
- The file of individual recordings on each work, effectively each album’s track listing;
- Each product released;
- The Interested Party National File.

Tibber says the interested party file was extended from carrying basic artist information to biographical details, but only if the publisher, and even replicator—“anything that’s an interested party.”

Tibber says that the Current Processing is only used by the database, when it’s released in the UK or “everything of note” from the major and indie labels’ catalogs.
showcases the Nashville area's non-
country music.

"It's just a matter of time until some of the Spoonbath bands hit," says, NEA executive director Sherry Bond.

"They're excellent."

The music of the 'Boro Beat draws willy-nilly from musical influences spanning the past four decades, a wild mix of Beatles, Kinks, Replacements, Specials, Cars, Police, Pavement, Syd, and Prince. But the results are fresh and spirited. If there is a Merfreesboro sound, it's the sound of youthful, unembittered optimism.

The town is located in the geographical center of the state and, in fact, was the state capital from 1818 to 1826, when the seat of government moved to Nashville. It is also, according to local lore, the geographic center of the universe. Williams says that an apocryphal story has it that a few years ago, "some physicists" from North Carolina decided not only that Merfreesboro was the physical center of the universe but that they had divined the actual site.

"C'mon," says Williams. "I'll show you where it is." It turns out to be the local waffle house, a sprawling sort of general store. A mural outside refers to the store as the Cosmos. Refrigerator coolers line three walls, holding more beer than any one town could possibly need. Students here drink a lot of beer, note Williams. On cue, Ross Montelone, a member of the local group Stump, turns around from one of the coolers, holding it, turns out, some iced tea.

Williams says that Spoonbath now uses that cosmic cachet in its ads, declaring that Spoonbath is "soothing in its nothingness".

"I have a theory on why this is such a great music town," says Lisa LaCour, at her garage sale. She has been an MTSU student, a youth therapist, and a former member of the two- woman group known as Dorothy Park.

Now she's packing for a move to Los Angeles and a job with a public relations firm specializing in music.

"Musicians come here from all over the country and all over the world to study at MTSU," she says. "Then they go in bands and start having so much fun that they drop out of school."

EDUCATIONAL WELLSPRING

Not all of them drop out, of course. MTSU's Department of Recording Industry is gaining an enviable reputation as a powerhouse in music business education. Musicians gain a valuable education on how to control their careers in a twofold way: through business and through the studio.

Sam Baker, drummer for Fl. Oz. (previously known as Skeg), former member of F Particles and Blind Farmers From Hell, notes that MTSU students are very techno-savvy and "can't be messed with in the studio."

Williams was attracted to the business through marketing and a love of music. Originally from Kingsport in East Tennessee, he studied marketing at East Tennessee State University and one semester shy of a degree, decided to try working in marketing in Florida. Eventually, Williams decided he wanted to do graduate work in marketing and came to MTSU to finish his undergraduate credits, though not because of the RIM program. "I love meeting musicians, and it changed his life.

"Music is a business," he says, "and Spoonbath president Richard Williams outside the label offices.

Unfortunately it's treated that way. Marketing is a creative tool, if it's used right. It doesn't change consumer behavior, the psychology of it, what drives someone to buy. And I've always loved music but never knew that it was my calling, what I was destiny to do."

At MTSU, he has a chance to meet young hip-hop artist Count Bass D. "He was doing his thing on campus," says Williams. "He had come for the recording industry program but lasted just a semester. So, I started managing Count. He was living in my apartment, and the idea for Spoonbath was just beginning to develop. I learned some really important lessons during that time. I got Count signed to Columbia Records and learned even more lessons about what it's like to be a freshman manager going into a major company. That takes the naiveté right off you."

"So that was a motivation for me to start my own company, on my own terms. I wanted a union, a creative tool between the artist and the company. My goal was to create something that was more than just a record label. It's not just that. I view it as a company, an extension of Spoonbath's and the artists."

Mainstreet is a regular hangout for pop bands.

Williams says he came to the record business accidentally, albeit through MTSU.

MURFREESBORO EMERGES AS AN UNLIKELY MUSIC MECCA (Continued from page 1)
album, 1960’s "Subliminal Plastic Motives," which was sold both at retail and direct mail. We’ve also got a CD-Rom of 40,000 units. This does not count Spongebath’s mail-order sales.

“I’m long term in my thinking business,” Williams says. “I was floundering financially, but ultimately, we’re staying with artists who write great music and have something to say. Culturally, the only band we’re interested in is the one because most of them are from the South.”

The only band that isn’t Fleshpaint, from Ottawa, Canada. That is a band on an Iron powder pop, that will break commercial- ly, they have great songs. We have a band from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., called the C-60s, who come up on here. So, our reach has expan- ded, without us trying to become a big company. We’ve been quiet; we’ve been sort of a mystery, even in Nashville, but now we’ve evolved into the place where we can be a little bit more of a question.”

Other Spongebath acts are Count Bass D, who’s a sort of hip-hop, pop group from Sparta, Tenn.; Self, the self-acclaimed Matt Mahaffey group that he released on his own label, Murfreesboro; FL Oz, Seth Timbs’ heralded piano-pop group; and the Roaries, from Manchester, Tenn. Known for their kitchen-rock virtu- o- sity David Henderson’s lead work.

MAKING MUSIC SCENE

By now, the quality of the local scene, says Mahaffey, has been Timbs’ musicianship and songwriting.

“When I moved here,” says Mah- affey, “it was nothing but jam bands. I knew I wasn’t gonna have that. It’s like, if I can’t get music going on here, and Seth was doing that.”

Timbs, who is that rarity, a musician who records himself in a studio since childhood, and his idols were Thelonious Monk and Elton John. He writes literate, witty, and melodic, piano-driven pop. We’re getting some great music at MTSU before dropping out.

“About that time,” says Timbs, “me and Matt were in a band called Minoyo. We were really into quitting school and doing the band thing—real idealistic. But out of that came Sponge- bath. I was just getting out of rock and roll for a while. I missed the band for the thing, and we talked about how we wanted to do it and the talent we wanted to pool together. And after that, I said, ‘I want to get in, and I want to be a part of it, because it really went into the business side of it. Me and Matt have helped with the art department side of things, like the Features and Gumption.”

Unfortunately, at this stage in the band’s career, FL Oz’s gigs are a rela- tively rare occurrence. FL Oz is traveling with his up-to-date Yamada piano, which he says is a logistical nightmare.

“We have to, like, rent a U-Haul trailer all the time,” says Timbs. “We’ve barely stayed out of town because of that. We’re all based in Nashville, but not Chattanooga, Tenn. or Knoxville, Tenn. or Atlanta. We’re really anxious to do that, but we lose so much money after all.”

Ben Folds carries around a baby grand with him. It’s easier for him because he can take the legs off and put it up on his side. He wants to rent a piano.

His other piano, his childhood Wurl- itzer, is in Sebastian’s, the second- story jazz and blues club on the Boro in Nashville. He’s got a very nice street from Spongebath. That way, he has someplace where he can come and play regularly whenever he feels like it.

“I’m probably the only real native here,” says Timbs. “The town has dou- bled in size in the last six or seven years. When I was growing up, there really wasn’t much here at all.”

Besides Timbs, the other leading musicians on the scene are largely self-taught one-man band, musician, producer, and engineer. Mahaffey came to MTSU to enroll in the music program, and dropped out after two years.

“I got suspended because I wasn’t studying,” says Mad Jeff. “I was learning a lot more outside the classroom. I had a 4-track in my dorm room where I moved here and was recording a lot of Hip hop artists. I used to shower talk in the bathroom for a vocal booth. At school they were teach- ing me how to wrap mike cords. They loved the songs I was doing, but they were failing me on all my tests. I said, ‘Doesn’t this kind of defeat the purpose?’ I wanted myself to engineer and produce from listening to albums.”

Mahaffey wrote, engineered, pro- duced, played almost all instruments, and sang the songs on the new Self album, “The Half-Baked Serenade.” He recorded it in his living room. It’s edgier than any Spongebath album before it, but it’s very much going to listen to jazz to whatever. Mahaffey is the most studio-savvy of the techno- murs in Murfreesboro, and it is really a great record.

“Mike and Matt are in a band called Count Bass D for Spongebath, along with producing the C-60s and Fleshpaint and the downtown band, the Nylon.”

“I’m also doing a side thing called Greg Grunge & The Booty Hoop,” he says. “It’s completely white-boy hip hop, more of a rock and roll band. We’ve got some songs that are already in high schools around here.”

WIDE-RANGING INFLUENCES

“This is all commercial music,” Williams says of the wide-ranging sounds the local bands produce. “There’s no real antithesis. EP has been likened to the early Kinks, and while it’s impossible to categorize it, the band carries that sort of free association. They say, ‘This song is about the French’ or ‘This band is about the Japanese.’”

Says he and Seth Timbs first spotted them in the Chameleon Coffee House and knew immediately that they belonged in the Spongebath mix.

Matt Pelham, the Features’ vocal- 1000

ist, says, “We met our drummer when we went to MTSU. The rest of us had been a band in high school, and middle school, in Sparta, Tenn. Then we started rehearsing and playing at a local coffeehouse here, the Chameleon Cafe. Rick came and saw us and asked us if we wanted to be part of what he wanted to do. I wish now I could have stayed in school longer and found out more about what they offer, but once

hooked up with Spongebath, we sort of dedicated most of our time to rehearsing and playing shows... Things seem to be taking off.”

He says immediate plans call for world touring and CD-Rom from college radio and then touring colleges starting in September.

“We play Murfreesboro twice a month,” says Matt McLenon, who manages the show. “We usually draw a decent crowd, mostly college students. It seems like 20 groups are coming in a day here. From what I can see, and I’m watching Spongebath start, there’s been many, many bands come in. Every time I see a new flier, it’s a band I’ve never heard of. I think we’ve lately been very, very, really good.”

Another advantage of the shared MTsu-Spongebath experience is that most of the musicians have contri- buted to the annual MTSU CD stu- dent sampler (used as a promotional and rec- 1000

MURFREESBORO EMERGES AS AN UNLIKELY MUSIC MECCA

bination of the much the same data- base.

Of others joining the collaboration process, he comments, “What we are in the process of doing is to influence those who have the same business ethic, the same business vision. They should feel their justification for joining us is in what we are doing, and that is being re- placed with positive value.”

John Hutchinson, chief executive of the PRS/MCPS, says that other like-minded groups have been attracted by that and are declining to be affiliated with which ones. It’s understood, however, that expressions of interest have come from Sweden’s STIM, Denmark’s NCK, Greece’s AEP, and Portugal’s SPA.

Asked whether a third body is ready to try to become the current, local management of a triumvirate, Hutchison re- sponds, “Sort of. There are ongoing talks—and it might not be just a tri- umvirate.”

Hutchison emphasizes, though, that any group seeking to work with PRS/MCPS and BUMA/STEMRA must be motivated to serve as part of a new power bloc, but with an enthusiasm to support the stated Anglo-Dutch business philosophy.

That philosophy was outlined by PRS/MCPS in announcing the link with BUMA/STEMRA. A statement issued earlier this year says that it will “centrate on immediately examining ways of coordinating licensing, collection, and distribution procedures, licensing ourselves and the labels, through the mechanism of duplication of effort and thereby eliminate inefficiencies which result from present ways of working.”

Hutchison says a practical effect of such thinking is to question the effectiveness of both the British and Dutch bodies each maintaining their own version of the much the same database.

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Hutchison notes the benefits of such cooperation: “I could spend £15 to 20 million pounds on a new performing right computer system and the same again on a mechanical system. But what is the point of a society in one country spending that kind of money if somebody else in another country is already doing the job very well? Link- age of computer systems is not a prob- lem.”

Hutchison says that since the announcement of the PRS/MCPS/ BUMA/STEMRA link, the bodies have been in talks with “a number of other groups to a variety of degrees.”

He declines to specify the detail of the discussions, though he says not all of the talks have been positive. “There have been those of the French, who probably don’t know much,” says Mahaffey, “but Virgin was at the last one I went to.”

He adds, “I would never move from here now. I like visiting L.A. and I love New York, but I couldn’t live there; I couldn’t live in San Francisco. I just wouldn’t come back, and Murfreesboro’s a great place to be.”

“We have little places to play that everybody plays and we’re not afraid to go to Mainstreet. Granted, they’re shitty gigs, but for some reason it’s a neat little scene. I never expected to have a scene the way it is. I don’t think you can become overweight. To put it simply, the town couldn’t physically and logically accommodate it.”

predicted European Rights Groups Strike Happy Chord

EUROPEAN RIGHTS GROUPS STRIKE HAPPY CHORD

We have to, like, rent a U-Haul trailer all the time,” says Timbs. “We’ve barely stayed out of town because of that. We’re all based in Nashville, but not Chattanooga [Tenn.] or Knoxville [Tenn. or Atlanta. We’re really anxious to do that, but we lose so much money after all.”

Ben Folds carries around a baby grand with him. It’s easier for him because he can take the legs off and put it up on his side. He wants to rent a piano.

His other piano, his childhood Wurl-
parang articles highlighting McLachlan’s tour brainchild.

"Her history with ‘Fumbling Towards Ecstasy,’ coupled with the Lilith Festivals, has helped build McLachlan in the forefront of the rock music scene," says Vicky Szydloewski, music product manager of retailer Vir- gin Megastore. "In the U.S. and Canada, it was No. 1 the first week out of the box and is now holding steady at No. 2 behind the new Puff Daddy. She now goes along with the heavy-hitters like Tori Amos, Tracy Chapman, and Jewel."

As a president Clive Davis views his artist as the exception to the rule, saying that achieving her newfound status is rare without a hit single to fuel it. She really stands as a shining example of an artist who has tremendous live charisma and has been able to make that hit single a sure fire hit," says Davis. "That’s very substantial. So many artists blow up and out as a result of hit singles, where they have a short shelf life. She’s taken their audience and genre and she hasn’t thoroughly run it over like Jewel.

Tower Records senior VP Stan Goodman says that McLachlan’s success also reflects a growing diversity among consumer-buying interests. "It seems like we’re back to the good old days when you could go to Tower and get a whole variety selling, from folk to rock & R&B, he says. "The landscape is very broad now; in our top 25, we have artists as diverse as Thugs-N-Harmony, Pantera, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Lita Ford—and McLachlan. What is pop music? It’s everything." For radio, the McLachlan beacon is just beginning to take a shine to audi- ences in the way that Fleetwood Mac discovered her pastel-painted music for the first time. "Building A Mystery" was first worked to modern rock stations as a single track off of the debut album, McLachlan 12 on the Modern Rock Tracks chart this issue. It is also perched at No. 1 on Billboard sister publication Rock Airplay Monitor’s Top-Radio A chart, No. 10 on modern AC, and No. 20 on adult top 40.

"We’ve already seen a lot of success with ‘Building A Mystery,’" says Steve Blatter, VP of programming for modern rock KLYY Los Angeles, where the song is No. 1 with 42 with 48% peak week. "We’re still in the early stages, but for a record that’s this young, it’s performing very well."

" McLachlan is an artist that proba- bly should have broken a few years ago," he adds. "In the last six to 12 months, a whole raft of singer/songwriter artists like Jewel, Sheryl Crow, and Fiona Apple have done really well with the audience we target. And here’s McLachlan doing this longer than a lot of them.

The single shipped July 21 to top 40, with 10,200 copies sold on 41 mainstream outlets. It is No. 27 in Hot 100 Airplay. No commercial single has been made available.

McLachlan is top 40 radio. It’s passionate, and it’s infectious, which makes it fit with other music that’s working now for top 40 radio. But you can’t compare McLachlan like the world just caught up with Sarah. ‘Building A Mystery’ is similar to a record that will break through and do well. The audience reaction is the same; it’s just that more people are now exposed to her talents."

The Clinton administration has made the treaties a priority, and legislation to implement them will be approved by Congress and signed by the president by the end of the current congressional session next year. The proposed legislation will include the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performance and Phonograms Treaty—negotiated in late December 1996 at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva. The WIPO treaty grants to record companies the right to authorize digital delivery of copyrighted works. Previous inter- national treaties, such as the Universal Copyright Convention, have given record companies reproduction rights to music, but the new treaty grants the right to license transmission as well. The treaties also would make it illegal for anyone to circumvent copyright protection devices for reproducing music.

Some provisions of the treaty are already part of U.S. copyright law, but the new pact will require other countries to play by the same rules. Neil Turkewitz, RIAA’s executive VP, says, "U.S. record companies and performers will at least be entitled to the same deal- ing that they’re entitled to in the U.S.

The most important part of the treaties are not covered by U.S. law, which is why Congress has to pass the implementa- tion legislation before the treaties can take effect. Right now, the proposed House bill would make it illegal to manufacture, import, or traffic in devices that circumvent techniques like encryption that protect copy- righted works in cyberspace.

The bill also would prohibit the unauthorized altering or removal of management information such as the title of the work, its cre- ator, the copyright owner’s name, and terms and conditions for its use. This provides the conditions for electronic commerce of copyrighted material, so you can get paid for what it is it’s about, that is the dream."

The implementing legislation—the WIPO Copyright Treaties Implementa- tion Act (HR 2281)—was intro- duced by Rep. Howard Coble, chair- man of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts and Intel- lectual Property, along with Rep. Hyde, chairman of the House Judi- ciary Committee, John Conyers, the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, and Barney

Digital-copyright treaties up for vote in Congress

Justice dept. asks for change in decree restricting ascap abroad

Consolidation of dvd royalties collection is goal of mpeg la

Justice dept. asks for change in decree restricting Ascp abroad

Consolidation of DVD royalties collection is goal of MPEG LA

Admitted to knowing anything about the company or its charter. That execu- tive is Richard Marquardt, head of Warner Advanced Media Operations (WAMO) in Olphant, Pa., which replicates discs for Warner Home Video and is a distributed label, and sev- eral DVD independents.

Marquardt would not comment directly on the contentious MPEG LA has already taken steps to make sure it complies with a payment scheme. "We’re securing reserves in a special escrow account and leaving a fraction of what the royalty will be,” he notes.

Fees paid to various CD patent holders,特别是 MPEG LA, were "not fair compensation," Marquardt main- tains. "We need to avoid that situation in DVD if the consumer is going to ben- efit from low-cost mass media. Other- wise, it has gamed literature written all over it. Royalties are a big reason for the high cost of laserdisc production, hindering acceptance of the format.

Futa says the think MPEG LA gets away with is that it requires each participant eventually will limit the royalties paid to a single check, smaller in total than one written to a levy holder. That is, once word gets out.

MPEG LA, which Futa says he con- (Continued on next page)
**SUIT AGAINST RED ANT COULD AFFECT SALE**
(Continued from page 6)

SUIT AGAINST RED ANT COULD AFFECT SALE

(Co-sponsored by Chicago Tribune)

Delicious also alleges that Red Ant failed to reimburse it for $900,000 advanced on behalf of Delicious to cover the cost of the store's ability or intention to pay the $500,000 balance of the purchase price" due Delicious; and that it has "paid no "interest" at least $1.5 million "in an apparent attempt to satisfy certain creditors of Red Ant or its parent company, Alliance.

The suit also claims that Delicious' officers (brothers/co-founders Mike and Rick Ross) joined the joint venture to "give Delicious' name" and keep it afloat and that the loan has not been repaid.

Delicious states that it has "made several offers in excess of $1 million to buy out Red Ant's interest" in the joint venture and that they have been "flatly rejected."

As a result of its alleged failure to perform its duties under the terms of the joint-venture agreement, Delicious claims, Red Ant has failed to "protect Delicious' share of proceeds from the sale of its records, and to manufacture, market, promote, and distribute its records."

A Red Ant spokeswoman says the label has no comment on the suit. In statements to the Wall Street Journal, Delicious president A. Arkin characterizes the suit as "a piece of neurotic litigation with no substance."

**OTHER LABELS ON THE BLOCK**

Alliance's other label assets may soon be sold.

Sources confirm that 32 Records has put in a bid on the company's U.K.-based catalog imprint Castle Communications, also exempted from the bankruptcy filing due to its status as a non-U.S. holding and Concord Jazz (Billboard Bulletin, July 22).

**CO-TRUSTEES OF EAZY-E ESTATE FILE SUIT**

(Continued from page 6)

CO-TRUSTEES OF EAZY-E ESTATE FILE SUIT

(Ruthless label, filed by Mike Klein; Los Angeles, April 11)

Assistance in preparing this story provided by Jeff Clark-Mende in London.
Hot 100 Airplay

AUGUST 9, 1997

Billboard

Hot 100 Singles Sales

AUGUST 9, 1997

Complied from a national sample of POPS (point of sale) recorded retail sales and rack outlets which report number of units sold. SoundScan, Inc. data is used in the Hot 100 Singles chart.
R&B ingenue Simone Hines recently snagged a recording contract with Epic Records. Looking on as Hines inks the deal, standing from left, are Ed Woods, Hines' lawyer; Tracy Gordon, VP of Gaman Entertainment; Nathan Gavin, CEO of Gaman Entertainment; and Ron Grant, talent scout/R&B rep for Sony Music Entertainment. Shown seated, from left, are Ron Sweeney, Epic Records executive VP of black music; Hines; and Gilianne Manigat, COO of Gaman Entertainment.

Classical music director Philip Pickett and the Musicians of the Globe recently helped christen the newly renovated Globe Theatre in London with performances of key selections from their latest albums, "The Mask Of Oberon" and "Shakespeare's Music." Congratulating Pickett on the performance, from left, are Miranda Smith, label manager, Philips Music Group U.K.; Pickett's wife, Sharona; Pickett; Steph Collignon, VP of international marketing, Philips Music Group; and Liam Toner, marketing director of PolyGram Classics.

Tenor saxophonist Scott Hamilton performed at the Village Gate in New York to promote his latest Concord Jazz set, "After Hours." Relaxing after the set, from left, are Hamilton and veteran jazz pianist Tommy Flanagan.

Musicians/producers/composers Daniel Lanois, right, takes time from scoring the theme to the motion picture "Sling Blade" to pose with the film's director/co-star, Billy Bob Thornton.

John Fogerty performed recently at the House of Blues in Los Angeles to promote his latest Warner Bros. set, "Blue Moon Swamp." Shown at the performance, from left, are Stu Cohen, Warner Bros. senior VP of promotion; Fogerty; and Steven Baker, president of Warner Bros. Records.

The National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) hosted the Grammy Jazz Artists Forum at the Chicago Hyatt Regency Hotel in conjunction with the 26th Annual International Assn. of Jazz Educators Conference to allow new musicians to learn from the experience of veteran artists. Participating in the event, from left, are Griff Morris, executive director, NARAS Chicago chapter; Michael Wolff, jazz artist; Gerald Wilson, jazz artist; James Moody, jazz artist; and David Sears, senior project manager, NARAS Foundation.

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MCA execs recently celebrated the release of legendary R&B songstress Patti LaBelle's latest album, "Flame," with a patio party. Shown at the event, from left, are Ken Wilson, president, R&B; Ashley Fox, VP of marketing, R&B; Jay Boberg, MCA Records president; Abbey Konowitch, executive VP; Jayne Simon, senior VP of marketing and sales; LaBelle; Skip Bishop, senior VP of promotion; and Marilyn Batchelor, national director of marketing, R&B.
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The aim of the project is to enlighten, entertain, and inform, according to Christopher Polcino, director of communications for Phoenix House.

"The CD will give us financial support, but it also enable us to tell our story," he says. "We want to let more people know about what we do, and how we can help."

Specific marketing plans for the album were not in place at press time. Goldberg says there are no plans for the project to yield any singles.

"We're very cautious about putting out commercial singles, since there is not much profit in them," he says. "The point of this project is to raise money to continue our work in the lives of young people after they get through the chaos. It stays in touch with the kids and helps them re-enter the mainstream.

McGrath. "Many of the residents have not had the advantages in life that most of us have had. Some of these kids fell early into a hard life, and they are trying to build their future one day at a time. This gives them renewed hope and potential possibilities, and we want to support that."

Adds the New Yorker's Brown, "One of my primary concerns, both at Phoenix House and abroad, is efforts to free people from the hell of drug and alcohol abuse. We want to be intelligent in the way we present these messages to youth."

MTV plans to move the message behind the cause with programming that focuses on drug issues in the coming months.

"We've tried hard at MTV not to take an authoritarian point of view with our viewers about serious issues," says McGrath. "We're not interested in another 'Just Say No' campaign, but we do want our viewers to know there are other options to free people from the hell of drug and alcohol abuse."

Big Bang: His friends may call him Puff, but he might consider a new nickname, because his much-anticipated album enters The Billboard 200 with the force of a hurricane. As expected, Puff Daddy & the Family debut at No. 1 with one of the year's largest openings. In 1997, the 560,000-unit tally held the producer/performer's 'No Way Out' has been bested only by Wu-Tang Clan (612,000 units) and the late Notorious B.I.G. (689,500 units).

Still, Puff's debut marks the second-highest first-week sum for a rookie album. Behind The Chronic, the 1991 debut by Dr. Dre, stands the SoundScan data for May 1991, hosted only by Snoop Doggy Dogg, who bowed with 503,000 units in the Dec. 11, 1993, issue. Stading in a distant third place, with 278,000 units, is the Snoop-affiliated Tha Dogg Pound, which debuted in the Nov. 19, 1996, issue.

Puff's total is also the 10th-best debut week for a No. 1 album during the SoundScan era and ranks as the 19th-largest one-week total during that span.

Sean "Puffy" Combs was the executive producer of B.I.G.'s "Life After Death," so he has been the creative source for two of this year's biggest-selling albums, in addition to being an artist who has scored two No. 1's on the Hot 100. Not a bad year, so far—and there's still five months to go.

AHEAD: Rap will reign over The Billboard 200 again next week, but the crown will move from Puff Daddy to Bone Thugs-N-Harmony. Hip-hop albums that open with big numbers tend to record a second-week evaporation of about 50%; Puff might have a somewhat smaller-than-usual decline, but it will still be significant. Meanwhile, early retail reports suggest that Bone's double-platinum album will open with a smash debut—perhaps a little higher, perhaps a little lower—to the one Puff rolls on the current chart.

Sources say that the Best Buy chain moved an unusual high 35,000 Bone units during the album's first day, thanks to a low-ball sale price of $14.99, but since that price will surely steal market share from other music chains, it becomes more difficult to gauge what Bone's first-week total will be.

Drive My Car: For the second time in four years, a Volkswagen spot has influenced the album chart. In 1993, a commercial for Passat GLX built on Clannad's "Harry's Game" track pushed the "Amam" album to No. 46 on The Billboard 200, a career-high peak for the Irish ensemble.

Now, a VW spot for the Golf has blown the dust off the disbanding German techno pop act Trio (Hot 100 Singles Spotlight, Billboard, July 5). The TV exposure of Trio's "Da Da Da"—not to be confused with the Police's "Do Do Do, Da Da Da"—has prompted PolyGram's Chronicle imprint to assemble a new Trio set. A 63% sales gain places the "Da Da Da" album at No. 194 on The Billboard 200, a week after its debut on Heatseekers and 14 weeks after the track first hit American radio stations. That label, Mercury, says that the coup shows the "great foresight" the company possessed when it signed Trio more than a decade ago.

Good Work: An annual charity project by WNNX (99X) Atlanta, culled from the station's acoustic "Live X" show, moves 8,000 units at Blockbuster stores in its market, which earned a top 10 ranking at that national chain. The 14-track "Live X" release, "Bills for Billie" (Rhino), also benefited the American Red Cross and Incest National Network and includes songs from Amos, Dave Matthews Band, Melissa Etheridge, Dishwalla, and Goo Goo Dolls. Unlike the hot-selling "unplugged" releases of KROQ Los Angeles released in December through Wherehouse, which sell for less than $2, the 99X set sells for a full boat of $14.99. Albums sold exclusively through one chain do not appear on Billboard's charts, but if it were eligible for The Billboard 200, the "Live X" set would bow at No. 146.

New Homes: This week's album and singles charts reflect the new labels for artists from the erstwhile EMI logo, Virgin takes on charting acts White Town and Jon Secada, Capitol gets BISUALD Union Of Souls, and Priority adds DJ Taz to its roster.
Slated to be issued via the label's Tuff Gong/Aswad subsidiaries, the project shows veteran producer Bill Laswell reconstructing 11 Marley compositions in electronic-dance and ambient-dub styles. The album is the first installment of an opened-ended series in which various producers and remixers will reinterpret Marley's music.

"The idea [for the series] was born with Bill, who had an interest in revisiting and digging into these songs," says Island CEO Chris Blackwell. "Doing the series beyond this album was a definite decision to keep, because we don't want to give the appearance that we're unnecessarily exploiting Marley's music. This is actually a net of artistic exploration and celebration."

Blackwell agrees that doing to "Dreams Of Freedom" was also relatively simple because Laswell has "a respectful view and a complete understanding" of Marley's music. "Choosing the future producers will not be quite as easy," he says, noting that only club renegade Adrian Sherwood has been confirmed to participate in the series so far. Sherwood's set is due until early next year. With its sprawling yet intricately arranged versions of anthems like "Rebel Music (O'Clock Road Block)," "Waiting In vain," and "Is This Love," "Dreams Of Freedom" is being positioned for consumption by a wide-ranging audience that includes Marley and Laswell aficionados, as well as fans of the burgeoning electronic movement.

In Island, Laswell is directly targeting the latter listener sector by issuing a 12-inch promo-only record that features Laswell's take on "No Woman, No Cry," "The Heathen," "Exodus," and "Midnight Ravers" later this month to club DJs. Although the label will not issue a commercial 12-inch single, it will sell the entire album in a two-record vinyl format in addition to CD and cassette. It's a move that is meet-

ing with positive response from turntable spinners.

Clues have already jumped on the release in its advance cassette form but are eager to include the vinyl version in their mix. The idea is to sell them the tracks and if some kids think that they didn't spin the hits until Photok and Chemical Brothers. It's time they learned about those groups that might not even consider listening without Bill Laswell and Bob Marley. Whenever I play "Midnight Ravers," they come rushing to my booth and go on and on about how we're discovering something brand new."

Retailers are equally enthused about the project. Matte Corson, buyer for the Record Kitchen in San Francisco, sees "Dreams Of Freedom" as having "surprisingly strong" commercial possibilities. "If [Island] can attract younger buyers, then this album could go through the roof," says. "But just Marley's name alone guarantees a big first few weeks for us. And there's [a] sizable amount of people who immediately snap up anything that Bill Laswell is involved in."

In enticing that all-important young audience, Island marketing VP Andrew Knofeld says the label is planning an extensive awareness campaign on college campuses, major markets, and 12 U.S. In October, Island will host a monthlong series of listening parties with product giveaways and extensive on-campus advertising.

"The music perfectly suits this market," he says. "It captures a spirit of experimentation, and it turns people on to a whole new vibe of music at a point in their lives when they're perhaps most open to new ideas."

Another crucial avenue of exposure for "Dreams Of Freedom" will be the Internet. An elaborate Worldwide Web site is under construction. It will offer biographical information and rare photos of the artist, as well as sound bites from "Dreams Of Freedom" and a selection of classic Marley albums.

BOB MARLEY INTERPRETED IN 'DUB' ON ISLAND

(Continued from page 1)

acquiring product at target older music buyers.

The label is based in Santa Fe, N.M. and is formed by Cohen, who founded the distribution company in 1986 and is a former president of the National Assn. of Recording Merchandisers.

"A lot of people talk about the problems in the music business. There's nothing wrong with the music business," he says, "but the problem is with the people—the baby boomers—want to buy something different."

Initial releases from Valley include "Faith Of Our Fathers," a collection of 22 Irish Catholic hymns recorded by the Irish National Symphony Orchestra.

Street date for the collection, which also features a companion video, is Sept. 9. Price points are $16.98 CD, $11.98 cassette, and $9.98 for the video.

According to Cohen, the album, which has never been released outside Ireland, has reached sales of 200,000 units in the Emerald Isle. He expects the U.S. release to sell at least 250,000 units.

"The album has been talked about on NPR, and retailers have been calling about it, so we know there's demand for the product," says Cohen.

Valley will follow with the Sept. 23 release of "Happy Birthday George Gershwin," "Tennyson's Greatest Hits," and "Songs Of Johnny Mercer.

Each will have video companion priced at $19.98. The Gershwin release will not be available on cassette, and the CD will be priced at $19.98.

The retail price for the Goodman and Mercer titles is $15.98 CD and $11.98 cassette.

The Gershwin release features the Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andrew Litton, with songs performed by Maureen McGovern, Juli- lan Sykes, Tommy Tune, and the Manhattan Rhythm Kings.

"Faith Of Our Fathers" and "Happy Birthday George Gershwin" have aired as specials on PBS.

In addition, the Gershwin release is being used as an exclusive premium for the network's summer pledge drive, while "Fathers" will be a premium for upcoming winter and spring drives.

"The idea is here that some of good stuff on PBS, and no one is giving the public the chance to buy it," says Cohen.

Coincidentally, PBS has announced that it plans to develop its own label to distribute music product from program across the network (see the Beat, page 12).

But Cohen says plans for the PBS label could benefit Valley Entertain-

ment.

Valley Records already provides full-fillment services to PBS for pledge drives, and Cohen says that the new label could step up distribution of pro-

duct coming from the PBS record label.

"I could see that happening," says Cohen. "If they call me and say they want to do something like that, we can work with PBS for quite a while."

However, he says that Valley Entertain-

ment does not intend to sign new acts and will concentrate on acquiring finished products.

While the label has a built-in distribu-

tion center, it sees itself as well positioned for video distribution. In May, Valley Records acquired Jersey City, N.J.-based Star Video Entertainment.

Star Video services video, record, mass merchants, book, drug, super-

market, and convenience stores, mainly on the East Coast. Valley will be supported by grass-roots campaigns that will concentrate on building sales slowly, rather than establishing quick hits.

For "Faith Of Our Fathers," a direct-response campaign is being test-

ed. It is being handled by Valley Entertain-

ment with Valley handling fulfillment.

In December, the Irish National Symphony Orchestra is scheduled to perform in Boston, Washington, D.C.; and New York's Carnegie Hall, further enhancing awareness of the CD.

"It is a huge coup," says Cohen. "It reminds people of their youth."

Although the release will be target-

ed to the Irish market, Cohen says the label could have broader appeal.

"It's a cross between 'Riv-

erdance' and 'Chant,'" says Cohen.

The label features songs in Latin, English, and Gaelic and was licensed by EMI Records.

A second volume of "Faith Of Our Fathers" is due next year, he says. Other projects in the works are "Best Of Millennium Music," based on the syndicated radio show hosted by Robert Audrey Davis.

Teddy Gives It Up. Veteran R&B singer Teddy Pendergrass hams it up with the director of his latest clip, "Give It Up." The track is slated to be the second single off Pendergrass' latest album on Sure Fire Records, "You & I." Pictured, from left, are Pendergrass and Dana Schwartz, video director.
New Latin Compilations Based On Billboard Charts

Billboard's commitment to the Latin music community grows with its recent licensing agreement with PPI Entertainment Group. PPI has a five-year international agreement for distribution of recordings based on Latin charts. The series will contain hit songs that have appeared on the Hot Latin Tracks chart since 1996. The line will be distributed throughout Latin America as well as a number of European territories, including the UK, France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal. A minimum of eight masters will be released as part of PPI's Latin-based Compaise/Tropico label featuring the Billboard logo.

Jessen To Serve On Academy Of Country Music Board

The Academy of Country Music (ACM) announced that Wade Jessen, director of Country and Contemporary Christian charts for Billboard and the Airplay Monitor magazines, was elected to serve a two-year term on the board of directors. The ACM is a Los Angeles-based country music industry trade association whose membership consists of professionals from all areas of the industry. Members include record label personnel, artists, producers, music publishers, songwriters, musicians, journalists, broadcasters, talent buyers, and performing right organizations. The Academy presents the annual ACM Awards each spring. In addition to his new position on the ACM board, Jessen is also a member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the Country Music Assn., the International Bluegrass Music Assn., and the Gospel Music Assn. He also served four consecutive terms on the Country Radio Broadcasters' Country Radio Seminar Agenda Committee.

New Eurofile In One Concise Edition

Music & Media introduces its new updated 1998 Eurofile. The Eurofile is widely acknowledged as the definitive directory for the European music and radio industries. This ultimate all-in-one reference guide is packed with listings of:
- Record Companies
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- Soundcarrier Manufacturers
- Presented country by country for ease of reference, the 1998 Eurofile will be published in one concise volume and will undoubtedly continue to be acclaimed as the indispensable directory for all music industry professionals doing business in Europe.

This vital international information source is published by Music & Media, part of the Billboard Music Group. For further information contact Music & Media at 414-332-6690 or fax 414-331-0010.

39 Candles For The Hot 100

There are some things in this world you can count on. The sun's going to come up every morning, the stars will shine every night, and every week there's going to be a new Hot 100.

It wasn't always so. Oh, sure, the sun and the stars have been around such a long time, they seem eternal. The Hot 100 has a more finite life. The chart, recognized around the world as the definitive list of the most popular singles in the U.S., was born exactly 39 years ago this week.

Before there was a Hot 100, Billboard published a number of weekly charts for pop singles. There were three 30-position charts: Best Sellers in Stores, Most Played in Juke Boxes, and Most Played by Jockeys. They measured sales, jukebox play, and radio airplay, respectively. But most stores were selling more than 30 titles, so the need for a chart with more positions was apparent.

Billboard combined sales, jukebox play, and radio airplay to come up with a 100-position chart called the Top 100. It made its first appearance in the Nov. 12, 1955, issue, but the component charts continued to be published. As soon as Billboard introduced the 100-position chart, other trades copied the move and also called their lists the Top 100. So the name was changed and copyrighted, and the Hot 100 first appeared in the issue of Billboard dated Aug. 4, 1958.

That day fell on a Monday as it does today.

The first No. 1 on the Hot 100 was Ricky Nelson's "Poor Little Fool." Since that time, 871 more records have occupied pole position. Of all those titles, one stands out as the longest-running No. 1 in the chart's history: "One Sweet Day" by Mariah Carey & Boyz II Men had an incredible 16-week run, two weeks more than its closest competitors ("I Will Always Love You" by Whitney Houston, "I'll Make Love To You" by Boyz II Men, and "Macarena" by Los Del Rio).

Of those 818 No. 1 singles, only one has the distinction of topping the chart twice, in two separate chart runs. Chubby Checker's "The Twist" was No. 1 the first time around in 1960, but when adults picked up on the dance craze a year later, the single returned to the Hot 100. By January 1962, it was back on top of the chart, a truly unique achievement. Hmmmm, "The Twist," "Macarena"—maybe nothing changes after all.

The chart certainly remains a constant in our lives, compiled 52 weeks a year—in, year out. And in its 39-year history, it has managed to produce a number of newsworthy occurrences. If I had to pick the most amazing event of all time, it would be the lineup of the top five songs the week of April 4, 1964: "Can't Buy Me Love," "Twist And Shout," "She Loves You," "I Want To Hold Your Hand," and "Please Please Me," recorded by the Beatles, the Beatles, the Beatles, and the Beatles. I doubt if such an alignment will ever occur again.

The Beatles made more chart history when "Let It Be" entered at No. 6 the week of March 21, 1970. That remained the highest debut of all time until 1995, when Michael Jackson entered at No. 5 with "Scream." And it was inevitable that someday, someone would enter the chart at No. 1. That barrier was finally broken when Jackson did it the week of Sept. 2, 1996, with the follow-up to "Scream," "You Are Not Alone."

That's one of the charms of the chart. No matter how brilliant an achievement, someday, someone will do something even better (all right, maybe one artist will nail down the top six positions someday). It might take 36 years, but it will happen.

Unlike humans, the Hot 100 will feel no need to remain 39 forever. So happy 39th birthday to the chart that ruled the world, and many happy returns.
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