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Labels Piggyback On The Success Of Best-Selling Books

LOUISIANA—The tremendous successes of such best-selling authors as Daniel Clowes, Steve Donald Walseh, Thomas Moore, and dating guru John Gray have some labels seeing the writing on the wall. Spiritual themes sell. No. They are tapping into that vein themselves with the release of companion audio projects that translate the spiritual mood and message of those and other books into music.

On Nov. 18, Winifred Hall released “Conversations With God,” a compilation inspired by Walshe’s best-selling “Conversations With God, Book 1,” which has spent 48 weeks on The New York Times’ nonfiction best-seller list. (Continued on page 89)

RETAIL TRACK
An Update On The State Of Affairs At Alliance Ent.

PAGE 74

Spain Stresses Latin Links New Awards Build Bridge To Americas

By HOWELL LLEWELLYN and ADAM WHITE

MADRID—Spain’s music industry is celebrating the success of its inaugural Premio Amigo awards ceremony, regarding it as the first foundation stone of a new trans-Atlantic link with Latin America.

“This is the beginning of a process which we really think will invigorate the Latino music markets,” said Warner Music Spain president Saul Tagarro after the Nov. 20 ceremony in Madrid. Among those honored were several Spanish artists whose music has already attained popularity abroad, including Rosana Arbelo, Alejandro Sanz, and Ricky Martin. The 15 awards were divided into Spanish, Latin, and international categories; indeed, they are thought to be the first such ceremonies of the genre with such successes as the Chemical Brothers, Photoek, Fatboy Slim, and Future Sound Of London.

Foreign Signings Paying Off For Germany’s Major Labels

By WOLFGANG SPAHR

HAMBURG—Germany is fast becoming a powerhouse for international A&R. Dissatisfaction with repertoire signed by their affiliates in English-speaking markets has led German execs to sign acts directly, say labels here. Now, German majors are beginning to see significant revenue streams from their sister companies worldwide as their own signings gain international recognition.

German companies are getting used to breaking international acts in the Germany, Switzerland, and Austria (GSA) market before offering them to their partners in the U.S. or the U.K. again. Backstreet Boys, N Sync, and World Apart are just some of the names that were well-known in Germany before becoming famous in Europe. Randy Crawford and Bootsy Collins are just two of the acts finding deals and being produced there.

For many years, German companies have signed acts that may have fallen foul of fast-moving tastes in the English market, but they have now found a way to make their artists successful overseas.

MUSIC VIDEO
Jamiroquai, Elliott Vids Get Billboard Honors

By CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—“Virtual Insanity,” the breakthrough clip by Work Group/Epic act Jamiroquai, scored a hat trick at the 19th annual Billboard Music Video Awards, (Continued on page 105)

MTV, Box To Bow Multiplex Channels

By CARLA HAY

LOS ANGELES—The music industry is reacting with guarded optimism to the official announcements from MTV Networks and the Box regarding their launch of “multiplex” digital channels, focusing on specific musical genres. (Continued on page 93)

Internet Exposure Ups Profile Of Clips

By DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—The growing presence of music videos on the Internet stands to be a boon for record labels looking for alternative means of exposure for their artists, (Continued on page 95)

Music News Briefs

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Thank You Very Much To Our Friends On Our 2nd Anniversary!
Heav D - Waterbed Me

Erykah Badu - Live

Merril Bainbridge - The Garden

Lost Boyz - Legal Drug Money

Crucial Conflict - Hay

Erykah Badu - On & On

Lost Boyz - Love, Peace & Happiness

Heavy D - Big Daddy

Available At Retail, Radio, Press & Video

VERSARY (NOV. 23rd)
Kickoff Of ’98 Chart Year Brings Changes

"Labels’ Nashville Divisions Will Now Be Delineated"

The start of the 1998 chart year, which begins with this issue, brings changes to Billboard’s charts. The most significant finds Billboard delineating Nashville Divisions from some country music radio and TV show pop labels. Other changes bring a streamlining of references to soundtrack-related singles, along with the introduction of updated vernacular in the magazine’s chart legends.

On charts that are not country-music specific, such as the Billboard 200, Hot 100 Singles, and Top Pop Catalog Albums, the label listings for singles or albums from autonomous Nashville divisions that have the same name as that of a pop label will now be differentiated with the parenthetical inclusion of the word “Nashville.” For example, Shania Twain titles will be credited to “Mercury (Nashville)” rather than “Mercury.”

The change in label designations will allow Nashville roosters to show up as stand-alone labels in the label standings in next year’s Year In Music report. The shift also levels the playing field for the pop labels that have different names than those of their Music Row cousins, as happens with nearly every single on the Billboard Hot 100 charts, or Arista and Arista/Nashville. Listings on the country charts, however, will remain the same.

“Differentiating the listings of autonomous Nashville divisions will enable country’s hottest labels to earn their place in the sun in the Year in Music label standings for The Billboard 200 and Top Pop Catalog Albums, while sorting out an apples-and-oranges problem with the pop labels’ chart performances,” says Geoff Mayfield, Billboard’s director of charts.

Also starting with this issue, the field chart in legends that previously read “Label” will now read “Imprint,” a change that also will be reflected in this year’s Year in Music issue, dated Dec. 27.

Weekly and biweekly sales charts will continue to carry a “Distributing Label” field to mark cases in which the selling label is different than that of the listed imprint, while weekly radio charts will continue to print a “Promotion Label” field.

And as part of this year’s Year in Music issue, as well as Billboard’s periodic genre spotlights, now will simply be referred to as “Labels.”

This issue’s charts also see a simplification in the listing of soundtrack singles, with such entries being listed simply by song title.

“In our previous policy, we only list soundtrack references when they appeared on a single label copy, which made this an arbitrary designation. The soundtrack references also leads to potential confusion when a single appears on both a soundtrack album and an artist’s own album,” Mayfield explains.

Henceforth, movie titles will only be listed on singles charts when they are actually part of a song’s title.
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EMI Eyeing New Efficiencies In Wake Of ‘Flat Market’

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

LONDON—The EMI Group says suggestions that it is about to shed jobs and cut back its activities are unfounded. The speculation arose because of a phrase in the statement accompanying the company’s interim figures released Nov. 24 that said that, because of the difficult world market, EMI “will continue to address the cost base of our operations around the world.”

But chairman Sir Colin Southgate tells Billboard, “People have leapt onto the idea that we are going to slash a thousand jobs—but it’s nothing like that whatsoever.”

Southgate says the reality is that EMI is reacting to a flat world market by seeking new efficiencies.

“We are building a central distribution facility at Uden [the Netherlands] for larger, bulk items,” Southgate says. “That will obviously give us a lot greater efficiency, and we have a program of things like that which will make us more efficient.”

Such efficiencies are made necessary, he adds, by a market that Southgate says is growing at 1% currently and that will continue to rise at that rate through the next year. Southgate says this conclusion is not just EMI’s perception but is a common view across the industry. “It’s not just EMI that thinks this,” Sony and Warner and PolyGram do as well.”

In the six months to Sept. 30, the EMI Group—which encompasses all EMI Music labels and publishing companies and the EMI retail chain—had revenues up 4.9% to $2.62 billion at constant exchange rates, the company says. However, operating profit fell by 4.5% to $194.5 million. The company adds that the strength of the British pound in which it reports reduced the real value of revenues by $243 million to $2.37 billion and operating profit by $23.8 million to $170.7 million.

EMI Music had a decrease in operating profit of 3.6% at constant exchange rates to $216 million on revenues up 3.1% at $1.92 billion. At actual exchange rates, the company says, operating profit was 14.6% down at $191.42 million on revenues down 8.4% to $1.7 billion.

At HMV, which includes U.K. book-selling chain Dillons, first-half sales rose 9.6% to $660 million. Sales were up 14.1% at constant exchange rates, the company says. HMV had an operating loss of $20.7 million, a result in line, says the EMI Group, with expectations for the quieter first half of the year. The EMI Group points out, though, that in comparable stores, HMV’s sales were on average 3.2% ahead of market growth. During the first half, HMV added 6,000 square meters of trading space to its global operations, the company reports.

EMI’s formula for the future? “We think that EMI is the most international company in this market,” says Southgate. “We’ve always been as nimble as we possibly can be.”

(Continued on next page)
EMI (Continued from preceding page)

company says.

Southgate says the fact that EMI Music had its operating profit reduced at a time when revenues rose was largely a function of a change in fortunes for the company's Japanese affiliate.

"Japan has gone from a substantial profit in the first half of last year to a loss for this year," says Southgate. "It's the biggest swing we have."

He notes that EMI is still in the process of "revitalizing" its Japanese management that it began in May but adds that one of the reasons for the poor showing there in the first half was "a lousy release schedule." He expresses his confidence, though, that the company will be back in profit in the second half of EMI's fiscal year.

Southgate says the performance of the Japanese company should be seen against the background of a total market down 12%. He notes another area of difficult trading as Southeast Asia, where, he says, the market "is in the toilet, if I may put it that way. It was 10% off in the first half and is probably much worse by now."

The strength of the British pound has also sucked imports into the U.K. from continental Europe, he states, whereas in times of a weaker pound, imports flowed the other way. Southgate cites the U.S. market as up by around 3.5%.

Within these conditions, he says, EMI's strong release schedule—spearheaded by Spice Girls' "Spice" (the EMI Group's top-selling album, with 8 million units sold in the period on top of 9.5 million sold last year), Radiohead's "OK Computer," the Rolling Stones' "Bridges To Babylon," Sir Paul McCartney's "Flaming Pie," and Meredith Brooks' "Blurring The Edges"—raised the company's global market share in the six months by 1.6% to "around 14%.

Bolstered by this, Southgate says he remains confident of EMI's ability to survive a flat market. "I do believe we are an extremely efficient organization. If we've done nothing else in the last seven or eight years, we have improved efficiency. Efficient organizations always do better in these times, I believe."

Southgate states that there have been no offers to buy the EMI Group despite its successful establishment as a stand-alone company following de-merger from Thorn EMI last year.

"If we've done nothing else in the last seven or eight years, we have improved efficiency."
—Colin Southgate

EMI reports in British pounds. The exchange rate used in this story is $1.70 to the pound.
Knight’s Latest Legal Setback
Brings Federal Prison Sentence

By Chris Morris

Los Angeles—Already serving a nine-year state sentence on an assault conviction for felony battery, Ricardo Lorenzo Toft, a reputed drug dealer who had been managing director of BMG Denmark, is to report to federal prison after the conviction of federal charges.

Following an agreement between Knight’s attorneys and federal prosecutors, the record was revoked.

His trial was held in Las Vegas. The principal target of the indictment was Ricardo Lorenzo “Ricky” Crockett’s reputed kingpin of a large cocaine-trafficking ring. Knight was one of 30 defendants in the case, was charged with illegally purchasing two .40-caliber Glock pistols from

BMW Classics Establishes New Euro Structure

By Jeff Clark-Meads

London—BMW Entertainment International, expanding its European operations in a new, continental company, has been formed.

The company says it is responding to the needs of the European Union’s 15-nation single market with the setting up of BMW Classics, a Pan-European business, under Lars Toft, currently managing director of BMW Denmark. Based in Munich, the new structure will mean the end of the classical division in each European country will report rather than to the head of his or her local BMW affiliate.

Toft will assume his new role on November 1.

BMW says that the new structure recognizes the new order in Europe and allows BMW to be more effective with its international artist marketing campaigns.

“This new structure will not only position us perfectly to respond to the rapidly developing continent, but will enable us to have a very focused, targeted approach in repertoire development and marketing for the adult consumer we cater to,” says Toft. “It was only a matter of finding the right executive who could both formulate the new structure and implement it.”

The new managing director of BMW Denmark prior to his new position, he will report to Cor Dubois, president of New York-based BMW Classics.

Dubois says that the new structure recognizes the new order in Europe and allows BMW to be more effective with its international artist marketing campaigns.

“New York—Rok the Vote met with little media attention in the time leading up to the 1997 elections. But while some may have wondered what had become of the organization—or just plain forgotten about it—Rok the Vote was quietly and systematically registering more than 15,000 voters and making plans to further step up its activities on a wide variety of fronts in 1998.

Says Donna Frisby, acting executive director of Rok the Vote, “We did not have as strong a media presence last year—we weren’t a new thing anymore. But we were out there in the community. We were in the faces of young people, which is what really counts.”

While the organization’s initiatives to reach youth were the new voter-registration phone number, 800-REGISTRATION—, and voter registration available over the Internet.

Formed in 1990 by members of the recording industry, Rok the Vote seeks to educate young people aged 18-24 about current political issues, freedom of speech, and the power of the vote.

Moreover, a cross section of music industry professionals polled by Billboard approved of the new site. “It’s a wonderful idea,” says Harry Hai, Asian region director for U.S. BMG Music, “in that it will help to demonstrate Asia as a music culture beyond Hong Kong.” The site is not just about Cantonopan and London.

Given the current turbulent state of Asian economies, some publishers are concerned that the cultural significance of the venue change is secondary to hard economic realities. Mirko Whitfield, RMO’s Asia and Australia director, says, “I wish they could help boost the flagging numbers from last year. But I also think it will make it more difficult for Chinese companies to participate in the convention.”

As an Asian resort, Bali (2,000 miles southeast of Hong Kong) is familiar to many residents of the region and as such holds little novelty value. “But with the representatives from the U.S. and Europe, says Bakery’s Claps, “there’ll probably be fewer people strolling the exhibition floors and more deals being done on the beach.”

At the British Phonographic Industry, which coordinates its members’ involvement in MIDEM Asia, GM Peter Scapin says, “My reaction is that MIDEM organizers would not take a frivolous decision. They have done research, consulted as many industry people as possible, and I respect that.”

This year, the U.K. sent more companies (105) to MIDEM Asia than ever before.

James Fisher, general secretary of the London-based International Managers Forum, says there may be some problems arising out of the flagging numbers of music industry infrastructure. “Everything they’re going to need, they’ll have to pay for,” he says.

Fisher expresses surprise that the convention was not shifted to Bangkok or Singapore, where such an infrastructure already exists. He even envisions with those who find the decision to move to Bali “frivolous” but adds that the attractions of the site might attract people.

Word Nashville Dissolved
Targeted Country, Christian Markets

By Deborah Evans Price

NASHVILLE—Word Entertainment has dissolved Word Nashville, the 2-year-old country label that created and marketed music for both the mainstream country and Christian retail markets.

The label’s roster included Brent Lamb and Skip Ewing, both of whom say that Word Nashville was to release mainstream country product from outside labels into the Christian market through the CBA (Christian Booksellers Association) market via Word Distribution.

Word will continue to offer Lamb’s and Ewing’s albums as well as projects by independent country artists (Collin Raye, Kenny Rogers, and Rick Van Shelton) that Word Nashville was working in the CBA market. The label has nine albums in the pipeline, including three various-artists albums, “Hymns From The Ryman” and

Sony Nashville releases “Common Ground” and “Gospel Super Hits.”

Word Nashville director of marketing Rick Bowles and public relations coordinator Kimberly Eaton lost their jobs.

Word Nashville releases “Common Ground” and “Gospel Super Hits.”

Word Nashville director of marketing Rick Bowles and public relations coordinator Kimberly Eaton lost their jobs.
**R&B Acts Are Basis For Rhino School Curriculum**

**BY SHAWNEE SMITH**

NEW YORK—In celebration of Black History Month in February, Rhino Records has established “Black History In Music: Songs Of A People,” a monthlong curriculum for high school social studies, history and creative writing classes.

Music relates to specific time periods,” says Quincy Newell, senior product manager and urban catalog development director at Rhino. “The Civil Rights movement inspired the music of that time, and vice versa. That is the component we are using to educate the children about music.”

Newell says Rhino brought in Lifetime Learning Systems to make the curriculum credible. The current absence of musical programs in many public schools sparked the effort, he adds.

“We didn’t want to make it marketing intensive,” says Newell, noting that the label owns the catalog or has licensed the use of many of the titles involved through release and compilation agreements. “Our main purpose is to educate kids and teach them [about black history] using music as a basis, just history.”

Set to begin in February, the curriculum will be distributed to 10,000 high schools in urban areas across the country. Teachers will receive a curriculum pack that includes a four-page guide and four reproducible student activity worksheet masters.

“Building A Black Music Time Line” helps students develop an understanding of how different styles of music are associated with different events and periods in history, allowing students to follow a time line to associate various songs or music styles with experiences or periods in their own lives.

“The Featured Artist Is...” the last assignment, examines different artists’ musical styles and the influences that helped create them. Class projects will feature personal and musical experiences of the artists.

Featuring artists in the curriculum include Aretha Franklin, Otis Redding, Sugar Hill Gang, John Coltrane, Charlie Mingus, Booker T. & the M.G.’s, Ray Charles, Curtis Mayfield, the Isley Brothers, Grandmaster (Continued on page 89)

**Persian Classical Music Finds U.S. Ears**

**BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER**

A Baeckeder as well versed as the “Rough Guide To World Music” doesn’t include a tour of the traditional Persian art, and no pop stars have plundered its charms. But Persian classical music is a trove of burgeoning appeal, as international travel has become easier for Iranian artists and entering labels have begun to issue their work to grasp-roots acclaim.

One such label, the Los Angeles-based Kershehmeh Records, has a catalog full of prime Persian classical albums, including titles by such veteran masters as setar virtuoso/composer Hossein Alizadeh, vocalist Shahrham Nazeri, and instrumentalist/vocalist Mohammad Reza Lotfi. In early February ’98, Kershehmeh has an album due from the young kamancheh (spine fiddle) virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor, the inspired live set “Eastern Apertures” with percussionist Morteza Ayan.

A rare solo feature for the haunting sound of the kamancheh, “Eastern Apertures” is an ideal introduction to the special character of Persian classical music. Kalhor explains that the art is bound up in Persia’s “very long, complicated social history. That history gives the music a unique depth. Like an old man speaking, it is the voice of experience.”

A rising star in Persian classical music, Kalhor also has a solo set due next April on Traditional Crossroads/Rounder. Earlier this year, Kalhor teamed with Indian sitarist Shujata Hussain Khan and percussionist Swapan Chaudhuri for an exploration of the common roots of the Persian and North Indian traditions on the Shanachie album “Ghazal: Lost Songs Of The Silk Road.” This month, he travels to India to record a follow-up to that soulful, pioneering hybrid, with the drip-drip next fall.

Kalhor describes “Ghazal” as “a path between two cultures,” on which the intricate beauties of the Hindustani raga and Persian dastgah merge spiritually and aesthetically. And, he adds, with their searching, meditative qualities, these ancient musical cousins also touch many Westerners similarly.

Isabel Sofer, associate director of the New York-based World Music Institute and executive producer of “Ghazal,” says she thinks Persian music should be as popular as North Indian classical in the West. “For Iranians here, the music has a real cultural significance—they’ve brought it over with them; it means a lot to them. But in the hands of a master, Persian classical music is breathtakingly beautiful—a sound that can appeal to just about anyone.”

For the first decade after the Islamic revolution in Iran in the late ’70s, many musicians had a hard time performing at home, so they traveled to Europe to play concerts and record. Persian classical artists have since built a considerable following in Germany, France, and Scandinavia, with such European labels as Ocora, Buddha, and Nimbus composing the gear.

With political tensions between Iran and the U.S. having eased in recent years, Persian music seems poised for a renaissance in North America, particularly on the West Coast, where there is a sizable Iranian-American population.

The 34-year-old Kalhor lives in Brooklyn, N.Y., and has toured the country many times. He just completed a 13-city trek with the Dastan Ensemble in support of Nazeri and plans solo shows for next summer, as well as a tour of the U.S. and Europe with Khan and Chaudhuri next fall.

Sofer says the World Music Insti- tute has had increasing success with its New York concerts with such Persian maestros as Nazeri and Alizadeh. This past spring, an event featuring Alizadeh and Kalhor packed the 850-seat Symphony Space. Also, the organization’s concert and catalog sales of albums by Persian classical artists have been brisk, including such Kershehmeh titles as “The Abu-Ata Concert,” a stirring classic of traditional Persian song with Lotfi accompanying vocalist Mohammad Reza Shahjarian, and Alizadeh’s landmark “Ney Na- va,” a sublime lament for nay flute and orchestra that’s the most famous composition in modern Persian classical music.

Distributed by City Hall in the Western half of the U.S. and Twinsister in the East Coast, Kershehmeh’s rich catalog features sundry other vocal and instrumental discs. Some of the standout includes the popular “Mozafar.” Nazeri’s textured album of Sufi songs on the mystical poetry of 13th-century Persian poet Manav Khan Jalauidini Rumi, “Mystic Of Love,” with a contemplative Lotfi captured live in Copenhagen singing and playing the lyre-like setar and tar; “Torkaman,” a disc of dynamic solo improvisations by Alizadeh on setar; and “Dawn,” (Continued on page 89)
Artists

Indonesia’s Dewa 19 Eyes Global Audience With ‘Stars’

JAKARTA—Indonesia—one of this country’s top pop acts, Dewa 19 is concentrating a move onto the international scene with two top-selling albums and a host of awards under its belt.

Dewa 19 is getting ready for the January release of its fifth album, “Bintang Lima” (Five Stars), as well as solo albums by two band members. The group says it’s denying that the solo projects will lead to the breakup of one of this market’s success stories.

The band could also be in line to add another award to its name, with a nomination for best pop group at the Anugerah Musik Indonesia (Indonesian Music Awards) Saturday (29).

This band of young self-taught musicians—all members are now between the ages 24 and 27—started out in 1987 playing together on top radio stations and junior high. The group’s name comes from the first initial of each original member’s first name—Dhanie Manaf (vocals), Muriyantoro Putra (drums), Apriyanto (guitar), and Andra Ramadhan (guitar), Queen, U2, and Toto were their biggest influences.

They drifted into jazz and later pop/rock and, after high school, began writing their own music and lyrics, with the addition of vocalist Ayu Lasso. Since they were all age 19 then, they became Dewa 19.

The group’s first single, “Kangen” (Missing You), distributed by PT Aquarius Musikindo, was released in 1992. It rocketed up the local radio and magazine charts; the self-titled album from which it was sold more than 300,000 copies in its first six months, according to the distributor. The follow-up was followed by “Selamat Pagi” (I’m Here For You) and “Kamu Saja-satunya” (You Are The One). “Kirana” garnered a MTV Asia Viewers Choice nomination, and in June, the band earned the Indonesian Journalist Asso’s most popular and productive band award.

“It’s difficult for a band to maintain its popularity, but Dewa 19 has managed to do it and has won awards all along the way, from the first album,” says Santaniello. “They just get better and better. The market demonstrates the confidence that this is a great band.”

“Pandawa Lima” is selling like hot cakes in Indonesia, confirms Widiana Hartawan, merchandising coordinator for PT Disc Tara, which operates 290 stores in Indonesia. “It is a very important album for us. [Buyers] are crazy about Dewa because the first album was such a hit and the band is all over MTV and many print advertisements.”

Channel V has also supported the act. It played “Kirana” five times a day on its international beam to Southeast Asia.

“It’s a very good video, very good music, and it also incorporated traditional elements,” says Jeff Selamat, manager of alternative programming for Channel V. “It stood out by virtue of its quality. They’re definitely not a garage band but a well-produced, well-put-together act.”

Manaf calls the group’s music “pop 2000”—rock with an alternative feel. The music is “heaven sent,” says Manaf. “It’s not something you can force. A good song is like a fever, it comes all at once, suddenly.”

Each band member has become increasingly involved with the creative process. “The lyrics are mostly love songs, both the painful and the positive. The more pain you make, the more people like it,” says Manaf with a shrug.

“Our fans from Australia say these songs would sell well in Australia in English,” Manaf adds. The band wasn’t happy with previous English recordings. “Even to me, the English sounds funny,” says Manaf, and vocalist Lasso agrees. To tap the international market, the band realizes that it must write and sing in English, changing the lyrics of existing songs or looking for an additional vocalist with more distinctive English diction. “We believe our latest songs, in English, would be well accepted,” says Manaf.

A&R at Columbia Records and GM at Tower Records.

Barbara Fairbairn is promoted to regional sales manager at Geffen Records in Miami. She was local marketing manager at Atlantic Records in New York.

Atlantic Nashville names Jennifer Shaffer West Coast promotion manager. She was manager of national alternative promotion at Sony Music.

Deborah Castellero is appointed manager of English-language product at Sony Music Puerto Rico. She was cross-cultural/Hispanic marketing consultant at DC Consulting.

Howard Nelson is appointed director of integrated music at Sony Wonder/SYM in Santa Monica, Calif. He was director of advertising at the Disney Channel Magazine.

Mike Chapman is named South-west regional promotion manager at Asylum/Elektra Records. He was an independent radio consultant.

Pensley Recordings in New York names Mr. Mayhem A&R rep/record producer, and executive director, Amir Thornell video consultant, and Jill Karagezian of video promotion. They were, respectively, a DJ, production manager and music video production director.

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Tango Turns Toward The Mainstream
Music In The Spotlight Via Ma Set, New Film

BY BRADBURY BABBAGHER

NEW YORK—The tango has come a long way since its gestation more than 100 years ago as a diverting soundtrack for the bars and brothels of Buenos Aires. In the past decade or so, the music has been performed in concert halls and has been embraced by the world by musicians of international renown, with the primary goal being the pioneering, ever-popular new tango compositions of the late Astor Piazzolla.

Every few months seems to bring a new Piazzolla tribute by a great classical The musician. Violinist Gilmore Kremer recently issued his second acclaimed homage to Piazzolla on Nonesuch, for instance, and cello star Yo-Yo Ma has an album of masterful compositions in the works on Sony Classical. But Ma's "Souls Of The Tango" is aligned with a venture that is purely a tango affair.

Further: "The Tango Lesson," a new feature film by Sally Potter ("Orlando") that glories in the dance and romance at the root of the tango art.

A fine line between fact and fiction, "The Tango Lesson" traces the learning experience of a British filmmaker in an affair with her Argentine dance tutor. Potter—an accomplished dancer who co-stars in the film with Pablo Veron—first experienced the tango in London.

"When I heard the tango," Potter recalls, "it was, 'Where has this music been all my life?' I loved it for its combination of dance and tango and its emotional directness. The rhythms are driving, the tunes are so soulful. The tango is such.

Before making "The Tango Lesson," Potter made pilgrimages to Buenos Aires and "danced the night away" in the music's birthplace. She eventually turned to shoot "The Tango Lesson" there, as well as in London and Paris.

"The Tango Lesson," premiered in mid-September at New York and London and will bow Dec. 25 in Los Angeles. The Adventures Pictures film is set for a wide release early next year. Ready in stores is the Sony Classical soundtrack to "The Tango Lesson," a beautifully packaged, well-anointed disc that combines vintage tango recordings with fresh takes on the genre to provide a worthy anthology.

One track on "The Tango Lesson" features Piazzolla the bandoneón virtuoso backed by an orchestra on his classic "Libertango," from 1974. And in a characteristic bit of Sony Classical movie/music synergy strategy, Ma's version of "Libertango" appears not only on his "Souls Of The Tango" but on "The Tango Lesson," recorded with a similar potter. Potter also shot a video clip for "Libertango" that features Ma and scenes from the film in countertop.

"These were two completely separate projects that just happened to come together through a happy coincidence of timing," explains Sony Classical president Peter Gelb. "The Tango Lesson" should help make the music more accessible and vibrant to a broader public—people beyond the usual Latin or classical music buyers. And the connection with an artist of Yo-Yo Ma's caliber, with the music, might not hurt the film's reception.

The video for "Libertango" is slated for the Bravo channel to help promote "The Tango Lesson," and the video was also serviced to European outlets and tango clubs around the world. The cut also features Piazzolla on a fiddle in a tango on the set, the disc, included a Dec. 9 date at the Supper Club in New York.

"We want to publish a collection of 10-12 albums that presents Astor Piazzolla's compositions in prime tango conditions," Chamboarder says. "It won't necessarily survey his complete works, but the recordings done with the series, it think will give listeners a very good indication (Continued on next page)

Piazzolla Live
Captured On Milan Series

NEW YORK—Grand tributes to Astor Piazzolla by such classical artists as Yo-Yo Ma and jazzers like Al DiMeola may continue to proliferate, but the late nuevo tango master's most memorable recordings are still the real deal and very much in demand. So in demand, in fact, that dozens of unauthorized live recordings from many labels come in and out of the Piazzolla bin in most shops.

Milan Records CEO Emmanuel Chamboarder—who also guards the Piazzolla estate—aims to clarify the late composer's catalog by not only seeking to eradicate these unlicensed recordings but by forging a series of definitive live albums.

The first four discs in Milan's live Piazzolla series include the superior-sounding and artful packaged "Muerte Del Angel," featuring Piazzolla's own recordings with the bandoneons, from 1973 in their native Buenos Aires; "Concerto De Nacar," with Piazzolla and the bandoneones of Ballan Monarca, from the '80s; the '92 disc "Libertango," with Piazzolla's classic quintet; from '94; and "Three Minutes of a Million Dollar Shave," from El Sexteto Nuevo Tango, from '89.

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Fresh From Santa's Music Workshop:
Some Sets For The Naughty, Most Nice

BRING US THE FIGGY PUDDING: It's that time of year when I turn my thoughts to the stack of new holiday albums gathering on my desk. As usual, some are golden, others are lumps of coal.

"VH1 Presents RuPaul: Ho Ho Ho," RuPaul (Rhino): The inestimable RuPaul holds forth on his first Christmas album. Whether you're tipping the sippy cup over or the Red-Nosed Reindeer is sure to elicit a few guffaws, as is "All I Want For Christmas," which is a litany of plastic surgery requests. A novelty record to be sure, but not worth most. However, he should have left "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch" alone. A word about the CD jacket art: The lovely message about creating one's own family for the holidays is more than a little offset by a photograph of Ru's Christmas parties around his ankles.

"Snowed In," Hanson (Mercury): It's no surprise that Mercury is eager to capitalize on this sibling trio's current heat by releasing a Christmas album. The boys combine pop Christmas classics like "Merry Christmas Baby" and "What Christmas Means To Me" as well as deliver some of their own, with both being the best.


"Rhythm Of The Roof," the Christmas Jug Band (Globe Records): A little rough around the edges, this is the record to put in the jukebox at your favorite gin mill, because, believe it or not, with a few under your belt. It mainly consists of standards or Christmas songs turned into Christmas ditties (e.g., "Mr. Sandman" becomes "Mr. Santa"). Of course, the kegger here is the weepy "Daddy's Drinkin' Up Our Christmas." Definitely not for traditionalists.

"A Very Special Christmas," various artists (AEM) - this is the third installment in the Family Channel series benefiting the Special Olympics. Like any multi-artist album, there's plenty to love here and plenty to hate. On the plus side are Sting's "I Saw Three Ships," Blue's "Cats in the Cradle," "Christmas," (notice how John Popper sounds like Cat Stevens...?)... The Smashin' Pumpkins' "I'M A Believer"... The Black Crowes' "Go Like Truck..."


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PIAZZOLLA LIVE CAPTURED ON MILAN SERIES

(Continued from preceding page)

of Astor’s accomplishment.”

Piazzolla recorded little in the studio after the early '80s, aside from theatrical and dance scores and such special projects as his classic trilogy for the American Clave label and his trendsetting collaboration with the Kronos Quartet for Nonesuch.

But he continued to concertize considerably, and many of these shows were taped for broadcast.

Chamberdon says the Piazzolla Foundation is pursuing legal action against several labels and publishers to stop them from exploiting Piazzolla’s popularity via radio tapes and other unapproved sources. He adds, though, that he and the Piazzolla family appreciate the work of such labels as Nonesuch and Sony Classical to disseminate Piazzolla’s legacy in good faith.

Nonesuch released Piazzolla’s “Five Tango Sensations” with Kronos in 1991 and has gone on to put out two lauded homages to Piazzolla by classical violinist Gidon Kremer. Next year, the label plans to reissue Piazzolla’s American Clave albums from the '80s, “Zero Hour,” “The Rough Dancer And The Cyclic Night,” and “La Camorra.”

Sony Classical has Mal’s new Piazzolla tribute, “Soul Of The Tango,” along with the soundtrack to “The Tango Lesson,” which features a few Piazzolla tracks (see story, page 15). Last year, Sony issued “Los Tangos,” a duet album of Piazzolla material from classical pianist Emanuel Ax and former Piazzolla pianist Piazzolla Ziegler.

The Canadian Just A Memory label has released two-three disc boxed sets of Piazzolla’s early and mid-period studio recordings, but the Paris-based, BMG-distributed Milan has the most wide-ranging Piazzolla catalog of any label. Its backlist includes the film score to “Sur” and treatments of Piazzolla classics by the likes of Camerata Bariloche and the Buenos Aires Symphony.

With the four new live sets and the recent soundtrack compilation “Tango,” (Continued on page 27)

IT'S A SCREAM: Capitol Dimension has lots to shout about these days. On Dec. 2, the label will release the soundtrack to “Scream 2,” this season’s answer to the question of how many teen idols it takes to create a hit movie. The Miramax film, directed by Wes Craven, opens Dec. 12.

Just do a quick scan of the credits for the soundtrack and you’ll see names like Danny Elfman, “The Swing,” “Scream,” “The Thing,” “Good Will Hunting,” to name a few. The soundtrack album was produced by Miramax, and the label is expected to release the soundtrack to the original “Scream” (those honors went to MTV Records). “We are kicking in a massive radio and retail campaign to coincide with this release,” says Clark Staub, Capitol VP of marketing. “It is one of the highest-profile projects for the holiday season.” Helping raise the profile for the “Scream 2” soundtrack and movie is the cool $20 million in marketing money Miramax has committed to the project. Staub says Capitol will complement that effort with additional TV, radio, and print campaigns, along with ads in Billboard, Cash Box, and “unavoidable” in-store signage. “This is a huge priority for us,” Staub says. “With the first ‘Scream’ doing over $100 million at the box office and ‘Scream 2’ being one of the most anticipated films this year, there is a huge upside for the soundtrack.”

To catch the ears of as many members of the target 13- to 25-year-old audience as possible, Capitol is releasing a one-two-three punch of singles that the label is filtering out to different radio formats during three consecutive weeks. The first single, “Scream” by Master P Featuring Silk Tha Shocker, ships to R&B radio in late November. A videoclip for that track has already been accepted by MTV and is making its way to BET and the Box, according to Staub. Heeded to commercial alternative radio Dec. 2 is “Suburban Life” by new Capitol act the Kottonmouth Kings, and Collective Soul’s “She Said” will hit triple-A radio Dec. 8.

For Capitol, “Scream 2” is a catalyst not only to boost its reputation in the soundtrack industry but also to boost the visibility of some of its home-grown artists. The soundtrack is the first major-label appearance for Kottonmouth Kings, whose debut Capitol album is due this spring. It also features Capitol acts Foo Fighters and the previously unreleased track “Dear Lover.” Everclear with a new version of its song “The Swing,” “Less Than Jake with a cover of feel-good theme “I Think I Love You,” and the John Spencer Blues Explosion.

Matador/Capitol bows its new soundtracks label, Matador Soundtracks, with Dec. 2 release of the soundtracks to “Welcome To Sarajevo” and “Suburban Life,” both of which were original songs by Miramax’s “Good Will Hunting,” featuring a score by Danny Elfman and tracks by Luscious Jackson, among others. “Welcome” features previously unreleased songs by Blur, Van Morrison, and Teenage Fanclub and an unreleased instrumental from Massive Attack. Upcoming in January is a second soundtrack to the music-filled “Bogie Nights,” which will feature most of the remaining feel-good songs from the film that didn’t make it on its first Capitol album.

EXPERIMENTING WITH ELFMAN: To be counted in the realm of record successes, “Flubber,” Buena Vista’s updated version of the screwball science flick “The Absent-Minded Professor,” called for nothing short of modern-day comedic genius. And who better than wizard of wacky Danny Elfman to complete the Robin Williams-starring picture with a score that lifts viewers into another dimension altogether. The album hits retail Tuesday (25); the film opens Wednesday (26).

Elfman, who had been keeping a tight schedule this summer and early fall completing the score to the Gus Van Sant directed drama “Good Will Hunting,” initially was slated to contribute only the quirky “Mambo Del Flubber” theme for “Flubber.” “That’s all I was going to do, because I had already contracted to do this Gus Van Sant movie,” he says, laughing. “And for a long time I held out, but they persisted and persisted, and they eventually wore me down.”

Elfman says his satisfaction working on the mambo also served as a guide. “It’s what attracted me to the project in the first place,” he says. “I said I would do (the piece) as long as it didn’t have to sound contemporary. I love pulling out old motifs, so diving into a mambo circa 1950 really appealed to me. I love taking traditional motifs and turning them inside out.”

To help keep the comedic edge in his work on “Flubber,” Elfman says he looked to Williams’ character closely, the way he tracked Paul Rubin’s temperament for “Pee-Wee’s Big Adventure.” His decision to dive in and score the rest of “Flubber” proved more serendipitous than perhaps even Elfman or the folks at Walt Disney initially realized. The Van Sant picture coincidentally also will be distributed by Disney through subsidiary Miramax and also stars Williams. The release dates of both films are within one week of each other—“Good Will Hunting” opens Dec. 5—and will render the sounds of Elfman nearly unavoidable during the holiday box-office season.

Scoring the two films simultaneously provided Elfman with the chance to compare and contrast his own composition styles. “There are times when I’m doing a really silly piece that I have to reluctantly admit to myself that it did it well,” he says. “I don’t want to be the king of wacky, but I do wacky very well. Doing a drama is interesting, because I’ve done less of them. ‘Good Will’ was more challenging; ‘Flubber’ was just fun.” Jumping back and forth between projects also made for a fascinating case study in the many moods of now close contemporary Williams. “It’s been pretty interesting doing two Robin Williams projects simultaneously,” he says. “It was a real Robin fest. Thank God he had a beard in one of them, or it would’ve been really confusing.”

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Billboard honors Chet Atkins with its highest accolade, the Century Award for distinguished creative achievement. The laurel was named for the 100th anniversary of the publication in 1994.

While Billboard traditionally has reported on the industry accomplishments and chart-oriented strides of generations of talented individuals, the sole aim of the Century Award is to acknowledge the uncommon excellence of one artist's still-unfolding body of work. Moreover, the award focuses on those singular musicians who have not heretofore been accorded the degree of serious homage their achievements deserve. It is a gesture unprecedented in Billboard's history and one that is informed by the heritage of the publication itself.

"Rock'n'roll snatched the guitar out of the country & western toolbox and made it a mechanism of musical potency," says Billboard editor in chief Timothy White. "But Chet Atkins wrested the instrument back in the most gentlemanly fashion and took it to a unique, new artistic peak as a countrified fount of solo verse and contoured melody.

"Suddenly, country guitar had a highly discerning voice, as worldly, perceptive, and nuanced as that of the most virtuoso fiddler," White continues. "In the process, Atkins conceived an intimate modern artistic matrimony of pop, jazz, rock, classical, and myriad American root forms that inspired everyone from the most ambitious Nashville pickers to the Beatles, Eric Clapton, George Benson, and Dire Straits.

"Chet Atkins is a true pioneer as a player, composer, producer, label executive, and architect of the music industry whose vision continues to be hands-down extraordinary. Meantime, Chet's latest album on Columbia, 'The Day Finger Pickers Took Over The World,' is one more prismatic delight, right up there with his finest legendary releases. Billboard can think of no artist more deserving of the the 1997 Century Award than Chet Atkins, who signs his name with the only title he accepts for himself: C.G.P., or 'Certified Guitar Player.' "

Previous Century Award Honorees:

George Harrison - 1992
Buddy Guy - 1993
Billy Joel - 1994
Joni Mitchell - 1995
Carlos Santana - 1996

Designed by jeweler/sculptor Tina Marie Zippo-Evans, the Century Award is a unique work of art as well as an emblem of artistic supereminence. Struck in bronze once a year, the handcrafted, 14-inch-high statue is a composite representation of the Greco-Roman Muses of music and the arts (among them Calliope, epic poetry; Euterpe, music; Terpsichore, dance; Erato, love song; and Polyhymnia, sacred hymns). The form is female, in keeping with an ancient definition of the arts: "Sacred music is a symbol of nature in her transitory and ever-changing aspect." The lyre held by the Muse is a specially made adornment that changes yearly in order to personalize the honor for each recipient. In homage to Atkins, who was once briefly barred from the Grand Ole Opry for playing jazz and other eclectic forms, the 1997 lyre is crafted from an actual century-old floorboard taken from the stage at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium, the original headquarters of the Opry. Cut and laid in place in 1892 by the Word Lumber Co. of Scottsboro, Ala., the stave of flooring was removed and donated by Ryman owner Gaylord Entertainment expressly for use in the 1997 Century Award. Thus, Atkins need never again worry if he can go to the Opry and find a welcome on its stage, for by this gesture the Opry has perpetually decreed that its stage shall henceforth come to him.
Before there was a Nashville sound, or a cultural or commercial context by which to convey it, there was Chester Burton Atkins, born June 20, 1904, on a Tennessee hillsdale northeast of Knoxville. His father was a classically trained musician named James Arley Atkins, who divorced Chester's pianist mother when the boy was 6. By the age of 8, the much-traveled Chester had his first Sears Silvertone guitar and a firm knowledge of the wider world beyond the railroad depot of Luttrell, Tenn., whether it be the studied drama of opera and pop music or the gospel songs expressed in the segregationist precepts of Georgia's red-clay farmland in Hamilton County. Much as Franklin Delano Roosevelt's years in the latter region opened a president's eyes to the urgencies of the New Deal, so young Chester's own creative curiosity during the Depression drew the artist/producer/record executive toward any sophisticated challenge, the social or economic limitations of Southern/Midwestern ruralism. Exulted by the jazz of European Gypsy virtuosos and aching to integrate all of America's other pre- and post-World War II musical influences with the real Southern folk culture he aimed to refine, the bashful but stubbornly urbane Chester Atkins was the true face of country music.

Indeed, Atkins slowly but surely shattered the sometimes Grand Ole Opry-enhanced notion that country came out of the hills with a fuzzy education, a nervy tick in place of rhythmic savvy, and tufted hayseed where its intellect should be. Atkins proved that country music, like all the arts at their high end, was actually about humanity's boldest hopes for private reason, public excellence, and the honest communication that links both as a force for good.

As fellow Country Award winner George Harrison wrote in the liner notes to a 1966 album of Atkins', "For me, the great thing about Mr. Atkins is not the fact that he is capable of playing almost every type of music but the conviction in the way that he does it. While listening to 'Chet Atkins' Picks On The Beatles,' I got the feeling that these songs had been written specifically with Chet in mind. The fact that they were not proves his eminence as an artist—the perfect example being 'Yesterday.'"

Four boys from Liverpool, England, were in awe of one fella from Luttrell, and vice versa, and that's the essence of country music's greatest asset: the common touch, as exemplified by Chester Burton Atkins, interviewed at length in September at his unassuming office on Nashville's Music Row.

What's your first memory of life with a stringed instrument in your hands?

My first memories are of playing around the stream by our house with the crawdads. One of my first problems, when I guess I was 4 or 5 years old, was that I'd been strumming on my ukulele, which had been left there by a friend of my mother's, and my mom said, "Go to the teacher, and choir director, and he was on the road all the time."

He'd been married once before, and they'd had Jimmy, my half-brother, who was older than me and became a fine guitarist and singer. Jimmy, who was with Fred Waring for quite a while and then left Waring in 1937, he and Les had a jazz trio with Ernie Newton. Then Les went into the Army, and Jimmy stayed with Fred, singing. Jimmy was also doing some kind of work for the government in photography; they didn't draft him 'cause he had two kids. He eventually moved to Colorado and was an engineer at a station in Denver.

One day my dad came down to where we were playing by the spring house with my brother Lowell and Nona—he liked to make up names—and he said, "Well, goodbyes, kiddies, I'm leaving. I won't be back for while." Didn't see him again for a year. He'd come back and see us once in a while, bring a present or two. After that, our dad's dog, Yardo—for yard dog—was our protector, even though he had been in the way of a train that cut off one of his paws. If our mother'd see us [get] into something wrong, she'd get a switch and try to whip us, and that damned dog would try to eat her alive.

My mom, Ida Elia Sharp, she had been a hired girl, like an au pair; she had come down to help with my grandpa, who was sick. He died, but I guess a romance started somewhere along the line. When my mom and dad were together, they had three kids—me and Lowell and Nona. My mother had a lot of musical talent. She was very emotional, and I think I got as much talent from her as I did from my dad. She played piano and sang but never seriously. We had a piano in the house, and she'd play once in a while, some old folk song like "When You And I Were Young, Maggie," but the music I heard around the house was mostly from my dad, who played piano, violin, and guitar. He'd do mostly classical stuff, and he was an Irish tenor. John McCormack, he loved him, and Richard Crooks, another classical singer. I'd hear Dad sing their stuff while he was shaving and doing his vocal exercises.

And later on, when I went to live with him, he used to do concerts down in Georgia on the evangelistic circuit there. Classical music never drew any crowds though, so he used to just do that for his own enjoyment. He had a nice woman who he rehearsed with, "who accompanied Mr. Atkins on the piano," as they said.

Understand, my dad was married five times, so I have a lot of half-brothers and sisters around. The first one, I was 11 when I went to live with my dad. I was asthmatic, very bad. My mother called him and told him she was going to leave me unless I had a change of climate. And it did help; he came out to east Tennessee in a Model A Ford to pick me up and my sister, and it took all day to drive back to where he'd lived down in Georgia on a farm he'd bought. That drive was quite an experience; all day I remember my sister would reach over and tell Dad, "Could we go a little faster?" but we could only go 35 miles an hour. So we get down there at 10:30 at night, and this beautiful woman comes out and greets us, and it's his new wife. And she was sweet; she was always very kind to me. Her name was Tommy.

Rural Georgia did help my asthma, so I stayed down there a few years and went to grammar school and high school. We were out in the sticks; we were out in the pines, nine miles from the county seat of Hamilton, in an area called Mountain Hill, at the end of the Appalachian chain. President Franklin Roosevelt would come down there to Warm Springs, about 50 miles or so below Atlanta. And there was a resort near there called Callaway Gardens, owned by the Callaway family, who used to see us working out in our fields and offer to buy them.

My mother, she stayed on the Tennessee farm about three to four years after my dad left, and she married a young guy who could farm and raised vegetables and tobacco and had a few horses. Then my dad took the land away from her in the divorce settlement, so she and her new husband moved away, 'cause they were sharecroppers. And I stayed down in Georgia.

Sounds like a hard, uncertain life back then, with a lot of bottle poverty and personal upheaval.

You know, when I look back and see all of what I've done, I think, "How in the hell did I do that?" Cause most people never get out of those little towns, they never "accomplish" anything, and they're as happy as I am and probably will live longer. My dad was the same way. He went to Chicago, and he studied classical music in Cincinnati, so I guess I had some...
of that ambition in me, I guess.

time and try to work up new things, "cause we used to say to each other, "We learn new stuff, get out there, and make our ass and start it!" It took a long time, and listening to Django [Reinhardt] and Les Paul and others was helpful. I was primitive, but so was everybody else.

**Hadn't you traded a pistol for your first guitar?**

**[Smiles]** Yeah, we had all kinds of old weapons around, but they wouldn't shoot, and we didn't have any ammunition. Who could afford ammunition during the Depression—that stuff is expensive! So we had two Owl Head brand pistols, and the boy down the road had a Stella guitar, so I traded him for one of those pistols, I guess I would shoot, maybe, but we never shot it.

As a kid, you avoided sports because you didn't want to hurt your hands and affect your guitar playing. That showed pretty intense belief as a young person in your own talent. So were you that serious even then?

Oh yeah. And I liked all kinds of music—like jazz, cowboy, gospel—any kind that had a good melody. That's what helped me so much, I think, when I got a job as a producer. I could draw from so many different sources, "cause I grew up in the sticks, listening to the Holy Rollers sect or hearing my dad sing in the gospel quartet he traveled around with. And if anybody came through the area playing something I didn't know, I'd steal it, take it over, and make it my own.

**Your finger-style approach—how would you describe it? Is it a jazz-based style?**

It is a slide piano style, which was very popular in the 1920s. I didn't develop it. It just evolved from a black guy in Kentucky named Arnold Schultz. He influenced Bill Monroe, so still the reason Bill's sound was bluesy. Bill had worked with Arnold Shultz as a kid, at dances. So did guitarist Mose Rager up in Muhlenberg County [Ky.], he hung around him and learned to play a little stride, and Ike Everly, the father of the Everly Brothers.

So Shultz, Rager, Everly, and this other guy in the area [Kennedy Jones], these four guys in Muhlenberg County wound up with this finger-picking style. And then, of course, Merle [Travis], he was younger, and he's up on the porch in Kentucky and they'd throw dimes to them. So that's how all that started, but Merle developed a better technique than they had, I suppose, and he also played great rhythm guitar and sang. So he finally got a job with [fiddler] Clayton McMicken [His Georgia Wildcats], and that started to rub the word around. I heard him in about 1940 on WLW [Cincinnati], and I thought, "What the hell is he doing?" I kept listening to him, and I didn't hear him just a few times, and then he got drafted into the Marines—I was 14 [during World War II] because of my asthma.

After the war, the comedy actor Smiley Burnette, who worked with Gene Autry as Gene's sidekick, told Merle he'd rather live in California among the oranges and the Hollywood studio than live in Cincinnati as a millionaire. Merle said that's all it took, and he went off to California—loved the pretty girls out there. So I didn't hear Merle anymore, or his style, which was with a thumb and a finger. Having read my dad's classical music magazines, which described classical guitar techniques, I'd started playing with a thumb and three fingers [middle, index, and ring finger], which gave me quite an advantage.

**I know that besides Merle Travis, Django Reinhardt was another of your earliest and biggest heroes. How old were you when you met him?**

I was 21-22. I met Django in Chicago in the mid-1940s. I was up there out of a job. I got fired from every dang place I ever worked. I only had enough money for a ticket to the Civic Opera House, and I bought it. I was in the way back. But it was good, and I came out there and smammed the blues and had these black guys in front of me yelling and screaming, and that made me admire him even more.

He was a character, as I was reminded of just the other day when I had a visit here in Nashville. When I was 16, I met Django. Reinhardt had his stroke, he told his wife, "I'll never play again; I'm paralyzed." Then he asked his boy, "Son, what are you going to play when you grow up?" He said, 'I don't know, Poppa.' And Django said, "Don't play guitar, you can never be as good as I am." [Laughter, shaking his head] What can you say?

Reinhardt was also self-taught?

**[Nodding]** More than that, he was different. He was first guy to come along who could really execute fast scales. Later on, Eddie Lang came along, and he was all right, but he couldn't execute them. Reinhardt just had a great banjo-type technique. He could play chromatic runs, right on the beat [rolls his hands Phy, and every note would be right on the damned button].

I only know of one other guy that's able to do that, an Australian guitar player. I made an album in 1974 called, "Day Finger Pickers Took Over The World" [Columbia, 1997] with him recently; his name is Tommy Emmanuel. But Django died in his 40s [in 1953]; I think he was 49.

All those radio stations that kept letting you go, what did you do, said, "Don't worry, they just looking for an air personality who happened to play?

Well, back in those days, country music wasn't near as sophisticated as it is now, lyrically and melodically, and I was playing jazz—and or at least trying to play jazz like Mr. Reinhardt and George Barnes, who was another great player in the '30s and '40s. In the radio days, your value was determined by how much mail you drew. I didn't draw any mail [chuckles], I sounded like two black guitar players, "cause I played rhythm and melody at the same time.

But I was a better musician than most of the guys I worked with; I knew three or four chords, and they knew two. So I would always tell them what to do and how to tune their guitars. My mother said, "You'll never keep a job! You're always telling people what to do!"

**Your first recording experience was playing guitar in 1945, and you played with Wally Fowler's Georgia Clodhoppers, who later became the Oak Ridge Boys. What were those tracks of your own like, that you cut in 1946 for Bullet Records in Nashville?**

They were just like I play now. I played the blues, like the song "Guitar Blues," and [I] played a tune called "Blue Eyes Crying in The Rain," and Jack Shook sang it 'cause I didn't sing, and we used a clarinet, two rhythm guitar players, and a bass. And you who know who produced those sessions—Owen Bradley! He was hanging around Jim Bullet all the time, and Jim wasn't a musician, so Owen'd help him out, make suggestions. A year or two later, I got to know Owen when Red Foley brought me back here in '46, and I played on the Grand Ole Opry PA. [i.e., the Prince Albert smoking-coco sponsored portion of the NBC radio show].

And when I got the chance to record for Bullet, I brought these musicians down from Cincinnati, who were about the only ones I know that were qualified. We got Dutch McMillian here, who was real good on sax and clarinet, and we got Jack Shook, a singer who was the staff rhythm guitar player at WSM [Nashville], and we made four sides in three hours, which is what they always tried to do. Then I got fired a few more times, and I went to work in a coffee shop with Redd Thompson & His Rangers. My record came out, and it got played a lot, I guess, because I got a paycheck every week, which was pretty big in those days. This was for "Blue Eyes Crying in The Rain" and for "Guitar Blues."

**Who else was on Bullet Records?**

Francis Craig was his big artist; he had an orchestra that played in a Nashville hotel for lunch every day, and Phil Harris played drums with him, and Lawrence Tibbett, the great opera singer, sang with him in that orchestra [which matched a huge No. 1 national hit in 1951 with "Near You," Milton Berle's theme song].

You got signed to RCA in 1947, and you had gotten attention with tracks like "Canned Heat." But something like "Main Street Breakdown," which Steve Sholes, RCA's Nashville A&R chief, produced in 1949 at your second Chicago session for RCA, really helped establish your style. Would you have worked that out by playing...
And Chet said yes. Then from Jethro it explain first met 'Chet, he
There's a custom acoustic guitar leaning nearby and Sholes
Later, a model. And Chet said, "OK, that's why I'm here. I wanted to show you down to see if they could get a talented, crazy fella, and he's got the Loft's, saying, "Hey, Chet, try this!" He brought in Nashville, and Sholes, and I'd be on the sessions, too, and he'd continue with that crazy way of his, saying, "Chet, try this!" and then it was something wild. He was very helpful, and so I started telling him when I got into the position of being a producer, and I told him to do that. But even then, he came to 61, he [would] send me demo tapes of ideas he had, and the guy was so far ahead of everybody else and around the time it was amazing. He was way ahead of his time.
So I started giving him work [in 1965], and he used to phone me late at night and say, "Chet, I can't come to Nashville for a session today and they're all looking at me and they don't like my playing, and they say, 'Hey, I want him.'" Another night, he played me some licks over the phone, and it was so amazing, he couldn't possibly see the next day and his head would be all bloody from scratching his scalp while he was writing and playing, trying to catch up with that kind of intense feeling to this day he still doesn't know how good he is. [Their 1970 "Me And Jerry Reed" set won a Grammy. Jerry was a true original, and he was sometimes a bit crazy, but he was a genius."
After Steve Sholes moved to New York in 1957 to lead RCA's pop wing, you brought a lot of people to prominence as you began marketing the country division of RCA, with Waylon Jennings, Don Gibson, Connie Smith. Did you have a free hand?
Yes, I did. The first person I signed in 1957 was Don Gibson, I called Steve and said, "I want to sign Don." He said, "Well, he's been on RCA and didn't sell, he's been on Columbia and didn't sell, and he's been on MGM." I said, "Yeah, but I've been working with him, and I know how he can write—he's a hell of a writer—and I want him."
Everybody was saying, "Keep him country! Keep him country," and I thought, "Aw, bullshit, let's do it my way." Don had sent me "Oh Lonesome Me" and "I Can't Stop Loving You" on one little tape. The 1957-58 model he had a drummer on it with him. I said, "Who's that drummer?" He said it was Troy Hatcher. I knew Troy and worked with him. So he brought Troy down with him, and we did four takes of "Oh Lonesome Me," and I played electric guitar, and I had an Echodyne amp, and a steady, course, with drink and things. Then he fell and hurt his back one time while he was hunting, and Fred told me they gave him some morphine, and Hank said, "I love it! He had a lot of problems and pain but a helluva lot of natural talent.
You kept exploring your own natural talents, too. One about was called "Chet Atkins In Three Dimensions," which featured you cutting some cutting material.
Mr. Sholes knew that I played classical tunes, pop tunes, jazz tunes, so I played some tunes by Austen, and I was doing with Fritz Kreisler that Boudleaux had taught me, and the record sold very well. Then I did "Classic Guitar," too, it sold 200,000, and it meets classical, and they didn't throw rocks at me!
On the "Fingerstyle Guitar" album in 1957, you worked at your own home studio, an unusual move at that time and place.
I was always doing home recording, and I had a Wilcox-Gay disc recorder, and sometimes there was a music store close to me down in Lakewood [Tenn.], which I sold, that really did brighten up some of my radio in it and a microphone to record live, was open to all sorts of experimenting.
Is that how you hooked up with Jerry Reed, whom you signed to RCA in 1956?
[Laughter] Jerry's something, isn't he? I first met him when he was about 17 years old. I went to Atlanta to play a country show there, Georgia Jubilee and Jerry was there, and I said, "Hey, Sholes, and I'd be on the sessions, too, and he'd continue with that crazy way of his, saying, "Chet, try this!" and then it was something wild. He was very helpful, and so I started telling him when I got into the position of being a producer, and I told him to do that. But even then, he came to 61, he [would] send me demo tapes of ideas he had, and the guy was so far ahead of everybody else and around the time it was amazing. He was way ahead of his time.
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were invented by Ray Outts in Cairo, Ill.—I got the second one he made; Scotty Moore in Elvis’ band got the third one. We also got Velma Smith to play a Bo Diddley lick; she was great. “I Can’t Stop Lovin’ You” was our B-side, and we had ourselves a hit with Don in 1956.

“O Lonesome Me” was No. 1 on Billboard’s Country & Western Best Sellers and Diameter Singles charts for eight weeks in ’56, And the B-side was a top 10 success, too.

And that gave me confidence. So after that I knew I could produce his hits, because I knew what it took to make a great run with any record. But here’s one of those fellows who’s so damn shy, he lives out here in a mansion in the richest, most powerful city in the United States, but he doesn’t want any guests, so he built a wall around the whole cot-to-pin-pickin’ place. I think I’m probably the best friend he’s got, and he’s called me since my recent operation, and he wants me to come by and see him.

Then it happened he’d have died young like Hank, he’d have been a legend within two weeks, because he was the same kind of great writer.

Incredibly, during this same period, rock-’n-roll arrived and Steve Sholes had signed Elvis Presley to RCA in 1956, so during a period when we were cutting albums of our own like “Fingerstyle Guitar” and especially the hit 1958 set “Chet Atkins At Studio A” that was also arranging and playing the rhythm guitar on the first RCA sessions where Elvis cut “Heartbreak Hotel” and “I Was Born Under a Bad sign” and “I Love You,” plus moonlighting on guitar for the Cadence Records sessions for an act co-signed to Nashlex, the Everly Brothers. Talk about being present at the Creation.

Well, the Everly Brothers are still friends, and I was happy to be an early supporter when they were practically little kids. I knew their father, and, I published a couple of their early songs which were the last release by Jack Presley and Johnny Cash, and I didn’t have a problem with that.

But Wanda Jackson and Jack Kitts[“I’m Shuttin’ Out Steal”] I recorded them. I suggested they audition for Acuff and they got signed to RCA, which was a new publishing deal, ‘cause they were brand-new and different. I played the electric guitar on all their records, until they signed with Merle Travis, a bunch of new people. It just became difficult to work there, because in the end I was always seen as the old-timer, the old guard, and I understood that.

The relocation to Columbia got you out from behind a desk and back into making records.

You worked from 1968 to 1972. What made you move from RCA to Columbia in ’82?

Well, as I say, I was at RCA for years, and one day I went to work in shoes that didn’t match! Bobby Bare, the old-timer, said, there was one of them wasn’t a wingtip.

[Laughter] I thought, “I’ve been on the damned job for 30 years, and there is a guy that I hired who’s a wingtip!"

It happened, I hired Jerry Bradley to help me, and he brought down [current RCA Label Group chairman] Joe Grundy, who was in charge of a bunch of new people. It just became difficult to work there, because in the end I was always seen as the old-timer, the old guard, and I understood that.

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You were an RCA vice president from 1968 to 1992. What made you move from RCA to Columbia in ’82?

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The relocation to Columbia got you out from behind a desk and back into making records. The Opry stayed in place there until 1974, when it moved to a suburban location—named Opryland. The Opry went dark, like much of downtown Nashville. At one time, it was slated for demolition.

Under Nashville Mayor Phil Bredesen’s program for downtown renovation, the Opry—under new ownership by Gaylord Entertainment—was extensively re-modeled in 1993. It reopened in 1994 and immediately became an anchor for the revitalized downtown Nashville.

Now, the acoustically impeccable hall—finally air-conditioned after many years—has never been better, and operates year-round in a section of cultural activities. Gar- rison Keillor’s “Prairie Home Companion” has been a regular feature, and “Nashville Night Train” has been a regular feature, and “Nashville Night Train” has been expanded to a full-time feature, and “Nashville” has been expanded to a full-time feature. “Sunrise” on “Opryland” was wonder- ful, but we wrote a lot together and had a whole album’s worth of unused material. But no one would let us get it out.

Incidentally, I also got George eating catfish, which he wouldn’t touch at first, and then he ate it and liked it. Like anything else, it’s all just a matter of taste, but taste is usually just what you’re used to.

Looking back over the last 50 years has it, thus far, mainly been fun?

I’ll tell you: I’ve been professional since 1942, and I never seriously compared myself to anybody else. I just did what I liked and hoped that people wouldn’t wonder if me. Fortunately, that strategy has mostly [chuckles] worked out pretty good.
Scream Kings: Capitol Records is well positioned to piggyback on the “Scream 2” soundtrack with the debut release by hip-hop/punk quintet Kottonmouth Kings. The Orange County, Calif.-based act, whose single “Suburban Life” from the soundtrack hits modern rock radio Tuesday (2), is getting early airplay on stations including XTRA-FM San Diego.

A video for the song, which features snippets from the movie, has been added to stress rotation on MTV.

Craig Aaronson, the Capitol director of A&R who signed the act, says the project has moved along quickly since he signed Kottonmouth Kings two months ago.

As well as the group’s songs, it was the band members’ unusual energy and unassuming attitude that drew Aaronson to the Beastie Boys-esque act when he came across them laying tracks for its demo in a Los Angeles recording studio.

They were playing these songs for me, and they actually climbed up on the mixing board and started dancing,” he says. “But it was just a funny, natural thing for them to do. Not really formal. I went to my boss the next day and said, ‘I’ve got to work with these guys.’”

Aaronson says the band’s still-unitled debut has already been recorded and will bow in the first quarter of next year.

At Screen: On the newest Aqua Velurs album, “Guitar Noir” released Oct. 28 on Milan Records, the surf band tweaks such ’50s and ’60s film music as

Coming Of Age: Baby bird, the burgeoning prolific and talented British singer/songwriter Stephen Jones, follows a series of popular indie and self-released albums in his hometown with the release here of “Ugly Beautiful.” The album, released Oct. 28, 1997 in the U.K. by Echo, bowed here on Atlantic in October. Look for more of the group in the coming months.

Asphalt Attack: Immortal/ Epic is moving toward its goal of proving new funk rock act Incubus on the road. The five-member band will extend its tour with 311 and Sugar Ray, opening for each through the end of the year. Meanwhile, the group’s whose album “S.I.E.N.C.E. bowed in September, has been receiving well on the road and in the press, where such publications as Guitar World, Main Streets, and BAM have covered its story.

Bob Ross: New star of the cable arts show “Bob Ross’ Joy of Painting,” Ross, who has taught art to kids and adults for years, offers his unique painting style to the millions who watch the program daily. Ross will be appearing at several stops on the West Coast this fall, including the Fillmore in San Francisco on Sept. 16th.

Roadwork: Sire Records release of the new album “Just Between Us” by Tiffany will be one of the most anticipated records of the year. Tiffany will be touring extensively in support of the album, which is expected to debut at the top of the charts.

As for the soundtrack, it features a mix of contemporary artists such as Scream 2, Aqua Velurs, and Incubus, among others. The album will be available on vinyl, CD, and cassette.
In Europe for a tour around May of next year, an itinerary that will also include the U.S.

Rick Davis, Record Corner in Balam, South London, is in agreement. "It's the "I'm Leavin' U" single, which he thinks is helping introduce Collins to a younger crowd. "That'll sell" not on P-Funk, he adds. "It's got a certain garage mix. And that's pretty strong," he says. "And if he's got Mousse T involved, that probably guarantees a strong album, although I do find that producers like that don't always sell albums. With Norman Cook's involvement it'll probably do quite a bit well in its C-list, playing in it all dayparts other than morning drive.

The single has had widespread exposure around Europe at such outlets as Nij Network in Paris; Radio Gdansk in Poland, Station Kebenhaven in Copenhagen; video channel Viva TV in Cologne, Germany; and in the U.K. at BBM Birmingham and Hallam FM Sheffield.

Chris Straw, head of music at Hall- am FM, describes "I'm Leavin' U" as both "a pleasant surprise" and "a breath of fresh air." The station has playlisted the song for several weeks in its C-list, playing it in all dayparts other than morning drive.

In the U.K., Funkadelic and Parliament had a loyal following, and their contemporaries in black music have come to be regarded as leg- endary, but their contemporaries in the black music community are more. Parliament sold a single a album, while Funkadelic charted only one single and album with "One Nation Under A Groove" in late 1978. Collins, a teenage member of James Brown's JB's who played bass on "Sex Machine" before beaming up to George Clinton's P-Funk mother ship, acknowledges that musicians of his era were rarely able to realize their commercial potential. That makes him particularly aware of the trap acts that have sold many a Collins baseline. "I have to say thanks to that, because they re-invented what we did."

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TANG0 (Continued from page 15)
go, along with tracks by such tango legends as vocalist Carlos Gardel and bandoneonist Osvaldo Pugliese. The album also features a discography of tango recordings by multi-instrumentalist Fred Frith and the Klezmatics. Most original tango is rocked in the Latin section at retail, whether it's a historical compilation like Metro Blue's "The Story Of The Tango" or the series of "authentic" live recordings by Pizzicato's ensembles on Milan (see story, page 15). But essays in Pizzicato by classical artists like Ma and Kremer are usually found in classical departments. In fact, "Soul Of The Tango" was the best-selling tango album for the week of Nov. 11 release at Tower Records in New York's Greenwich Village.

Going beyond the scores, Ma steeped himself in Pizzicato's music and its milieu—not only studying a tape of Rostropovich rehearsing "Le Grand Tango" for Pizzicato but traveling to Buenos Aires to tour its tango clubs and meet the composer's compadres.

"The whole experience of researching and reading this album was such a thrill," Ma says. "Like a lot of people, I'm so irrevocably drawn to Pizzicato's music. It's very sophisticated, yet it's very primal. And you can say that about Beethoven, Stravinsky—all the great stuff feeds the mind, the body, and the soul."

PIZZAZZA ON MILAN (Continued from page 15)
g ue De Amor," the Pizzazza trove on Milan now runs to 15 titles. Chamboren says some vintage live albums are due next year, and like the first four in the series, they will be packaged with distinctive covers set by 1930s Mexican painter Tamara de Lempicka.

"More than anything, Pizzazza's music is of the city," Chamboren says. "That's why with the artwork we sought something a little dark and very urban. Tamara de Lempicka's work is a good graphic representation of the music, and we worked with Christie's to make her paintings original, not copies, so the typical ones you see, but unique."

Pizzazza's music has proved popular not only in Buenos Aires and New York, but from Paris to Berkeley, Calif. One of the most substantial sellers of Pizzazza recordings in the U.S. is Rascal Music, the record label, where international music publisher Ian DeSilva says the Milan set regula
terily outsells most others (yet he notes that they have to compete with about 25 unnumbered discs). DeSilva also co-hosts a weekly radio show, "Afro-Cuban & World Music," on the University of San Francisco's KSFR, on which he has aired Milan's Pizzazza series.

Meeting on his first hearing of Pizzazza years ago, Chamboren points out a major selling point for the music. "Take a song like 'Adios Ninos.' It has such feeling, a melancholy, that it is universal. It speaks to everyone. Once that melody enters your ear, it never leaves you."
BOOGIE WONDERLAND: Can it be true? Has Danny Tenaglia finally seduced his ever-growing cult of followers with a peek into his long-anticipated new album? Yes, children, “Elements” is upon us—and it’s well worth the wait.

The first single from a still-untitled album that Twisted America promises will be available in March takes punners on an intense underground excursion that shows Tenaglia deftly combining raw African percussion with Anglo-speak house. If you’re seeing pick-flow pop, keep on stepping. “Elements” is strictly for the street, with Tenaglia verbally deconstructing the instrumental elements of the track and issuing commanding instructions on how to beat enjoy the grooves. With the aid of a few handy studio tricks, he’s altered and deepened his voice so that it’s beyond the recognition of anyone who’s ever heard him speak. In listener’s hands, all of this would reek of hack gtnmcklivre, but he keeps the kitch to a minimum. Also, it helps that the music is quite good.

With mixed spread out over two records, “Elements” provides plenty for DJs to work with, though none of it should replace the primary mix (clocking in at an astonishingly swift 12-plus minutes) as the key focus of your enjoyment.

Everyone in the States may be all aflutter over Sean “Puffy” Combs’ deep-smart revision of the Police’s wave evergreen “ Roxanne,” but the real remix to hear is Roger Sanchez’s seriously tripped-out interpretation of “Walking On The Moon,” just released on a brand new A&R collective’s new label, Roxanne/Back. Sanchez has already announced the remix for the single “Break With You,” and he’s currently cutting an EP for the label’s due early next year.

In other related news, he’s momentarily pausing from life in the club lave to produce Drill, a rock outfit “It’s a nice change of pace,” he says. “Of course, I can’t resist introducing some groove elements into their mix,” which is going ever run well with the band. Look for a record in the spring/summer season.

On the compilation tip, we implore you to pull your attention away from the endless barrage of super-duper mega-massive hits to collect editions of “Circuit Breakerably,” an album that kicks back to the rough-hewn techno and house sounds that inspired many of those mainstream hits. Underappreciated DJ Felix Da Housecat was behind the turntable decks for the Cold Front Records set, which includes “Blindmanwilly” and “While They Watch” by Aphrodite and “Logan’s Run” by L.A. Williams, among others.

Speaking of compilations, producer Jose Moskwitz succeeds in merging the varied vibe of a multi-act set with the cohesive tone of a singular-artist project on “Got The Feeling,” a Pow Wow Records album just released under the name Jemtone.

Using enduring better Michelle Weeks as the anchoring vocalist, Moskwitz darts from the realm of tribal house to fuzzy disco with pits in R&B-induced funk along the way. He’s smoothly blended the tracks (with editing assistance from Albert Cabrera of Latin Rascals fame) so that they flow like a turntable journey. Weeks is the perfect singer for this project, given her chameleon-like style. She gives the title track and the single—“My Love, My Life” a slick pop sheen while getting down and gritty on the wriggling opener, “Rock Your World.” This set is 10 times stronger than most of the dance albums we’ve heard on majors in recent times, and we wouldn’t be surprised if “Got The Feeling” becomes the first sleeper smash of ’98.

On a tip, we’re happy to report that respected music critic Michael Paolotta will jugle his active writing schedule with a new gig as A&R coordinator for the Hot Tracks remix service. Among his duties will be selecting and clearing material for several of the venerable company’s monthly CD compilations. His presence should give Hot Tracks a savvy, much-needed New York underground vibe.
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Lyric Street Looking To The Future

Disney Label Developing Core Country Sound

By Deborah Evans Price

NASHVILLE—Of the many new labels opening—and closing—the doors in the past few years in Nashville, few have ventured into the playing field with the credentials and backing of Disney's new Lyric Street label, a division of the giant entertainment company.

Since former RCA Label Group senior VP/GM Randy Goodman signed a deal last year under which he then-unnamed label, he's been building his staff. Doug Howard (left his post as VP of PolyGram Music to announce the label's new VP of promotion) and Theresa Durst have been hired as the label's first regional promotion director.

Ricky Skaggs Returns To Bluegrass;
Five Ex-Capitol Staffers In Limbo

By Chet Flippo

Bluegrass Rules: That's the title of Ricky Skaggs' new album, his first bluegrass recording in 14 years. It marks a significant return to the genre from one of its giants. When he emerged as a mainstream country star in the '80s, mixing the bluegrass of his child-star years with modern-country, Skaggs led a small but active traditionalist movement. Now, by returning to his roots, Skaggs may be doing the same thing again.

"I feel that I'm absolutely doing the right thing right now," Skaggs tells Nashville Scene. "I have never been so sure." Although he remains signed to Atlantic Nashville for country releases, "Bluegrass Rules" is on Skaggs Family/Rounder, and it is, he says, "the first record I've ever made that I totally own." He also hopes to make his new label home to other bluegrass, gospel, or other acoustic music who may not be suited to major labels.

Ricky says that bluegrass is poised for a resurgence. "I truly believe in the timing of everything," he says. "There is a season for everything. I felt that after [Bill] Monroe passed away, one chapter of American music had closed and another was beginning. It's a new day, a new time, and the music is as fresh as it can be. Even though these are old songs, we tried to honor Mr. Monroe, Ralph Stanley, and Staying at the Country Station. In my heart, I could not cut 10 or 12 new songs right now; I just wanted to honor these pioneers and let people know what these architect of the music did." Audiences, he says, seem to agree. "They're looking for something to listen to," he says. "I know I certainly am: I'm wondering who's going to curry on the music. This morning I was driving home from dropping the kids off at school, and I was punching buttons on the radio, and I couldn't find a dang thing worth listening to. I was gritting my teeth. You know, there are a few new artists who are doing it, though. Lee Ann Womack, if she keeps doing what in her heart she loves, is one. Doing what not can she sing, but what she loves to sing. There's people who can sing songs, and then there's people who absolutely live a song and have such joy and such honesty when they sing a song, that the song becomes them. And that's what I feel that bluegrass is for me. There's such freedom and joy in it."

Skaggs says an immediate goal for him is to reunite and record what he calls "the Grand Ole Opry Bluegrass Band," a pickup band consisting of himself, Vince Gill, Marty Stuart, Earl Scruggs, and Alison Krauss. "When we played together on the Opry, the perfect night, it was the highest ratings they ever had for the Opry segment on TV. That's the kind of thing I want to do."

Do: The Row: In continuing fallout from the Capitol Nashville realignment (Billboard, Nov. 15), five veteran staffers at the label have been placed on unpaid leave of absence and told to wait and see if they want to return. Those now sitting at home by the phone are VP of A&R Mike Murphy, VP for artist development Susan Levy, VP of publicity Lorie Lytle, director of radio marketing Doug Baker, and Hendriks' former executive assistant Donna Duarte. All were hired by Hendriks before he took over the label in 1996.

His replacement, new president and CEO Pat Quigley, has said that he will talk about further plans and developments at the label after the current marketing blitz for Garth Brooks' "Sevens." In addition, the planned November 15 release of the label into its new Music Row building has been delayed until January. Hendriks, meanwhile, is keeping mum about his plans. (When he was replaced, parent company EMI offered him a Virgin Nashville start-up with 15 staffers and a $5 million a year plus artist contract; as by artists interested in hiring him as a producer."

A new Bob Wayne album, "Debut," has been placed in an alliance with Sire Records Group. Their first joint efforts are the Derailers' just-released "Reverber" album and an early 1998 Don Walter project... SunTrust Bank here now has 11 country acts on its Cool Country list of Visa credit cards, and there's a waiting list for artists to get their pictures on the cards. The bank says it has more than 20,000 Cool Country cards in circulation. Artists on the cards are Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, Patty Loveless, Keb' Mo', Lorrie Morgan, Joe Diffie, Billy Ray Cyrus, Sammy Kershaw, George Jones, Travis Tritt, and Tracy Lawrence.

People: John Berry has canceled all dates and undergone surgery on his vocal chords at the Vanderbilt Voice Center. Doctors said that he would require at least 30 days of vocal rehabilitation before resuming singing... Cledus "T.J." Judd signs with Buddy Lee Attractions for exclusive worldwide booking... The Thompson Brothers Band has recorded a new radio single for Coca-Cola, singing the theme "Always Coca-Cola." Record label owner Sara Evans did the same commercial earlier this year.

Nashville, Int'l Country Greats Honored At British Awards

George Strait and Trisha Yearwood led winners of the British Country Music Awards, which were presented in a ceremony and concert held Nov. 16 at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham, England. Sarah Evans and Rory McGrath hosted the affair, which was—for the first time in its three-year history—open to the public.

In the international awards category, Strait was named male vocalist of the year, Yearwood was named female vocalist of the year, "Big & Rich" won the group duo award, LeAnn Rimes was named rising star, Lee Ann Womack's self-titled set won album of the year honors, Dale Watson was international artist of the year, and Alison Krauss & Union Station took honors for bluegrass group.

Winners of the British category were Charlie Landsborough, male vocalist; Sarah Jory, female vocalist; Cheap Seats, group/vibes; Cheap Seats, rising star; "Coyotes," by Coyotes, album; and Donny County Boys, bluegrass band. Ambassador Awards were presented to Ireland's Daniel O'Donnell and the U.K. band the Hillbilies.

Guitarist/Vinger Albert Lee was presented with an achievement award. Dolly Parton was the winner of the 1997 Country Legend Award.

Artists performing included Lee with Hogan's Heroes, Evans, Watson, Kathy Chialvo, Cheap Seats, Alain Coulibel, Amanda Newton, Steve Earle, and Phil O'Donnell. A film tribute to Parton, featuring Glen Campbell, Billy Ray Cyrus, Crystal Gayle, Loretta Lynn, Barbra Mandrell, and Wynonna, among others, was shown.

Highlights of the show aired Nov. 27 on Country Clubs on BBC Radio 2. BBC TV will carry coverage on an as-yet-undetermined date in December.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARTIST</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>WHAT IF IT'S YOU</td>
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<td>COLUMBIA</td>
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<td>MARY MARGARET CURTIS</td>
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COUNTRY SINGLES A-Z
PUBLISHERS/PERFORMANCE RIGHTS/SHEET MUSIC

**Country Corner**

By Wade Jessen

**THE CATTLE CALL:** As tipped in last issue's Country Corner, cuts from Garth Brooks' "Sevens" hit the airwaves Nov 17, due to what Capitol Nashville's VP of national promotion, Terry Stevens, calls "an unfortunate and devastating incident in that it interrupted CDs, which landed in radio station mailbags, were dubbed from an advance cassette. The only source any of us can even remotely identify is a cassette deck which was sent to our (broadcast) media contacts. It's possible that one of the journalists who has radio connections slipped it to someone who went to a lot of trouble to have the discs pressed," Stevens says that radio stations have their own listener publications and are often supplied material from freelancers who aren't part of individual radio station staffs. One programmer, who asked to remain anonymous, says that his copy carried a Texas postmark, adding that he was "unable to identify" the city of origin. Stevens suggests concern after learning of the leak would be that perception might dictate that this was some sort of marketing or advertising play by the Brooks camp. That is absolutely untrue, and we followed his wish to rush-ship the album to radio.

As a result of these pirated copies of "Sevens," Brooks beats his own record for placing eight titles from "Fresh Horses" in the Dec 5, 1995, Billboard as 12 cuts from the new 14-track set are ink on Billboard Hot Country Singles & Tracks, including "Long Neck Bottle," which increases 471 spins, and "Somebody's Les Paul," which peaked at No. 2 in the Nov 1 issue. Rather than listing the charting titles individually, it's more sensible to list the two "Sevens" titles that are absent from our airplay chart: "Ply For A King" and "When There's No Song Around" narrowly missed the chart. "Two Piña Coladas" takes the Hot Shot Debut trophy at No. 50, with radio play at 126 monitored country ports. Considering that Brooks splits his detection tally with Yearwood for "In Another's Eyes," it conveys a staggeringly high percentage since both this week's No. 1 hit and the artist signed to Lyric Street, Goodman says they are in discussion. "Neither Aaron nor Lyric Street has made a decision that that's what we should do," he says.

However, Goodman says, he's planning to sign the Violets. The three-sisters group will be "another asset to our catalog," he says. Both are Utah natives who originally performed as the Osborne Sisters when they first came to Nashville. "You can't beat that family harmony," Goodman says. "That's what they're all about. Plus, in the years they've been with us, we've evolved a label Group that has really been writing and has turned into a really good songwriter." He adds, "And, too, is optimistic about the Violet's fan base and going to try it down and played live. It wasn't con- trolled. It was so natural," he says, "I didn't think we'd get that open to smaller venues and I didn't think we'd have a group that was so smartly written as much as they just assumed we knew that. Their music is just so fresh."

Goodman says the label's first signing, former RCA artist Lori Svetlik, is "in the process of getting ready to go," he says. She can be very commercial and mass- appeal, which her second album on RCA opened about the whole community. (See page 4.) "But the point is, with someone like Lori, she's a very artistic artist any- way. She's a singer-songwriter."

He admits that the label has been having trouble finding male acts for its roster. "Every time we see one, we ask, 'Can you do a single that's not that's already out there?'" he says. "And if we can't bring something to the table that's different and unique, then why bring it to the marketplace? I don't know when we will find that person. We may end up choosing our first year being mostly female- driven."

Since the label opened its doors Aug 1, Goodman says, it has received more than 350 submissions from acts looking for a deal. But he says the staff is taking its time and being selec- tive. "We have a good company like company, we don't have the pressure to turn around and be profitable in the first or second year," he says. "We submits a business plan they are very sup- portive of and very understanding of.

Goodman says that one of the key things that drew him to Disney's country label was the opportunity to take advantage of the relationship with the parent company. "Being involved with the Disney company makes a big difference and involvement company," he says. "There are syn- ergistic opportunities that in my prior life I always wanted to be able to do as a marketing guy but never had the opportunity. As we look at our artists, that's another thing we are looking at. No really great Rufus Party, core country artist? Is that what they want to be? Can we work with them in that kind of setting? And, secondly, to look at how they can make them feel comfortable in the atmosphere, and also, 'Do they have all the tools that we can play and synergize with and make it work?""

Goodman says Disney has a whole department that is exclusively devot- ed to working with synergies among Disney companies. He and Schreiber recently attended a company meeting that also included representatives from a variety of Disney-related enti- ties. Another major advantage of the promotion with Disney is the sound- track division, headed by Kathy Nel- son, who is a fan of the Nashville music business and is a much-needed re- source for Nashville songwriter ways Kirkpatrick, Tommy Sims, and Gor- don Kennedy getting the Grammy- nomination for his song "She Will Be Loved." (While "Living in the Phenomenon World" on the "Phenomenon Soundtrack.

Lyric Street will differ from other record labels in the music business in what people do. "The philosophy from an A&R point of view is to go back to what A&R really is, and that's artists and repertoire, and that is finding the artists and working with those artists on the repertoire. I think when you have a producer on staff, there are a lot of internal struggles. Again, with Lyric Street's and Disney's resources, we can pretty much hire any produc- er. I think with having no producers on staff, it really opens us up," he says.

Goodman says his goal is to create music that is different, and he thinks nurturing up-and-coming producers is a way to help the format grow. "How do we get new blood to get with the artists and help us get those new songs?"

He has confidence in Howard's and Kennedy's abilities to find the best songs. "In Doug and Shelby, we have two very strong song people who have great writers in relation and that's a saving grace from such strong song backgrounds, and right now that's really what's driv- ing country music," Goodman says.

Goodman spent 16 years with RCA and says he owes a tremendous amount to his mentor Joe Galante, RCA's former chairman, but it's obvious he's enjoying the building process of heading up Lyric Street. "What we want to do for our employ- ees, what we want to do for our future, is bring it back to what I think is really involved in the lives of your artists. You really had strong relationships with those people," he says. "That's something we want to create not just for a staff, but for the artists as well."

**LYRIC STREET LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

(Continued from page 30)
**Latin Artists**

**Notas**

**by John Lannert**

**Latin America Grows On:** The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) has released its half-year sales report, which shows that Latin America remains the fastest-growing region in the world.

Unit sales are up 10%, and CD sales are up 20%. Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina, the region's largest markets, have continued to build upon sales from the corresponding period in 1996.

Brazil's January-June unit sales in 1997 increased 12% to 40 million units. Mexico's unit sales rose 8% to 27.7 million units. Argentina's unit sales soared 28% to 9.4 million units.

The value of the three markets in local currency rose 9% in Brazil, 17% in Mexico, and 17% in Argentina.

The retail dollar value of Brazil's market was $506.3 million. Mexico's was $190.9 million, and Argentina's was $118.3 million.

By comparison, the U.S. Latin market's midyear retail figures as compiled by the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) showed that the market moved 19.5 million units valued at $213.2 million. Thus, in dollar terms, the U.S. Latin market is the largest Spanish-speaking market in Latin America.

In units, however, Mexico remains the biggest Spanish-speaking market in the region.

IFPI reports that Spain's record market in the first six months of 1997 generated $228 million in revenue on sales of 25 million units.

**Amprofon Smooths Itself:** Given the tumultuous happenings that have taken place recently within Mexico's recording trade society, Amprofon (Billboard, No. 22), it appears that ruffled feathers have been smoothed.

Amprofon president Rodolfo López Negrete says that his Nov. 13 meeting with Fonovisa president, CEO Guiller-mo Santiso "went very well. I wanted to make sure Guillermo had a clear picture of what was going on and . . . he accepted it well."

"He reiterated that Fonovisa was not going to be leaving Amprofon. Guillermo related to me his concerns of Amprofon the last couple of years. I received his comments and recommendations, and we will try to accommodate the new strategies of Amprofon. Guillermo is a very valuable individual, and he could contribute a lot."

Santiso could not be reached at press time, but López Negrete, who also is AMG Mexico's managing director, confirms that Santiso would attend Amprofon's next scheduled meeting on Tuesday (2).

Indeed, López Negrete notes that one of the bylaws recently passed by Amprofon allows only managing directors to participate in the meeting.

"We don't want lawyers sitting there talking about law," states López Negrete. "We want managers directing talk about the business."

Fonovisa was represented by an attorney when the label and six other industries walked out of an Amprofon meeting Oct. 23 in protest of the perceived dominating role of the major labels in the organization. López Negrete notes that he is trying to persuade other walkout industries to return to Amprofon, including Melody, whose new managing director is Javier Toussaint; Musart; Peerless; and M. Also, Antera Music has been invited to join Amprofon.

Further, López Negrete is going to arrange a presentation of Amprofon's anti-piracy initiatives (Continued on page 36)
### The #1 Latin Album

**"Y Hubo Alguien"**

*Hot Latin Track-Top 40*

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist/Ganador</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Marc Anthony</td>
<td>Contra la Corriente</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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</table>

*Includes six tropical/salsa hits, a ballad and a pop/bachata.*

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**The First Salsa Album To Debut In Billboard's Top 200 Album Chart In 1997 At #74!**

Look for the upcoming video to the #1 single "Y Hubo Alguien".

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**Billboard's Top 50 Current Latin Album Chart**

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**Artist of the Week**

- **Marc Anthony**
  - Title: *Contra la Corriente*
  - Label: Sony Latin

---

**#1 Hit Single**

- **Marc Anthony**
  - Title: "Y Hubo Alguien"
  - Label: Sony Latin

---

**HEAR IT ON BILLBOARD**

- **Marc Anthony**
  - "Y Hubo Alguien" (Hot Latin Track-Top 40)

---

**Artist of the Week**

- **Marc Anthony**
  - Description: "Y Hubo Alguien" is Marc Anthony's first chart-topping Latin album.

---

**About the Chart**

- **Decade**: 1990s
- **Genre**: Latin
- **Key Artists**: Marc Anthony, Luis Miguel, Thalía, Emmanuel

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**Billboard's Top 50 Current Latin Album Chart**

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**About Billboard**

- **Source**: Billboard magazine
- **Date**: December 6, 1997
- **Format**: Print

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**Contact**

- **Billboard**: www.billboard.com
- **Adaptation**: Adapted by American Radio History

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**Notes**

1. **Multifamily**
2. **Archie British**
3. **Adaptation**: Adapted by American Radio History
4. **Book**: Billboard's Top 50 Current Latin Album Chart
5. **Website**: www.billboard.com

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**Billboard's Top 50 Current Latin Album Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist/Ganador</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Label</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Contra la Corriente</td>
<td>Sony Latin</td>
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**About Billboard**

- **Source**: Billboard magazine
- **Date**: December 6, 1997
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- **Billboard**: www.billboard.com
- **Adaptation**: Adapted by American Radio History

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Foroviva and the other breakupway impress to pay their anti-piracy dues. He says he'll label's unwillingness to help fund anti-piracy campaigns this year was "a way of expressing discontent with some of Amprion's activities of the past."

López Negrete has hired a Mexico City recruiting firm to procure a GM for Amprion. He adds that the current GM, Efrén Huerta, would keep on board, most likely as a consultant.

RO, GLO, TOP AMIGOS: Universal Spain's new contracted singer-songwriter Rosana and Rocío Sánchez's global superstar Gloria Estefan came away with two awards when she launched the inaugural Premio Amigo music awards held Nov. 20 in Madrid (see story, page 5).


Among other winners were Warner Spain's artist Alejandro Sanz (best Spanish male artist), Warner Mexico's hitmaker Luis Miguel (best Latino male artist), and singer-songwriter's international group, Los 55 music/Sony's Celine Dion (best international female artist), and Virgin's Spice Girls (best international new act).

SLAT GOES INTL. Foroviva's multi-talented artist-producer Marco Antonio Solís launched the international release of his latest album, "Marcó," with a two-hour show Nov. 7 in Guadalajara, Mexico. On hand for the festivities were three acts Solís has produced this year: Foroviva's Ana Bárbara and Lorena and Melendi's Laura Flores.

Foroviva gave Solís a special award for his 22 years in the music business. He also received a gold disc (100,000 units sold) and platinum disc (250,000) for his 1990 album "En Pleno Vuelo.

Solís already has three videos for the album, including one for his recent Hot Latin Tracks chart-topper "La Venia Bendita."

Solís said he plans to work as a producer with EMIL Latin songstress Edmira Nazario and singer-songwriter Roberto Carlos and Julio Iglesias.

Now working on a Portuguese-language album, Solís also expects to cut a disc in Italian.

JUAN'S SACK: Even as two of his hit tracks take up the longest chart rides in the history of Hot Latin Tracks, Mexican superstar Juan Gabriel is slated to drop a live two-CD package Jan. 13 for Arista/BMG.

Juan's as-yet-untitled disc, recorded at El Teatro El De Bellas Artes, is the first time he's been able to take advantage of the unprecedented opportunity to sign with EMI Latin, is due in March.

A third disc out by EMI Latin is the self-titled set by El Coyote Y Su Bando. El Coyote was the former lead singer of Foroviva's well-known bands at Banda Limón.

Scheduled to ship in March is the maiden disc by actor/singer/cantante Carlos Ponce, a recent signee.

PIRATA BUSTIN': The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, with help from the RIAA, seized more than 55,000 alleged counterfeit copies during a raid Nov. 14. Also confiscated were 4,000 insert cards, 212 sets of imprinting machines, and two shrink-wrap machines.

Among the all-Latino cassettes were tapes by EMIL Latin's Selena, Sony Discos' Victoria Fernández, and Arli-ola/BMG's Juan Gabriel. The cassettes were being distributed at two locations in Los Angeles and Bell Gardens, Calif.

Following a two-month investigation, Richard Ortega and Arturo Rojas were arrested and charged with violating California's True Name and (Continued on page 39)
Dickerson Releases 'One Man': When Denzel Washington found himself in need of a musical role, he turned to soul singer Darrin Dickerson. One of the musician-turned-label executive were looking forward to his first solo project. He spent five years as the original guitarist for the artist (formerly known as Prince) and four years as VP of A&R for Star Soul. His debut as a solo act has been highly anticipated. With his just-released album "One Man," he's more than fulfilling expectations.

Dickerson launched Absolute with the release of Paul Quayle's debut album in February 1996 and has followed with albums by Believable Picnic (July '96), Brett Williams (August '96), and Jodi Mills (February '97), as well as an instrumental Christmas album last year. What was so long for him to release his project? "I really wanted to establish the label first," he says. "I think that a lot of times you can send the message that a label is just sort of an excuse to have a way to put your own records out, and for me, that's definitely not the case. The label has a definite vision and a mission. I wanted to be just one artist who is a part of that, as opposed to it being a vanity press so to speak." Dickerson says the album has really been in the works since 1994. "When I left Prince in late 1988, I kind of did it backwards," he says. "I went out and toured first, then came back to make a record, and things just didn't go to that time, work out. Even though we had handshake deals and contracts in front of us from just about every major label, it just wasn't time to do it. As a result, I ended up doing a lot of different things that ended up being preparation for formation of the label. Late last year, it just felt like the right time to do the record."

The project was recorded, produced, and mixed by Dickerson, who had written all but one song. "I started out with a general idea. I kind of had a fuzzy picture of what I thought the record would look like, and in the process of doing it, it became more and more clear," he says. "I didn't want to do an alternative record, but at the same time a lot of the bands and the music that influence alternative artists are the things I really grew up playing. So those elements were bound to be there. I wanted to make a record that consist-ent of strong songs. So I kind of focused on "Is this song strong enough to stand on its own?" And I just kept going until I had enough songs I felt good about."

Lyricaly, Dickerson has delivered one of the most well-written and word-processed albums of the year. The melodies on the album's lead single "Hold On, Hello Ag-ain," which features a guest appearance by Phil Spector, guitarist/co-founder of the Rem- brandirt. Dickerson's release, and all Absolute product, is being marketed as a "soul" record, the Christian retail market and by Minneapolis-based Arista to mainstream outlets. However, Dickerson says Absolute is looking at other mainstream distribution options for the future.

Newsboys Depart: John James, a founding member of Star Singers/Virgin act the Newsboys, has left the group to pursue other interests. First Company Management will continue to manage James. Band leader Peter Furler had been sharing lead vocal duties with him, now Furler will relinquish his drumming responsibilities to take over the lead slot in the band. Percussionist Duncan Phillips will play drums. Phil Joel and Jody Davis will contribute vocals. The band used this lineup during its recent European tour and at its Nov. 1 concert at the Houst- on Astrodome. More than 35,000 fans attended the con-cert, and management and label are trumpeting it as the largest ticketed Christian music concert ever. The Newsboys' next album is due in March 1998.

In the Spirit
by Lisa Collins

Still Going Strong: "A Time For Healing" is the title of Sounds Of Blackness' latest album, and it's also a movement for the Minneapolis-based act. But trying to keep up with the Grammy-winning choir can be challenging, despite the fact that its latest release hasn't enjoyed the commercial success of its previous tours. As the second single..."Hold On, Change Is Coming," was serviced to radio, Sounds Of Blackness was managing to maintain high visibil-ity. A stop in Los Angeles yielded appearances on currently aired segments of "Soul Train" and "Vibe." Additionally, the choir completed a tune titled "Another Song In Paradise" for a project due next year celebrating Philadelphia's 15th anniversary as a solo artist. The set also features musical tributes from the likes of Stevie Wonder and Boyz II Men. However, the choir is most in demand, it seems, for its contributions to film soundtracks. The choir has completed two songs for DreamWorks' upcoming "Amistad" soundtrack (due Dec. 10), has a cut called "Zero To Hero" on the European soundtrack to "Her- cucles," and there's talk of the choir's possible involve-ment on the soundtrack to Eddie Murphy's much-anticipated remake of "Dr. Doolittle" due next spring. For the moment, the group is prepping its annual "The Night Before Christmas," a 2-hour show from their private Santa Sings. The musical production is a holiday favorite for locals and is also performed in Chicago. Director Gary Hines reports that the choir is celebrating its 25th anniver- sary as an organization.

Says Hines, "Twenty-five years of bringing all the styles of American music to people of all backgrounds: Thus far, it's been great, so we're still just doing it to the max."

Stretching Out: BeBe Winans stepped behind the camera and into the role of TV producer with the recent taping of his own summer TV special, "Bringin' It: The Holidays With BeBe Winans & Friends." Among the musical guests joining Winans for the program, taped last month at Church of the Harvest in Los Angeles, were Sista's Of Darkness, Hezekiah Walker & the Love Fellowship Crusade, All-4-One, Darius Rucker of Hootie & the Blowfish, and "Living Single" star Kim Fields-Freeman. The special, Warner Bros. TV, is slated to air nationally in syndication between Nov. 27 and Dec. 24.

Briefly: Fred Hammond played host to a capacity crowd Saturday (29) at Detroit's Straight Gate Church for the recording of the longform concert video for "Pages Of Life," his forthcoming release from Ver- tigo Records (due in early '98). Hammond is in the studio putting the final touches on the record, which is his latest Radical For Christ installment. The video will also offer an up-close-and-personal glimpse of Hamp- don's collection of African drumming. The promotional rollout will kick off in January with the release of the video, yet to be titled... Finally, Central South recently picked up mainstream gospel distribution of Angie & Debbie Winans' sophomore release, "Bold," which was produced on their Nashville-based label, Against the Flow.
On ‘Midnight’ Soundtrack,Mercer Is Man Of The Hour

HAVE MERCER: It’s no surprise Clint Eastwood’s new film, “Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil,” contains elements of jazz. The director/actor has been involved with improv for ages. He directed “Bird,” a biopic of Charlie Parker’s life, and his Malpaso imprint has scored big with the Johnny Hartman tunes on two editions of “The Bridges of Madison County” soundtrack. The recently released “Eastwood After Hours: Live At Carnegie Hall” offers an array of jazz players honking and cooing their way through music connected to the star’s past movie roles.

“Midnight” the film is an adaptation of John Berendt’s novel “Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil.” The disc is a canny program of young and old jazzers and popsters putting a spin on the music of Johnny Mercer. It is slated for Nov. 18.

Co-produced by Eastwood and Matt Pierson, senior VP of Warner Bros. Records, it unites a diverse roster of artists that include L.D. Lang, Paula Cole, Tony Bennett, Joe Williams, Diana Krall, Rosemary Clooney, and Alison Krauss. It also has a familiar twist: Alison Eastwood sings “Come Rain Or Come Shine,” and the one-time Dirty Harry himself offers some pleasant crooning on “Acc-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive.”

With the film campaign bolstering visibility, the disc seems poised to make a big splash on the marketplace. But one of the record’s creators assures that its individuality was carefully planned from the start. “I wanted a well-rounded list of artists, a variety of vocalists from different genres that could show the universal appeal of Mercer,” explains Pierson. “I’m not a big fan of these soundtrack albums where everyone hands in a track, you throw it on a record, and it doesn’t have any continuity. I wanted something that played like an album apart from the movie. So if the film never even happened, this could be a great Johnny Mercer songbook—a tribute to his writing.”

With that in mind, Pierson put together two core bands, one on each coast. Charlie Haden’s Quartet West and a combo of Christian McBride, Joshua Redman, Brad Mehldau, and Greg Hutchinson supported the singers. “Initially, I was thinking Nat Cole’s ‘After Midnight’ sessions—that kind of stripped-down rhythm section with a soulful vibe.”

Eastwood’s a bit dubious about various artist soundtracks that are concocted as more marketing tools. “Clint doesn’t do a Nora Ephron or Penny Marshall thing, where all of a sudden he breaks into a two-minute video in the middle of the film,” says Pierson with a smile. “The music has to have something intrinsic to do with the narrative.”

After reading the script and the book, Eastwood realized that the Mercer angle was a crucial part of the story’s thread. “It seems like he was Savannah’s favorite son,” muses the director, “and a lot of people thought the idea of contemporary singers doing classic Mercer songs was a good idea. Matt came up with most of the artists involved. But I agree that blending people like Rosemary Clooney and Alison Krauss is really fun. It’s amazing how well some of the newer [artists] did. If it were the 1940s, you’d think 100 people could get up and do it. But these days, there aren’t that many singers who can present these types of vocals.”
PHILIPS

Scholars: Since Phillips acquired a controlling interest in Gimell Records Ltd., the label of the Tallis Scholars, last year, Peter Phillips, who founded both the group and the label, noticed some changes. "Now, through the PolyGram distribution network, the records are in places they never were before," he says. "We just came from touring Colombia for the first time, and the records were all over the place." Phillips notes that sales have increased. "It's been like having a Second Life, because the market is still rising. After all, the market is still falling."

The Tallis Scholars, whose 25th anniversary tour this year is its first, are a group of 10 singers specializing in Renaissance sacred music. They have 40 CDs, all of which are still available. "We have a very loyal core market worldwide, each of whom will buy one copy of everything we produce, certainly enough to justify making more records." Phillips is instigated to pursue a vocal ensemble Voice Box with "Carolining A Simple Song" (Voxhumana Records), which offers bright and sometimes very funky arrangements of well-known and not-so-well-known carols. Voice Box is based in Cincinnati. Going beyond carols for seasonal music, Harmonia Mundi has two classics, both directed by Philippe Herreweghe: three Advent Cantatas by Bach (with Collegium Vocale) and a lovely Berlioz, "L'Enfance Du Christ," with Veronique Gens, Paul Agnew, and others, plus La Chapelle Royale and the Orchestre Des Champs Elysées.

More Callas: If you haven't had enough Maria Callas from EMI's massive anniversary release, there's "Callas: The Voice The Story" (HighBridge), a fascinating four-CD set, the expansion of a public-domain documentary that traces the tumultuous musical and personal history of the singer through broadcast excerpts, interviews with Callas, and comments by her friends, family, and colleagues, all tied together by a narration. The 50 musical excerpts begin with her appearance (at age 11) on "The Major Bowes Amateur Hour" in 1935, for which she sang "Un Bel Di;" stories include a description of an anti-Callas demonstration at La Scala, when the diva picked up the rotten vegetables tossed at her and dropped them disdainfully into the orchestra. The set is available at retail, or at 1-800-755-8532.

Blue Notes (Continued from preceding page)

Fats Waller records in his kiddie days. As a youth, he thought of attempting a career as a jazz pianist. Recently, his chops have been re-honed. With an 11-month-old daughter now part of the Eastwood clan, he cope to knowing "Itsy Bitsy Spider" without even looking at the sheet music. And he's not kidding himself about his vocal prowess. "At 65, the 'T-Cent' Thesis of the 'Positive' is a novelty track Pierson added for a touch of lightness. "It's a good song to sing in the shower, too," concurs Eastwood.

Malpaso has instigated a lot of price and positioning strategies at retail, especially at stores like Borders and Barnes & Noble, where product will be in both the record and book sections. "When you walk in for the novel, the CD will be there, too," says Pierson. "We've also taken a few TV spots." Speaking of TV, lang sang "Skytalk," the film's opening theme, on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" Nov. 14.

DATA: Those interested in a preview of Cassandra Wilson's forthcoming Blue Note disc are prompted to take in her highly anticipated show at Lincoln Center performances Monday (1)-Saturday (6). The title says it all: "Cassandra Sings Miles."

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Capitol's Brooks Wins Artist Achievement Award

Record-Setting Sales, Skyrocketing Popularity To Be Recognized

The statistics are simply staggering. In the eight years since the release of his self-titled debut, Garth Brooks has sold more than 62 million albums in the U.S., making him the top-selling solo artist in U.S. history, according to the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA).

At 13 million, his 1990 album, “No Fences,” is cited by the RIAA as the top-selling country album ever. As his 1991 effort, “Ropin’ The Wind,” comes in at No. 3.

Not only does Garth Brooks have the most hits, but he also has the most consecutive No. 1 hits. Brooks’ recent album “Sevens,” with its seven singles at No. 1, has continued to break records. Brooks’ current single, “Pink,” is expected to hit No. 1 by the end of the year.

And despite the millions of tickets sold, he tries never to take his success for granted. “The truth is every time you go on stage, you don’t know if you’re going to get booed off the stage or not. I’m sure there’s some artists and athletes who go out there and just know they’re going to win, but I’ve never been like that. I’ve always been a guy that’s had to go out there and prove himself. I’ve always been a guy that had to go out there and say, ‘OK, OK, am I good? Is this my last night? Is the magic gone?’ And then go, ‘Holy cow, how cool is this? It’s here for one more night.’”

Brooks’ wide-eyed disbelief at his own good fortune is not so surprising, given that he was turned down by every label in Music City before being signed by Capitol Nashville (which had previously passed on him) in 1988.

His first album, released in 1989, sold respectably but didn’t really skyrocket until the release of “The Dance,” which remains Brooks’ best-selling album, record and show-closer. Since then, Brooks’ meteoric rise has slowed.

And it shows no signs of abating. Brooks is looking at a nine-city slate of upcoming releases. While continuing to support “Sevens,” he hopes to put out a boxed set of his previous six studio albums, each with live material, in summer 1998, as well as a duet album with Trisha Yearwood in the fall. In 1999, Brooks plans to release a live album from the current tour.

Melinda Newman
Aerosmith Thrives With Its ‘Lives’
Tour Finds Columbia Act In Good Spirits

IF AN EXHAUSTIVE world tour could be considered peaceful, Aerosmith is now experiencing the calm after the storm.

As co-moderator for the veteran rock band, Aerosmith—singer Steven Tyler, guitarist Joe Perry, bassist Tom Hamilton, and Kramer—regained its footing and hasn't stopped. “Nine Lives” debuted at No. 1 on Billboard Rock Tracks, the band’s current single, “Pink,” topped Mainstream Rock Tracks in the Sept. 6 issue.

Meanwhile, the band’s tour, which began in May, is its best in years, says Perry. "It feels a lot less than the last couple of tours," he says. "There’s a lot more flexibility, and it’s a lot more fun. We went through a lot of stuff in the last couple of years, but now we’re having fun.”

The tour is going so well, Perry says, that he's sure when it will end. The band will wrap up the U.S. leg of the trek on New Year’s Eve at the Fleet Center in its hometown of Boston. After a break, the group will wing its way to Japan for a series of dates in March.

"Nine Lives" isn’t the only release the band is promoting. “Walk This Way: The Autobiography Of Aerosmith,” which the band members penned with Stephen Davis, was published in October by Simon & Schuster. According to Perry, the book was more than three years in the making.

"He was the one that struck a chord with us," Perry says. So far, fan reaction to the book has been positive, he says. "I’m more interested to hear what the non-fans have to say," he adds. "It’s kind of a universal story, a rags to riches to rags to rich kind of a thing."

"Walk This Way” chronicles Aerosmith’s rise, drug-induced fall, and climb back to the top. The book also covers the turmoil that occurred during the making of “Nine Lives.”

"When you think you have it figured out, God lets you know that you don't," Perry says. "It’s like they say, 'If you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans.' On every record, we try to learn from the last one and not make the same mistakes, and inevitably something else comes along to throw a wrench in it. It wasn’t so much the actual making of the record that was hard, it was all the stuff that was going on around it."

Perry says that parting with Ballard in favor of producer Kevin Shirley was “kind of traumatic” and that the manager was “too young and too green” to handle the job. Yet somehow, Aerosmith overcame that adversity.

The book’s label, Virgin Records, says worldwide sales of “Spice” have topped 18 million units.

"Spaceworld” was released worldwide Nov. 4 and debuted at No. 8 on Billboard 200. In the group’s native U.K., the album shifted 14 million units, the largest in that country’s history.

"Spaceworld” was recorded fast, says co-president of Virgin Records America Ray Cooper, "but it reflects the nature of the first album with the same qualities."

As with “Space,” the new album features lively, positive songs, each co-written by the group. “Space” producers Richard Stannard and Matt Rowe were on board again and produced five tracks on “Spaceworld,” as did Absolute, another

“Joye came back with a fire lit under him and he’s never played better, and I think that’s pretty apparent by what’s on the tracks,” Perry says. "And our new management has really taken the ball and run with it. Everything happens for a reason, and I think it’s all been for the positive.”

"Nine Lives” offers a nice summation of the band’s recordings since 1975. “It incorporates that really early vibe of the band playing in the room with our ‘80s approach to songwriting,” he says.

As the members of Aerosmith candidly admit in the new book, the band wasn’t always as focused, particularly during its mid-'70s heyday. “You can hear the abuse and all the hard work, no pun intended,” he says. "We just kind of lost our vision about what the band was about."

Spice Up Your Life, "From ‘Spaceworld,’ " currently on the Hot 100.

"Delaying the U.S. release of the ‘Spice’ single and album was absolutely the right thing to do," says Cooper. "We needed a world story to tell."

Cooper says establishing the group as an international act was a priority for the label and the quintet. Virgin signed Spice Girls in fall 1996 after bidding war with several major labels.

"They came into our office with a crusty old cassette, but their exuberant personalities and the strength of the songs sold us," says Cooper, who at the time was deputy managing director of Virgin in London. He adds that in 1996 the U.K. was dominated by “boy bands” and that Spice Girls’ “girl power” theme was a new statement in pop music. Virgin also had a gap in its pop act roster, and Spice Girls fit it like a glove.

"Everyone loved the ‘girl power’ idea and wanted to get involved with them," says Cooper.

EILEEN FITZPATRICK
Curb’s Rimes A Country Music Conqueror
Chart-Topping Teen’s Star Continues To Rise

At 16, MOST TEENS are anticipating getting their driver’s licenses and possibly their first car. Such ordinary rites of passage might seem anticlimactic to LeAnn Rimes.

Since debuting at No. 49 on Billboard’s Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart in July 1996 at age 13 with the hit single “Blue,” Rimes has gone on to win numerous accolades, sell a staggering number of records, and have No. 1 singles on Billboard’s Hot Country Singles & Tracks and Adult Contemporary charts.

In little more than a year, Curb Records has released three albums and nine singles from Rimes. Her current album, “You Light Up My Life: Inspirational Songs,” simultaneously debuted at No. 1 on three billboard charts in the Sept. 27 issue: Top Contemporary Christian Albums, Top Country Albums, and The Billboard 200. The album has sold more than 1.2 million units, according to SoundScan.

Rimes’ first album, “Blue,” debuted at No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart July 27, 1996. It peaked at No. 3 in August 1996 on The Billboard 200. The follow-up release, “Unchained Melody/The Early Years,” debuted at No. 1 on both The Billboard 200 and Billboard’s Top Country Albums chart March 1. She was the first country artist to win in the best new artist category at the Grammy Awards, and “Blue” took best country song honors. She also won top new female vocalist and single and song of the Year at No. 1 on last spring’s Top Academy of Country Music Awards. In October, she took home the Horizon Award for the week of the Country Music Awards.

“When that album ["You Light Up My Life"] debuted at No. 1 on all three charts, it was one of the happiest days of my life,” says Rimes. “Winning my Grammy award was unbelievable. I thought they called out the wrong name. It was the most shocking night of my life.”

So how did getting her driver’s license compare? “It was a big deal to me, because I can finally drive,” says Rimes. “If I had to choose, I’d take the Grammy.”

Born in Jackson, Miss., Rimes began singing at age 2 and at 5 won her first talent competition. When she was 6, her family relocated to Texas, where the little girl with big voice became a fixture on the Texas entertainment circuit, performing at rodeos, Dallas Cowboy football games, and at the Johnnie High Country Music Review.

At 8, Rimes was a two-week champion on the “Star Search” TV show. Impressed by the young vocalist’s ability, veteran Texas radio personality Bill Mack sent Rimes “Blue,” a song he had written 30 years earlier for Patsy Cline, who died before recording the song. Rimes cut the tune on an independent album that caught the attention of Nashville record labels. She signed with Curb Records.

Since then, her career has become an unstoppable juggernaut. “Blue” has sold 4.8 million copies in the U.S., according to SoundScan. Her independent album was rereleased as “Unchained Melody/The Early Years” and has sold more than 1.7 million copies.

Rimes is working on her next album, slated for first quarter 1998. “I’ve been really involved in this album with the arranging, and I’ve been writing songs with my band,” she says. “I wrote one called ‘More Than Anyone Deserves,’ and I have a song on there. Bryan White wrote called ‘When Am I Gonna Get Over You.’ We also have cut one Diane Warren song for this album.”

“Today was the most awesome, amazing day,” says Warren. “I got to see LeAnn sing two of my songs, and she blew me away, as she always does.”

This fall Rimes has also been promoting her new book, “Holiday In Your Heart,” a fictional Christmas story she co-wrote with Tom Carter that on Dec. 14 will become a television movie on ABC. Rimes says she’s been offered a three-movie deal by Warner Bros., and is considering the offer.

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

B-Rite’s God’s Property ‘Stomps’ To Success
Kirk Franklin’s 52-Member Youth Group A Gospel Crossover Smash

**God’s Property**, one of the acts set to perform at the eighth annual Billboard Music Awards, staged one of the biggest upsets in the music industry this year with the surprising success of “Stomp,” the first track from the group’s “God’s Property From Kids of America” on B-Rite Records.

Already a staple in the gospel arena as the visionary for Gospel Centric recording act Kirk Franklin & The Family, Franklin spread his secular music-based gospel to pop, top 40, crossover, and R&B audiences by forming a 52-member group of at-risk youth singers called God’s Property. “(God’s Property) was Kirk’s baby,” says Matt Lattilale, CEO of Gospel Centric, told Billboard (Billboard, May 31). “Lending his name to the project was very important to him. He felt he had to reach back into the community and share the spotlight.”

Franklin began working with the Dallas-based group in 1992 as a sort of mentor and featured them in the family’s “Whatcha Lookin’ 4” video, from the album of the same name, released in 1996. “Stomp” characterizes what B-Rite was trying to do and the audience we were trying to reach... youth-oriented and energetic,” Claude Lattilale, CEO at B-Rite, told Billboard.

“Stomp” was the band’s first single, “You Are The Only One,” propelled the sales of “God’s Property” to 1.2 million, according to SoundScan. The album peaked at No. 1 on Billboard’s Top Gospel Albums and Top R&B Albums charts and No. 3 on The Billboard 200 chart for four consecutive weeks.

Both tracks are driven by samples of classic R&B instruments: Funkadelic’s “One Nation Under A Groove” and the Jacksons’ “Heartbreak Hotel,” respectively. The infectious samples and chorus have acclimated listeners’ ears to the praises of God.

In addition, the songs utilize other aspects of youth culture, such as fraternity-like chanting, stepping, and call-and-response interaction. The videos are also highly contemporary, with the singers dressed in current fashions to make the group palatable to the image-conscious audience.

“I prayed to God for the opportunity to give a talented black youth a platform to showcase their talents,” Franklin told Billboard earlier this year. He also said that his work with the group is part of a larger plan for a youth crusade.

Plans are in the making for a youth conference to take place next year in Dallas. “I’m planning a convention that could be a cross between the Gospel Music Workshop of America and Jack the Rapper, only with a ministry component, where we might have nightly worship followed by a youth, jam session. I want to be about raising up a standard for the youth,” Franklin said.

SHAWNEE SMITH
Elektra’s Third Eye Blind Fully Charms Audiences

As smooth and effortless as front man Jason Kay’s dance steps, British group Jamiroquai has funked and grooved into America’s collective consciousness. The band’s recent album, “Return of The Space Cowboy,” made the group an international sensation, it took “Traveling” to the top of the charts. The album is expected to perform its latest single, “Fishbowl,” at the Billboard Music Awards.

Meanwhile, its latest single, “Al"

WITH NEW SET, HIT SHOW, CASSIDY IS STILL TURNING HEADS

(Continued from preceding page)

sidelity, who chronicled his life story in 1994’s “C’mon, Get Happy: Fear And Loathing On The Partridge Family Bake.”

At least I never felt on really hard times or had to resort to living off my teen fans,” says Kay. “Absolutely thrilled that American audiences have taken to this album, and it’s not just them, but other people,” he adds. “It’s been similar to what happened in Europe and Japan. People see us perform live, and it has an effect.”

Through electrifying presence, Kay has earned the title of best director award winning for his music videos. Kay’s style is catchy and memorable, creating a lasting impact on the audience.

DOIUG ROER

Elektra’s Third Eye Blind

Fully Charms Audiences

AFTER SPENDING almost four years as a regular in San Francisco’s underground music scene, Third Eye Blind gained huge popularity overnight with their debut album, “Third Eye Blind.” The album, released in 1996, contained the hits “Jumper” and “Semi-Charm- ed Life,” which were immediately successful and remained on the charts for months.

The band’s debut album, “Third Eye Blind,” was an instant success, reaching No. 1 on the Billboard charts on its first week of release and remaining there for several weeks. The album has sold over 4 million copies worldwide and has been certified platinum by the RIAA.

Since its debut, Third Eye Blind has continued to release music, with their latest album, “Science & Faith,” released in 2017. The band has continued to tour and perform, with fans eagerly awaiting their return to the stage.

The band’s success can be attributed to their catchy melodies and upbeat, energetic performances. Their music has been described as alternative rock, and they have been praised for their unique sound and style.

In recent years, the band has reunited and has been performing together again, with fans excited to see their iconic live show.

The band’s fans are loyal and dedicated, and the band has remained true to its roots, sticking to its alternative rock sound. With continued success and a strong fan base, Third Eye Blind continues to be a force in the music industry.

Meanwhile, its latest single, “Al"

WITH NEW SET, HIT SHOW, CASSIDY IS STILL TURNING HEADS

(Continued from preceding page)

CARRIE BELL

The third single, “Graduate,” spent 16 weeks on Billboard charts, peaking at No. 4. The album also included the singles “Kiss You,” “Be the Change,” and “The Way You Make Me Feel.”

The album’s success continued with third single, “Kiss You,” which also hit No. 1 on the Billboard charts. The single was well-received by critics and fans alike, with many praising the band’s ability to mix pop and rock elements in their music.

In 1998, the band released their second album, “The Best of What’s Next.” The album featured hit singles such as “Burn,” “I’m a Girl,” and “Starry Eyed.” The album was another success, peaking at No. 4 on the Billboard charts.

Since then, the band has continued to release music, with albums such as “Into Your Eyes” and “The Science of Love.” The band has continued to tour and perform, with fans eagerly awaiting their return to the stage.

The band’s success can be attributed to their catchy melodies and upbeat, energetic performances. Their music has been described as alternative rock, and they have been praised for their unique sound and style.

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The band’s fans are loyal and dedicated, and the band has remained true to its roots, sticking to its alternative rock sound. With continued success and a strong fan base, Third Eye Blind continues to be a force in the music industry.
Early-Music Pioneer Looks Back

Erichson Revolutionized Period Performance On Disc

BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER

To say that producing records has been a religious experience for Erichson wouldn’t be too far from the truth. Most of the 800 or so albums he’s supervised over the past four decades have been made in churches, often in the dead of night. Alongside some of the world’s greatest musicians, Erichson has divided the gospel of Beethoven, Handel and Haydn, like no other record maker.

Since the late ’60s, Erichson has directed Sony Classical’s 17-year-old early-music imprint, Vivarte. Before this association, he produced an award-winning series of Deutsche Grammophon albums for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and Emerson String Quartet. In the ’70s, Erichson ran his own peerless early-music label, Erichson Records, and he co-founded Teldec’s pioneering Das Alte Werk series in the ’80s, creating its landmark complete Bach cantata series.

This is the German-born Erichson’s 70th birthday year, a time that finds him taking stock and winding up his commitments in the face of a classical record industry he barely recognizes from the one he entered as a young man. But Erichson has an enormous amount to be proud of and the industry much to thank him for, not least of which is his hand in the cultivation of period performance (the playing of early music with the instruments and techniques of the time) and its vibrant preservation on disc. As Young Turks, he and his associates helped revolutionize the recording of music from the Baroque and before, imbuing those works with an amaranthine spirit long reserved for Romantic-era masterpieces.

The list of Erichson’s longtime associate artists reads like a who’s who of period performers: keyboardist/conductor Gustav Leonhardt, cellist Anner Bylsma and his namesake group L’Archibaldoni, violinist Sigiswald Kuijken and his virtuosos brothers, flautist/conductor Frans Brüggen, violinist Jeanne Lattre and her Tafelmusik orchestra, pianoforte ace Paul Jos van Immerschel, choral expert Paul van Nevel and his Huelgas Ensemble, harpsichordist Bob van Asperen, and conductor Bruno Weil, among others. Many of these musicians are Dutch or Belgian, reflecting the Lowlands axis of the ’70s early-music movement.

One of the great albums Erichson made in an old European church is Leonhardt’s two-disc “Great Bach Organ Works,” recorded in Amsterdam’s Oude Kerk in 1972-73 and recently reissued on Sony with the Super Bit Map processing to glorious effect. The amazing sonic bloom of this vintage recording—sound engineering—stands today as one of many organ records produced today—is testimony to the art of production that Erichson perfected early on.

“Recording in churches, at night, so there was no noise from the street outside, allowed us to go into the depths of the music,” Erichson says. “Truly, music is in the air in these old churches. The acoustics, the atmosphere is everything. There’s wonderful natural reverb with all the wood—far better than a recording studio and much less expensive. And in the dark

(Continued on next page)

THE HEART OF ROCK ’N’ ROLL
Rock band Heart worked at Ocean Way on “Strong Wind,” a new song for an upcoming “Greatest Hits” collection on Epic Legacy. Shown at the session, from left, are producer Peter Asher, also senior VP of Sony Music Entertainment; Heart members Ann Wilson and Nancy Wilson; Columbia Records VP of A&R, John Kalodner; and engineer Nathaniel Kunkel.

(Continued on next page)

Denmark’s Soulshock & Karlin Trade In Techno Success To Travel R&B Road

BY SHAWNEE SMITH

NEW YORK—“It was like starting over,” says Soulshock of his and partner Karlin’s producing experience in the U.S. “We had a production company over in Europe, and we didn’t even get a meeting with the production guy [in the U.S.]” Formidable players in their native Denmark’s techno scene, Soulshock was co-founder of PowerSound Records and Karlin was a prominent musician-producer. However, their hearts were not in the Louisiana but in R&B and hip-hop.

“We really wanted to do R&B,” says Soulshock, “but Europe was really into techno, and we were getting pushed to do that genre [of music], and we didn’t want to, so I said, ‘Let’s go to the States and do what we really want to do.’ So we gave up the company and moved over here.”

A virtual unknown when they began shipping tracks in 1992, the two struck gold with a remix of CeCe Peniston’s “I’m In The Mood” off her Acid Kelly debut album, “Final-

ly.” “It was a pretty good start for us,” says Soulshock, “because CeCe is a cross between the dance music in
europe and R&B.”

Since then, the two have honed their craft to a more commercial style, and have produced or remixed tracks for Toni Braxton (“I Love Me Some Him”) and “I Belong To You”), Brandy (“If You Love Somebody”), Luther Vandross (“I Can Make It Better”), Patti LaBelle (“Almost Now”), Mary J. Blige (“Mary Jane”), Monica (“Before You Walk Out Of My Life”), Seal (“Don’t Cry”), TLC (“Diggins On You”), and Ultra Nate (“Show Me”), among others.

The duo’s list of credits also includes several hip-hop tracks, like “I Wonder If Heaven Got A Disko” from the first single off 2Pac’s second posthumous set, “R U Still Down? (Remember Me),” and Brandy’s “Baby’s Got A Habit” from her first album. They also produced “Me Against The World” and “Old School” on the deceased artist’s previous sets.

Other hip-hop collaborations include Queen Latifah’s “Queen Latifah,” MC Lyte, Audio 2, Cookie Crew, Tone Loc, and De La Soul. If SRF was a natural evolution for the duo, hip-hop was a return to roots—at least for Soulshock, who formed a professional start in hip-hop as the European tour DJ for Queen Latifah, the Jungle Brothers, True Mathematics, and Chill Rob G. at the age of 17.

“I was onstage for five hours, and I did it for free,” says Soulshock excitedly. “I was so happy to be doing what I’d been dying to do. I got to open the show with a mix show. I was part of it for real instead of up in my next dream about it.”

His ties with Latifah’s Flavor Unit led to a remix of the rapper’s “Rap Attack” that was included as a bonus track on her 1990 album, “All Hail The Queen.” He also did a few underground remixes for New York’s DJ Red Alert that aired on Red’s hip-hop mix show on WKRS New York.

Even if one were to put Soulshock’s tour DJ experience on Sony’s current musical experience was still against the grain of an average youth in Denmark.

“I went to school, everybody was checking out the new Tito or Dire Straits album, and I hated it. I just didn’t feel it,” he says. “A friend of mine introduced me to old R&B music like James Brown, and I really got into it, but it was hard to get. Then I heard ‘Wheels Of Steel’ by Grandmaster Flash, and I went nuts! I bought two turntables and a mixer the next day, and I was terror for [my parents] the next three months. I was into rap and R&B, that’s it.”

Karlin, on the other hand, played Bob Marley and to some extent the indigenous music of Denmark.

“1 grew up on a lot of different types of music,” says Karlin, “and it was a self-taught mix. I was about to dive into playing jazz fusion, a lot of Bob James, [Soulshock and I] have different backgrounds when it comes to...”

(Continued on next page)

EL PASO

RELAPSE RECORDS act Brutal Truth mixed its forthcoming project at the Magic Shop with producer/engineer Billy Anderson and assistant Juan Garcia. Also at the Magic Shop, Capitol Records act Fun Lovin’ Criminals tracked the song “Big Nite Out” for the Capitol soundtrack to “Scream 2,” with Tim Latham engineering and Garcia assisting. At Bear Tracks in suburban Suffern, N.Y., Spro Gyra mixed a GRP Records project with producer Jay Beckenstein, engineer Doug Oberkircher, and assistant Iain Fraser; Richard Stoltzman tracked a BMG Classics date with producer Jere- nity Wall, engineer Larry Swist, and assistant Rick Pohronezny; and Tom Chaplin recorded a Sony Wonder project with producer Ed Mitchell, engineer Joe DiGiorgi, and assistant Pohronezny.

LOS ANGELES

PRODUCER Mike Clink was at Runbo Recorders tracking a project at Bad Boy Entertainment act Fuzz Bubble/Ed Thacker engineered with Dave Dominguez assisting. At Fox Sound in Hollywood, Bill Grisola tracked with Michael Landau and Lower & Navarro for Roadapple Records; Barry Fauman and Ray Yuki produced, and John Thomas mixed... At CMS Mastering in Pasadena, Calif., chief engineer Robert Vogsern went over projects by Bush (Trauma/Interscope), the Uninvited (Atlantic), and Richard Elliott (Blue Note), plus the soundtracks to “Gatacaca” and “Scream 2.”

OTHER LOCATIONS

SWEETPEA RECORDING Studios in Argyle, N.Y., celebrated its 10th anniversary on Halloween with projects by the Celtic/Anglo act the Big Gerais- son, Albany, N.Y., band Stigmata (with producer/engineer Tom Case), and Vermont’s Iridian Blue (with engineer Greg Lelallo). Also at Sweetfish, producer Stevie J and engineer Mark Fuller were in studio A working on tracks for Sean “Puffy” Combs and his Bad Boy Entertainment label.

Please send material for Audio Track to Paul Verna, Pro Audio/Technology Editor, Billboard, 1515 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10036; fax: 212-586-6588; E-mail: PVerna@billboard.com.
with this music, where it's been played for hundreds of years, it is intense and very inspiring for the performers.

"But the secret of the SEON albums sounding so good after all these years was the tape we used—a very thick Sony 4-track recording. In fact, that I had imported, very expensively. The analog tape soaked up all the sound and has preserved it very well. We always invest in the best equipment and materials, and as the digital remastering of these records shows, this investment has paid off in musical joy.

Among the other SEON recordings, we are all to thank for Lulu's "Lagrima San Pietro," with Nevel and the Hauges Ensemble; Tafelmusik's latest Bach Brandenburg concerto; and Bylsma's definitive traversals of Brahms' cello sonatas and Bach's solo violin sonatas.

Bylsma has worked with Erickson since 1982, when he recorded an Edison Prize-winning disc of Handel's recorder sonatas with Bruggen and Leonhardt. "I liked to work with Wolf immediately, and we shared a deep love of music," Bylsma says.

"Above all, Wolf is a man of Old World refinement, a real European gentleman. He has all that a record producer needs: good taste, good ears, and good humor. When you're hard at work making records, with late hours, you need patience. And in the early days, we might make 20 intense records in a row without a cross word."

As a youth, Erickson served as an apprentice to an organ builder before studying musicology and singing at the University of Hamburg, giving him his insight into both the performance and mechanics of music. He gained an edge in engineering via his close relationships with studio pros from the Stuttgart, Germany, firm of Tritonus. Behind the board with such engineers as Stephan Schellmann, Andreas Niesner, and Markus Heinl, he has worked to overcome the sonic vagaries of gut strings, 18th-century harps, and the human voice to produce lifelike balances of shadow and light—a quality he sees lacking in many current classical recordings.

"I don't understand the sound aesthetic of 1997," Erickson says. "With the equipment we have today, everything should be beautiful. But the pictures are too black and white. It's not natural. And Surround Sound—that's the end of the world. The human ear wasn't designed for that..."

Even though no one is more responsible for the way we actually hear pre-19th century music than Erickson, archeoaoustic hasn't been his sole era of endeavor. His Vivarte productions have delved into Brahms and Bruckner with impact, and his work with Orpheus and the various ensembles has given fair share of modern music. He even won a Grammy Award for his recording of the Emersons' complete Bartòk quartets. "It's more than ironic that I would win a Grammy for Bartòk," Erickson says. "It's funny."

Along with many classical labels, Sony Classical is constructing its recording program—Vivaldi included. The imprint has a devoted worldwide following, but albums of Praetorius masses and even Mozart sonatas aren't about to rival "Appalachia Waltz" in sales. Still, Sony Classical president Peter Gubitz says the label is committed to Vivarte and is honored by its association with Erickson. "Wolf is an innovator, one of the greatest figures in classical recording," he says. "We hope when he retires that he'll stay on as a consultant for us."

Erickson appreciates Sony's care with the SEON reissues, although he imparts a certain sadness at the deletions and cutbacks that threaten the rest of his carefully cultivated catalog. "Once, the whole world seemed to be waiting for these records, the Bach cantatas, the SEON albums," he says. "Now it's like a train in the desert."

The great paintings and architecture of Europe are preserved in museums, but music is an interior legacy," Erickson adds. "Almost all of this early music was lost for so long. Only now are we able to bring it back to life and make it available to the public. Artists and record companies should make this a priority, to nurture this legacy and market it and make people aware of its worth. It's an obligation we all have to each other."

**Soulshock & Karlin**

**Continued from preceding page**

"The two say that they clicked right away when Karlin and a local Denmark signer named Susan came to SoulPower Records for a record deal. "We decided not to keep her, but we kept Karlin," says Soulshock, whose first partner in SoulPower, Cutfather, decided not to keep her. Karlin decided to return to Denmark.

It was Soulshock who introduced Karlin to R&B music, making tapes of music by the S.O.S. Band and Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis. "He freaked, he was so into it," says Soulshock.

"I didn't even know a lot of that music," says Karlin, "so I freaked. But I knew it was just so much good, old-school R&B out there."

Since then, the two have kept busy mixing tracks that challenge the conventions of R&B music in the market where it was born.

"We're a little different from other producers," says Soulshock about the team's production methods. "Since I started [producing] in Europe, I've been using Cubase sequencing software. It's like an old Otari machine that I've been using for the last eight years. It's still the tightest set I can find. I go around looking for any [of the computers] that are still left so that when this one goes, I can use another."

He says and Karlin fight over getting a new computer, but he's tried new Macinotches and "something about it and change it around so you can't even hear where it came from." If they find a particular sample they like, Soulshock and Karlin will take the time to get it changed, but they say that not many activate.

In the meantime, however, the two are cutting down on the production jobs they take to concentrate on their latest project, Soulpower Records. The label is expected to release four or five records under a two-year distribution arrangement with Virgin Records, based in Soulshock and Karlin's Los Angeles office/studio, the label is a lean operation, according to Soulshock.

"We're not trying to be super executives," he says. "We don't know how to run a record label, so we want to focus on the music and grow with the label. We've seen too many people go into the whole label thing and forget the most important thing, which is the music."

The two are getting help from Virgin and have hired outside people to handle A&R and promotion. The first act off the label is slated to be a female singer named Shiro.

"The project is going to be really typical Soulshock street beats and tracks with really good songs," says Soulshock. "We're gonna try to add a little psychedelic thing, and so far it's been turning out really good."
Homegrown Heroes

Germany, Switzerland And Austria See Lower Sales In General, But What Sells Is Increasingly Domestic

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

With annual revenues of more than 6 billion marks ($3.4 billion), Germany is the world's third-largest music market and the anchor of the regional market of Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Yet, over the past few months, growing worries have clouded the outlook for the market.

High unemployment of nearly 12%, political inaction ahead of the parliamentary elections next autumn and the resulting economic uncertainty among consumers, all have contributed to a drastic slump in sales in the German record market.

This past summer, some record companies recorded a 50% drop in sales of top-sellers, with earnings in some cases down by nearly 70%. The only consolation for the German industry is the rising proportion of domestic productions, with their higher margins, on the charts.

After 20 years, the share of domestic repertoire on the German singles chart has broken a new record again, now accounting for 55.7%. As numerous German productions sell well internationally, German companies can boost their income with foreign royalty payments.

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

Industry executives are very muted in their assessment of 1997.

Heinz Canibol, GSA president of Universal Music, projects only slight growth of 1% in the German market in the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, he says, record companies have very little influence on the overall economy. Canibol questions whether German record companies can influence consumer behavior through new products and distribution channels, and whether they will be able to tap new trends to enhance the interest in music-buying.

"Nothing is more threatening to our industry in the long term than mediocrity and boredom," he says.

German companies must take drastic measures to cushion themselves against the slump in the market, says Michael Haentjes, CEO of edel. "We have always worked with cost efficiency," he says. "Accordingly, it is not possible to respond to the weak market merely by cutting costs."

He goes on to say that edel is attempting to further extend its market share, as it did in 1997.

Wolf-D. Gramatke, president of PolyGram Germany, also expects muted growth results for 1997 overall. "What we need in the future are capable of making it into the national and international charts and who have sufficient staying power in the long term," he says. "One of the greatest challenges for future growth is to conquer part of that 50% who are non-buyers in Germany," says Gramatke.

A study co-sponsored by PolyGram shows that more repertoire is needed to lure non-active music consumers, largely those over 35, back into the record shops. PolyGram has taken the first successful step in that direction with million-selling releases in Germany by Italy's Andrea Bocelli and Holland's André Rieu.

Germany's double-digit growth rates of recent years will become increasingly difficult to repeat, says Gramatke. "We will probably be faced temporarily with flat markets, as the economic situation in Germany—high unemployment, high tax burdens and political inactivity ahead of the parliamentary elections next autumn—causes great uncertainty for consumers."

Like other companies, PolyGram has taken action to ride out the flat market. "As always, we attempt to create new structures in good time, so as to be able to respond flexibly to any changes and to extend our market leadership," says Gramatke.

According to Gerd Gebhardt, president of Warner Music Central Europe, retail sales have been declining over the past five years. And in tough times, music becomes a luxury item, he says. In addition, in recent years, other products, such as computer games, have competed for the leisure-time spending of music buyers.

"It is almost impossible to predict what the situation will be at the end of 1998," says Gebhardt. "Only after the next parliamentary elections have been held in October or November 1998 will we know whether the newly elected government will be willing to act quickly to combat unemployment, lower the high tax burdens on companies and address other key economic problems to give consumers some sign of hope."

Thomas M. Stehn, president of GSA, points to the favorable trends in the GSA market for his company. "With revenues of 861 million marks [$489 million], BMG-Entertainment International Germany/Switzerland/Austria (GSA) posted record growth of 11% in fiscal 1996-97," reports Stehn. "The BMG companies in Germany, Austria and Switzerland primarily owe this strong growing to their market leadership in the domestic product segment, which they have further extended over the past 12 months."

In Stehn's opinion, the industry's major challenge is to open up new distribution channels to tap the 50% of the German population who do not regularly buy records. This would include expanding activities, throughout Europe, with non-traditional music retailers.

To supplement its traditionally close ties with music retailers, BMG has established BMG Special Marketing Europe and has assembled a group of marketing experts who will be responsible for developing specific concepts and merchandising plans aimed at non-traditional outlets.

Jochen Leuschner, GSA senior VP at Sony Music, agrees that 1997 has been a difficult year for his company, as well as the rest of the German industry, but he remains optimistic about year-end results.

"I am convinced that we will close the year with a net increase," he says. "In view of our product schedule, I think..."
The acts given priority attention during the third and fourth quarters of 1997 will determine whether Germany will shake off a year-long sales downturn. Accordingly, the record companies are going to great lengths to launch their top products in the German market—while keeping an eye on sales in Austria and Switzerland. At the same time, some of the Austrian and Swiss companies are confident they will achieve Europe-wide success with their own releases.

Here are some of the current priority releases in the GSA region:

- BMG Entertainment International GSA, based in Munich, is betting on the Swiss rock band GOTTHARD, whose last three albums consecutively hit No. 1 and achieved platinum sales (50,000 units) in Switzerland. Meanwhile, the band has made a name for itself as a top 50 album seller in Germany, as well as a guaranteed chart act in Japan. The new album is titled "D Frosted." Since the prior three albums were released all over Europe and in Asia Pacific markets, BMG expects further international action on this release.

- Eckhard Gundel, CEO of BMG Hamburg, is confident about high chart positions for ANNika, a singer previously known for her involvement with the hit group Redux. Gundel expects Annika’s album "Me & Myself" to be a Europe-wide hit.

- Sony’s Dance Pool label expects SPACE FROG to make a splash with its album "Welcome All Species," which was released in early October. The Frankfurt-based foursome is a dance act that performs live. Dance Pool manager Markus Wenzel says, "The advance single, 'X-Ray (Follow Me),' has already set a trend, while the follow-up single, 'I Feel Ur Pain,' is even more intense. We expect that the debut album and Space Frog's frontman, the Grim Reaper, will excite all dance-crazy kids." Dance Pool is looking at a worldwide release with a special eye on the Benelux and France.

- EastWest Records is backing two new groups from Berlin. MADONNA HIP HOP MASSAKER, on its new album, "Radical Romance," showcases a provocative and glamorous pop style, while THE BOYZ have stepped into the absence created in the teen-group genre by the breakup of Take That. EastWest managing director Hubert Wandoj finds both acts have strong potential beyond the GSA market.

- AARON CARTER, the younger brother of Backstreet Boy Nick Carter, has landed a topspot 10 hit with his debut single, "Crush On You," on edel, which has released his debut album. Michael Haentjes, managing director of edel, says that the company will be concentrating its marketing and promotion activities on Carter. "We assume this album will make it into the top 10," says Haentjes.

- In May of this year, the British band CHUMBAWAMBA signed to EMI Elektra for Europe. By July, its single "Tubthumping" was a hit in Britain and other European territories, setting up the release of the album "Tubthumper." After forming their own label in the early '80s, the group members released their first single, "Revolution," in September 1985. Their first album was called "Pictures Of Starving Children Sell Records" and was followed up in 1987 by their second album, "Never Mind"...
Guess who will be

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Touring Germany

Concerts Require Preparation And Promotion While Navigating High Taxes And Ticket Prices

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR

Germany's concert promoters say that international artists should focus on long-term career development rather than short-term payoffs when planning tours in the world's third-largest music market.

"The cardinal error made by foreign promoters—as well as by the music industry as a whole—is to think in the short term only," says Marek Lieberberg, who is one of the leading European impresarios.

In view of the complexity of the German market, says Lieberberg, "even a concert promoter who is familiar with major acts to establish a presence in the country and to plan their tours well in advance.

Lieberberg's views come at a time when weak record sales are pushing acts out of the concert business. Even so, he expects to break even in 1997 after a more successful 1996, a reality he accepts in the cyclical concert business.

TAX TROUBLES

Yet the concert business in Germany also has been hurt by the introduction in 1996 of a new tax structure that effectively doubles the tax burden on international acts to 32% of revenue.

The business also has grabbed unwelcome headlines in the past year with the arrest of Marcel Avram, co-owner of Merck Oberg, and Qua, on tax evasion charges—an action by government officials that has been widely criticized by Avram's fellow promoters and German music-industry leaders.

Thomas Stein, president of BMG GSA, told an audience at Popkomm this past summer that the government's action in detaining Avram reflected a wider attitude of municipal authorities towards tax issues. "Instead of seeking compromise, an example was set," said Stein. "Instead of loosening the state fetters on creative people, one of the most creative and economically productive individuals in the nation was put in chains, in the fullest sense of the word, when he was on his hospital bed. I do not seek to defend tax evasion—if this is what happened—but this example is not a way to solve German tax problems.

MORE FOR YOUR MONEY

Tours by domestic artists on almost 30 years of experience have taken a greater share of the concert market in Germany recently because of the excessive fees demanded by international artists, says Werner Kuhl and Johannes Wessels, the managing directors of the German Music Company in Hamburg. The higher fees are due to the tax arisings must pay in advance—although a large part of this can be absorbed if concerts are planned properly, the Sunrise promoters say. National artists are now every bit as good as foreign artists, in terms of quality. Since their ticket prices are lower, there is a tendency for national artists to be favored, they say.

"The consumer today does not buy everything," says promoter Peter Rieger of Cologne, who notes there has been a slump in audience numbers. At the "Giants Of Rock" concert in July, featuring Meat Loaf and the Scorpions, he only achieved 50% of the audience required to break even. U2's concert audiences were half what he projected, in part because of high ticket prices, he says.

Rieger has noted an increase in fees, costs and taxes, which, of course, is also reflected in ticket prices. "As a service company, we try to keep ticket prices reasonably inexpensive with the assistance of sponsors," explains Rieger.

"In the past, we used the profile earned on major acts to invest in new artists and systematically build them up," says Rieger. As the profile on such major acts is shrinking more and more, it is becoming increasingly difficult to invest in new groups, he says.

Lieberberg believes that German audiences have become obsessed with fleeting pleasures. Only the latest, most spectacular and popular will do. Second-best is just not good enough.

"This atmosphere is not conducive to developing and building up artists and careers step by step," he laments.

GERMAN GUIDANCE

Managers and agents should pay more attention to the advice given by German promoters, claim Sunrise managing directors Kuhl and Wessels. During preparations for a world tour, which generally coincides with the release of a new album, negotiations for concerts in Germany are frequently commenced too late.

Other concert promoter Karsten Jahnke also believes that as much as 80% of the tours in Germany are confirmed by managers and booking agencies much too late. While a tour may be planned six months in advance, they often are not confirmed until 60 days or so before the first show, says Jahnke. "Another major mistake is to judge the amount of work being done by the record company in Germany from the importance of the act in its home market only." The result is that managers fail to recognize the situation facing record companies with a flood of new releases.

SUCCESS STORIES

Jahnke has had recent success with tours by Italian artists Angelo Branduardi and Lucio Dalla, America's Bryan Adams and the latest German shooting star, Blümchen, who drew total tour audiences of 35,000.

Jahnke's 1998 schedule includes bookings by Italy's Paolo Conte and American jazz musician Pat Metheny, among others.

With his open-air projects, meanwhile, Lieberberg has created cult events defying all fashions and trends. "Rock Am Ring" and "Rock Im Park" are far and away the most successful festivals in Germany. These two open-air events, which look back on a tradition of 12 years and are based on almost 30 years of experience in this field, broke records in 1997, with 120,000 visitors each.

The new, more alternative "Blindman's Ball" festival, which now takes place annually at the end of the season, attracted more than 45,000 fans, according to Lieberberg. "Of course, the failure of amateurish open-air events organized without attention to detail comes as no surprise," says Lieberberg. "Festivals require extraordinary expertise and a professional organization catering to the needs of the audience and the artists. Most attempts fail because these essentials are not observed.

In 1997, concerts by Sting, Bryan Adams, the Who and Kiss were extraordinarily successful, attracting a total of 750,000 fans. Celine Dion proved her strength as an open-air drawing-card with her incredible performance at Bremen's Wacken Music Festival.

Sunrise organized five open-air festivals under the motto "Go Bang!" featuring David Bowie and the Prodigy, which fell well short of audience projections.

The Bizarre Festival attracted roughly 100,000 fans over three days this summer. Says Rieger, "Service was spoiled with a capital S, with a supermarket, camping facilities, sufficient lavatories, enough stands selling food and drink, and leisure facilities, etc. A three-day open-air concert costs about as much as a holiday on the island of Mallorca, so you have to offer something special.

What makes Rieger optimistic about the rest of the year is the already sold-out Phil Collins tour with an audience of almost 250,000. In 1998, the promoter expects another good year, with concerts by Genesis, Luciano Pavarotti, the Three Tenors, the Bizarre Festival, Simple Minds and many other artists.

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Herman van Veen nachbar
100 shows between 24th of September '97 and 24th of May '98
(New Album: „nachbar“, Polydor)

Tim Fischer
18 shows between 30th of October and 4th of December.
(New Album: „Aus blauem Glase“, EMI)

the Dubliners
11 shows between 17th of October and 6th of December.
(New Album: „Alive Alive-O“, pinarrekk records)

Randy Crawford
01.02.'98 Stuttgart, Hegelsaal
03.02.'98 Frankfurt, Alte Oper
04.02.'98 München, Philharmonie
06.02.'98 Berlin, HNK
07.02.'98 Düsseldorf, Tonhalle
09.02.'98 Hamburg, Musikhalle
(New Album: „Every Kind Of Mood“, WEA)

Michel Petrucciani & Friends
02.12. Hamburg, Musikhalle
03.12. Köln, Philharmonie

Michel Petrucciani All Star Trio, 1998
Anthony Jackson (b) - Steve Gadd (dm)
04.02. Mannheim, Musenaal
05.02. München, Philharmonie
07.02. Freiburg, Konzerthaus
08.02. Stuttgart, Hegelhalle
09.02. Dresden, Kulturelalast
10.02. Frankfurt a.M., Alte Oper
12.02. Stuttgart, Offorium
14.02. Düsseldorf, Tonhalle
15.02. Berlin, Friedrichstadtpalast
New Album: „Both Worlds“, edel conter

Blümchen
19 shows between 28th of November & 22nd of December.
New Album: Verliebt Edel

Pat Metheny Group
15.04.'98 FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, Blindfischbach
18.04.'98 HAMBURG, Capitol
19.04.'98 HAMBURG, Musikhalle
22.04.'98 DÜSSELDORF, Philharmonie
27.04.'98 BERLIN, Tempodrom
28.04.'98 MÜNCHEN, Circus CRone
01.05.'98 KARLSRUHE, Stadtthalle
03.05.'98 FRANKFURT, Alte Oper
(New Album: „Imaginary Day“, WEA)

Karsten Jahnke Konzertdirektion GmbH
Hallerstrasse 72, 20146 Hamburg, Germany
Tel.: +49 40 41 47 88-0, Fax: +49 40 44 35 97, HTTP://WWW.STADT.COM/KARSTEN-JAHNKE/
ECONOMIC WATCH
Currency: Schilling
Exchange rate $1 = 12.11 S
GDP in U.S. dollars (1995): $200.3 billion
Inflation rate (1996): 1.9%
Unemployment rate (August 1997): 5.9%

SALES WATCH
Average wholesale album price: $12.80
Average retail album price: $20.64
Mechanical royalty rate: 9.306%
Sales tax on sound recordings: 20%
Unit sales (first six months 1997): 10.91 million
Change over same period previous year: 6%
Per capita album sales (1996): 2.6
Piracy level: 2% of units

SALES WATCH (key retail outlets)
Libro (250 stores)
Media Markt (12 stores)
Virgin (4 stores)

TRADE CONTACTS
IFPI national group: IFPI Austria
Mechanical-rights society: VBT
Performing-rights society: Austro-Mechana
Music-publishing associations: AKM

CD-player household saturation: 54%
Platinum album award: 50,000 units
Gold album award: 25,000 units

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RETAIL WATCH (key promotional outlets)
Rennbahn Express, biweekly magazine (100,000 circ.)
MTV (Austrian audience figures not available)

POPULATION
World ranking (by $U.S. retail value): 18th
Population: 8 million
Population under 25: 30%

CD-player household saturation: 54%
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Inflation rate (1996): 1.9%
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A SPECIAL AWARD FROM
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MAREK LIEBERBERG KONZERTAGENTUR GMBH, MORIESTRASSE 14, 60320 FRANKFURT MAIN, GERMANY, PHONE 069/5682020, FAX 069/568199
World ranking (by U.S. retail value): 16th
Population: 7.1 million
Population under 25: 29%

ECONOMIC WATCH
Currency: Swiss Franc
Exchange rate $1 = 1.40 SFr
GDP in U.S. dollars (1995): $311.4 billion
Inflation rate (1996): 0.8%
Unemployment rate (August 1997): 5%

SALES WATCH
Average wholesale album price: $13.86
Average retail album price: $23.57
Mechanical royalty rate: 9.306%
Sales tax on sound recordings: 6.5%
Unit sales (first six months 1997): 9.31 million
Change over same period previous year: 2%
Per capita album sales (1996): 3.5

MEDIA WATCH (key promotional outlets)
Der Blick, daily newspaper (circ. 335,341)
MTV (strongest in French region and major cities)
DRS 3 (4.5 million listeners daily)

RETAIL WATCH (key retail outlets)
Hug (13 stores)
City Disc (24 stores)

REPERTOIRE BREAKDOWN
Classical 10%
Domestic 7%
International 83%

CHART WATCH
Top-Selling Albums: January–September 1997
1. Bocelli (Sugar/Polydor)—Andrea Bocelli
2. Romanza (Sugar/Polydor)—Andrea Bocelli
3. Secrets (LaFace/Arista)—Toni Braxton
4. My Promise (MCI/Arista)—No Mercy
5. Spice (Virgin)—Spice Girls
6. Evita (Warner)—Soundtrack
7. Still Waters (Polydor)—Bee Gees
8. Tic Tac Toe (RCA)—Tic Tac Toe
9. Klappe Die 2to (RCA)—Tic Tac Toe
10. The Best Of Zucchero/Greatest Hits (Polydor)—Zucchero Fornaciari

Top-Selling Singles: January–September 1997
1. Time To Say Goodbye (EastWest)—Sarah Brightman & Andrea Bocelli
2. Don't Speak (Trauma/Interscope)—No Doubt
3. Un-Break My Heart (LaFace/Arista)—Toni Braxton
4. I Believe I Can Fly (Jive)—R. Kelly
5. Don't Let Go [Love] (EastWest)—En Vogue
6. Warum? (RCA)—Tic Tac Toe
7. Verpiss Dich (RCA)—Tic Tac Toe
8. Vivo Per Lei... (Sugar/Polydor)—Andrea Bocelli & Judy Weiss
9. MMMBop (Mercury)—Hanson
10. I'll Be Missing You (Bad Boy/Arista)—Puff Daddy & Faith Evans featuring 112

TRADE CONTACTS
IFPI national group: IFPI Switzerland
Mechanical-rights society: SUISA
Performing-rights society: SUISA
Music-publishing association: SVMHV

Source: IFPI, Music & Media, Media Control, Billboard research

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To all our Artists, Managers, Agents & Crews for your ongoing support and a great number of outstanding shows in 1997 with us.

... and we will be strong in 1998!!

We wish you a peaceful and merry X-mas and a healthy, successful and happy New Year!

The Team of Mama Concerts & Rau
HOME GROWN HEROES
Continued from page 47

that we will substantially outgrow the market this year. Our multi-faceted activities are focusing on attempts to establish as many new national and international artists in the GSA countries as possible."

The split of Sony Music Germany into Columbia and Epic Records helped the company position itself early for the tough economic climate, says Leuschner. "Our strategy of marketing and promoting key national and international releases as aggressively as possible and simultaneously securing the company for untapped efficiency reserves is already bearing fruit," says Leuschner.

While consumer restraint is understandable in a time of economic uncertainty, Leuschner also believes that Germany's music retailers could do a better job of meeting the needs of music consumers.

Helmut Fest, president of EMI GSA, is cautious but not pessimistic about this year's business performance. "As we systematically prepared our company for a leveling-off of double-digit growth rates back in the 'fatter years,' we are working on the premise that our company will post record results again in 1995, just as it has done in the past 11 years," says Fest. "This necessitates strict budget compliance and overheads, which have been held steady for years."

In the artistic area, EMI has long since shimmied down its release schedule without, however, preventing A&R staff inside the company from signing up new artists. Fest is adamant that there will be no standstill in this area.

He sees three core areas that will receive attention from EMI over the next few years: further expansion of A&R activities, additional international success and improved ties to non-traditional retail outlets for music.

"One of the findings of the non-buyer study was that it is becoming increasingly difficult to encourage those buyers, in particular, who do not visit traditional retail outlets, for a whole host of different reasons, to buy CDs," he says. "Our very successful partnership with drugstore chain Schlecker and Breeze TV in over 6,500 outlets throughout Germany is a good example of how this group can be reached."

In this context, Fest stresses that no business will be taken away from traditional retailers. Selling via the Schlecker chain primarily reaches customers who don't shop at record stores.

Kurt Thienen, managing director of the independent label Rough Trade, does not expect the German record market to expand in the foreseeable future, in spite of his own company's growth.

Following its acquisition by Zomba Records as its principal shareholder and the resulting takeover of the Jive label, Rough Trade has defied general trends by boosting its revenue considerably. With the establishment of the Jive office in Cologne under the management of Konrad von Lohnneysen and additions to the radio promotion team, Rough Trade is an example of a German record company that has been able to extend its resources substantially in a tough market.

DOMESTIC BLISS

Aside all the negative trends in the German market, there is great joy at the growing proportion of domestic or national product on the charts.

"This is a marvelous development for us," says Hauenjes of edel. "Germany still forms the core of our business. I have no doubt that rising domestic repertoire will automatically translate into higher revenues. If we had only national signings, edel would be among the top three in the record market."

Warner is also benefiting from the strong appeal of national product. Acts such as Mr. President, Sarah Brightman, Princesa, X-Pergiene, C-Block, Red & Breakfast, Scorpions and many others are not only generating dependable sales in Germany but are enjoying success in the U.S. and Southeast Asia. Warner's Gehardt wants to further bolster this trend within his company.

Over the past 12 months, the share of national productions in the revenues of BMG Ariola units in Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna and Zurich has risen to more than 60%, the company reports. As a result, BMG is easily outperforming the market as a whole and is making a decisive contribution to domestic product's overall share of 40% in the German market.

With sales of roughly 150 million records around the world in the past 10 years, as well as permanent international chart presence, the BMG Ariola companies are proving that, far from being history (Boney M, Modern Talking and Milli Vanilli), their foreign success is stronger than ever, as German-produced acts such as La Bouche, Real McCoy, No Mercy and Scatman John find international acclaim.

Cansbol at Universal is also pleased that his company is earning considerable foreign revenues with its German signings. Papa Winnie has sold 220,000 albums in Asia and Latin America, while the Swedish artist Pandora, who has signed with Universal Germany, sold more than 800,000 copies of her two albums in Japan. However, success in the domestic market must remain the first priority, he adds.

Leuschner says that developing national acts is a key aspect of Sony's activities. "After a difficult phase in the recent past, our artist roster is now beginning to move in the right direction," he says. "The label's favorable development is being strategically supplemented by carefully selected deals with artists who complement and harmonize with our existing roster."

Foreign exploitation of EMI Electrola's product is playing a special role in the company's growth. Last year, the international successes of artists such as Captain Jack and Worlds Apart (who sold more than 1 million CDs in France alone) made a considerable contribution to EMI Electrola's earnings. This year, EMI's Fest expects the foreign revenues earned by these and other new signings to the German company to almost double.

What the German PolyGram president Gramatke finds particularly gratifying about the success of domestic product is the acceptance of music from Germany as credible, not only in Germany itself but in other countries as well.

"Royalty income from foreign successes also boosts the bottom line," he says. Gramatke expects the share of national product in the market to stabilize at 45% in the long term. He adds that PolyGram is committed to further extending this segment of the market by forcing national acts at its own repertoire companies. PolyGram has international success with product from Germany: Andrea Bocelli (Polydor), Rammstein (Motor) and Nana (Motor).
Aside from a Europe-wide release, Intercord has its sights set on the Asia Pacific region, where the band has attained stardom with sell-out concerts. Koch International has a special jazz-meets-classics single on the market this winter. It presents German tenor GREGOR PRÄCHT (executive producer and exclusive artist signed to Koch Classics) along with his mentor AL JARREAU. Prächt and Jarreau perform the Charlie Chaplin song "Smile" accompanied by the Warfield Avenue Symphony Orchestra, arranged by GRP recording artist David Besset. Robert Koch, A&R manager rock/pop says, "This cooperation with such high-quality, internationally renowned artists as Al Jarreau and Gregor Prächt is an honor for us. We believe in this powerful team as well as in the high-quality artistic production." The company plans to release this single worldwide— in cooperation with various distribution partners—in order to cover all global territories. An album and tour are expected next year.

Mercury Records managing director Dietmar Glöckle and A&R chief Boris Lobe, together with producers Achim and Klaus Volker, have assembled 11 hip-hop stars and classical vocalists for "The Rhapsody Overture," featuring the likes of Mobb Deep, LL Cool J, Run-D.M.C., Jay-Z, Redman, Onyx, and Nicky D. The first single from the album, "Prince Igor," features Warren G. and the Norwegian soprano Sissel Kyrkjebø. The concept owes its emotional impact to the symbiosis of rap and operatic art, says Lobe. "This is largely due to the fact that the productions are not the result of synthetik studio sessions but arose from the artists personally exploring the classical music in a very individual manner."

* With its album "Herzeleid" raking up sales of more than 400,000 units, the Berlin group Rammstein has now sold over 1 million copies of the latest album, "Sehnsucht." The band played its first two concerts in New York in September and was well-received, reports Motor CEO Tim Renner. Rammstein arouses attention with aggressive lyrics and perhaps the most popular stage show. The band has been signed by London Records in the U.S.

* This winter's key national release at Play It Again Sam in Hamburg is the first solo album by Hamburg rapper GARY D. He is currently one of the leading hard trance-techno DJs on the rave circuit in Europe, and his compilation album "D-Trance" has been the most successful product advertised on TV in this genre. The DJ demonstrates his skills in arranging the compilation but also writing his own material. Says PIAS head Peter Cadera. Working in his own studio, Gary composed and produced his debut album, "Ran," released this autumn by PIAS through Rough Trade Germany.

* Karen Heinrich, head of A&R/marketing for national pop at Polydor Germany, says that American TV star David Hasselhoff, who is signed to the label, is releasing "Hooked On A Feeling," featuring songs produced by John Ballard (Ace Of Base), Axel Breitung (DJ Bobo), Enrique Zamart (Masterbo), Wade Hurst, and Devon Watson. Says Heinrich, "The album is a superb blend of up-tempo pop songs and strong ballads." Hasselhoff has had his greatest chart success to date with the European hit "Looking For Freedom" in 1998. The year in which the Berlin Wall fell. His new album will be released in many markets outside the GSA region, notably Asia. For Christmas, Polydor also is releasing "Warren G Sings Christmas," compiled of songs sung by Warren G. from Dutch violinist André Rieu. The disc will benefit from a tour, television appearances and a TV ad campaign.

* Universal Records Germany's top national project for the next few months is A.R. S.W.I.F.T., reports Universal GSA president Heinz Gschöld. Produced by Boyoo Music, the debut single, "Light In Me," made it straight onto the VIVA and MTV playlists, charted two weeks after release and with sales of over 110,000 units, entered the top 20 of the German singles chart. The band's new album is being released in Scandinavia, the Benelux territories and France. Universal Germany is expecting "Kyryan," the new album by harpist Andreas Vollenweider, to have a worldwide impact. Together with the Zurich Symphony Orchestra and many superb musicians, Vollenweider has produced "A masterpiece," says Universal's Rolf Sommer. Vollenweider has sold more than 9 million albums to date worldwide.

* Virgin Schallplatten has high hopes for the young German band Vivid and its debut album, "Go!" Virgin managing director Udo Lange explains, "It's very clear-cut—very rare. Before he has a German band come up with such a high international standard for a debut album. The album is strong within itself: starting and ending with the music—from a fascinating mixture of great melodies, a compelling voice and charismatic frontman (Thomas Hannreich), down to the refined sound, artwork, support of the media and management. Vivid is already on top and ready to conquer the world." Virgin has release commitments from almost all the European Virgin companies, as well as from Japan.

* Alexander Matus of WEA Records notes that Mr. President has enjoyed enormous success recently in the U.K. and U.S. with its hit single "Coco Jambo." At the same time, the group's debut album, "We See The Same Sun," has racked up sales of more than 1 million units outside Germany. A follow-up, "Nightclub," was released at the end of October on Germany and has already cracked the single "Jojo Action." Says Matus, "We have created a basis for consolidating and expanding the act's international and national success." American funk/pioneers Bootsie Collins also is signed to WEA Germany, which has released his new album, "Fresh Outa P. University." Cultured Pears achieved chart and sales success in Germany with the debut single "Te Te" and the ensuing debut album. The album "Space Age Honeyman" is a soul-pop-tinged musical production.
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SESAC Presents Second N.Y. Music Awards

More than 300 people attended SESAC’s second music awards Nov. 18 at the Supper Club in New York. Among the highlights was the presentation of a 1997 Song of the Year Award to Bob Carlisle for his hit “Butterfly Kisses” and a Pride of SESAC Award to Bob Carlisle for his hit “Don’t Wanna Be A Player.”

Shirley Caesar acknowledges her Pride of SESAC Award.

BMG Music Moves Further Into Asia; V2 Cozies Up To In Bed

Asia Expansion: BMG Music Publishing, amplifying its expansion program in Asia, has expanded its Taiwan office under the direction of its first GM, Lobo Lo, a well-known name in the area as a producer, recording artist, and composer. He will work with other regional BMG Music Publishing companies to expose Chinese composers across the national boundaries in the pan-China region.

In Bed With V2: Expansion of the recently formed music publishing unit of Richard Branson's V2 Music Group has come via a “majority interest” stake in an independent company formed by its own A&R chief, Kate Hyman. In fact, two of her writer deals at In Bed Music—Grandaddy and Marc Anthony Thompson, also known as Chocolate Genius—have been signed to V2 Records on a world (not including the U.S.) and an all-territory basis, respectively. Grandaddy records for Will Records in the U.S.

Words & Music

by Ira Lichtman

In Loving Memory of

LOU LEVY

Legendary Music Publisher

December 3, 1910 – October 31, 1995

A Tribute to his Life and Legacy

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Richard Adler
ASCAP
Kenneth & Susan Auerbach
Lee August
Charles Aznavour
Jack Bart
Barbara Biszick
BMI
Edward M. Cramer
Casey & Cathy Del Casino
Deborah Dill
Richard Falken
Tom Fourounjian
Milt Gabler
Al & Grace Gallico
Kitty Kallen Granoff
Mickey Hayes
Sydney Herman
Zachary I. Horowitz
Jenny Hudson
Phoebe Jacobs

Bad Katzel
Anita M. Kramer
Steve Lawrence & Eydie Gorme
Leeds Levy & Jaymes Foster - Levy
Bob & Naomi Lippert
Irene S. Marcus
Stanley Mills
Music Sales Corporation
New York Sheet Music Society - Sam Teicher, Pres.
Harold Oreinstein
Paula Perry
Moe & Sophie Preskell
Howard S. Richmond
Philippe Seller
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JASRAC Takes Interactive Lead

Authors’ Body Sets Rates For New Media

BY STEVE McCLURE

TOKYO—Japanese authors’ body JASRAC is joining the vanguard of societies trying to establish the level of royalty payments in new media.

Following complaints about high copyright fees from companies using music in their CD-ROM, DVD, and floppy disc releases, JASRAC has now proposed an interactive-media royalty rate code.

JASRAC’s initiative is likely to set a benchmark for its sister societies around the world, many of which are striving to establish their members’ rights in this developing market.

In Japan, JASRAC’s code would require a basic fee of 800 yen ($6.30) to be paid for each minute of domestic music used in such media, irrespective of the number of software units sold. As with videograms, basic fees for some international repertoire would be subject to negotiation between the software producer and the original publisher or the Japanese subpublisher. These fees tend to be much higher than the standard fee.

Mechanical fees for interactive media would be set either by multiplying the pretax retail price by 0.1% for each minute of material, or dividing 4.5% of the pretax retail price by the aggregate use time in the software package. For both methods, the same minimum figure would be set as the mechanical rate, with 4 yen (3 cents) per minute the absolute minimum.

The net result is that JASRAC’s interactive-media royalty rate would be significantly lower than its current rates for videograms, which until the end of September were used to calculate royalties on interactive media paid by smaller companies not belonging to either the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan (RIAJ) or the Japanese Video Software Assn. (JVSA). Those companies argued that the videogram rates are too high, and since the beginning of October they have been depositing money with JASRAC based on the proposed interactive rate structure.

When JASRAC, the RIAJ, and the JVSA agree on the new rates, settlement will be carried out with individual companies based on how much they have deposited with the society. JASRAC declines to reveal how much money has so far been deposited with it.

Tokyo-based CD-ROM production company Oracron was recently involved in a dispute with JASRAC concerning royalties on a CD-ROM featuring music by Japanese singer-songwriter Miyuki Nakajima. Oracron refused to pay royalties on the CD-ROM through JASRAC using the society’s videogram rate. Oracron and other multimedia production companies also complained that negotiating with JASRAC took too much time.

The case made JASRAC realize the urgent need for a separate interactive-media royalty code. JASRAC hopes to reach an agreement (Continued on page 67)

Roger Grierson Takes Helm Of Australia’s Festival Cos.

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

SYDNEY—Roger Grierson, managing director of PolyGram Music Publishing here and co-manager of Nick Cave, has been named CEO/chairman of the Festival group of companies. Festival is owned by Rupert Murdoch’s News Corp. Grierson will report to James Murdoch, New York-based VP of music and new media, after taking up the post Jan. 6.

The same week, Festival’s managing director, Bill Eeg, will retire to spend more time with his family. Eeg began with the company’s accounts section 26 years ago and took over the helm in 1991.

At the time of his appointment as managing director, the 50-year-old music company had lost its 15-20% market share of the 1980s, after losing its licenses for Chrysalis, Island, and A&M. Earlier this year, Mushroom’s CEO/chairman, Michael Gudinski, pulled out of a 25-year-old distribution deal and signed with Sony Music (Billboard, May 31). Eeg’s rebuilding included expanding its global catalog and setting up a new label. Under Eeg, Warren Fahey, head of the Larrikin imprint, became joint CEO. Eva Wallengren and Simon Kain were recruited from the indie music sector to consolidate the dance and A&R divisions, respectively.

It is believed that James Murdoch, who believes that Festival’s future lies in fostering Australian talent, approached Grierson at least (Continued on page 67)

Europe Awaits Tribunal Ruling
U.K. Dispute Part Of Wider Debate

BY JEFF CLARK-MEADS

LONDON—Europe’s copyright holders are awaiting the outcome of a U.K. tribunal hearing that may help establish broadcast royalty rates and systems of payment across the European Union.

The tribunal hearing, held in November, was regarding a dispute between the U.K.’s Performing Right Society (PRS) and satellite TV channel BSkyB. However, in keeping with the increasingly international nature of the music industry within the EU, PRS called witnesses from its counterparts in the Netherlands, Sweden, and Belgium to bolster its arguments over precedents.

PRS and BSkyB appeared before the tribunal after failing to agree on the method by which the broadcaster’s royalty payments should be calculated. PRS wants a percentage—up to 3%—of the stations’ relevant revenue; BSkyB wants to pay a lump sum.

A judgment from tribunal chairman Christopher Floyd is expected in mid-December. The decision on how the case affects the remaining parties is expected in the first quarter of 1998. (Continued on next page)
EMI MUSIC ITALY and Warner Music Italy are top contenders to acquire the Nuova Fonit Cetra (NFC) catalog from public service broadcaster RAI (Broadcasting, July 21). Out of 20 companies that have inquired about possible acquisition of NFC’s rich catalog, a deal with either EMI or Warner is imminent, sources within trade unions representing RAI employees claim. A statement from the union RSE expressed fears for the 47 employees whose positions it says will be at risk. A statement from RSU claims, “The sale is not intended to safeguard the cultural patrimony of NFC, but an exercise in profiteering from the market, to the exclusion of RAI’s public service mission.”

Bidders are mainly interested in NFC’s extensive catalog; most artists signed to NFC’s label have left in the past 12 months. The catalog includes historic recordings from Maria Callas, Beniamino Gigli, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Giuseppe Di Stefano, Kati Ricciarda, Carlo Bergonzi, and Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli. According to figures supplied by accounting firm KPMG, which is acting as consultant for the sale, last year NFC recorded a loss of 3.5 billion lire ($12.7 million) on revenue of 26 billion lire ($15.76 million), against losses of 7.5 billion lire ($4.56 million) on a similar turnover in 1995. Further losses are anticipated this year.

MARK DEZANI

THE IRISH MUSIC RIGHTS ORGANISATION (IMRO) has appointed Paddy Lyons, ex-chairman of the Irish Competition Authority, as its first external director. He is IMRO’s only director without a music industry background, which marks a radical departure in the corporate governance of the organisation. IMRO administers the rights of 3,800 Irish songwriters and 46 Irish record companies.

Brendan Gray says that “appointing a director who is neither a songwriter nor a music publisher is a new and progressive departure for us, and gives IMRO’s monopoly in the administration of copyrighted music, it is only right that we should be as transparent as possible.” Lyons is a former economist with the Irish Central Bank and a lecturer in economics at Trinity College Dublin.

STUART BURT

THE U.K.’S RECORD COMPANIES and music retailers took their argument for copyright protection to the heart of government Nov. 19. The British Phonographic Industry (BPI) and the British Assn. of Record Dealers (BARD) held a reception for members of Parliament in the House of Lords in the Palace of Westminster, where they asked for the government’s help in tackling piracy worldwide and in supporting enhanced protections relevant to the digital age. The reception was attended by MPs from across the political spectrum as well as officials from the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. BPI director general John Deacon says, “It was an excellent opportunity for BARD and BPI council members to meet with politicians from all parties and tell them about the challenges we face now and in the future. It was encouraging to get such strong cross-party support.”

JEFF CLARK-MEADS

ROUNDER RECORDS, based in the Massachusetts town of Cambridge, is claiming to have secured the first deal in America for a Western music company. A statement from Rounder says its deals aim to draw a record from writers and publishers. Among the new deals are those of Johnnie Johnson, Solomon Burke, Robert John Royal, Rownan Spear, and Steve Wasserman, as well as the budget compilations “Urban Beat Reggae” and “Bahasa.” No figures are available for the size of the American CD market.

TV SHOPPING NETWORK (TVSN), a Sydney-based, pan-Asian electronic retailer, has launched a new music sales service, Global Entertainment. TVSN’s existing 24-hour television shopping channel now devotes five live programs five times a week to selling CDs as well as musical instruments, movies, sheet music, and related product. The programs, launched Nov. 25, feature a range of music from the majors and independent labels and include appearances by artists. TVSN reaches 57 countries and operates in English, Mandarin, Japanese, and the Indonesian language Bahasa.

GEOFF BURPEE

FORM RECORDS in Singapore has put in place a new regional marketing and label management team. The company’s international division has appointed five label executives, one regional marketing manager, and an acting regional A&R manager. The new label executives, led by senior label executive Kenneth Ng, will serve Form’s European and American licenses. The regional marketing executive will liaise between the regional and international offices, while the A&R manager’s duties for Singapore and Malaysia will be temporarily overseen by Poh Cheng Tiong, Form Records Malaysia’s head of international

Runga ‘Drives’ Sales. Big Runga, claimed to be New Zealand’s biggest-selling female artist, was presented with a double-platinum disc marking 30,000 sales of her debut album, “Drive.” Pictured, from left, is Sony Music Entertainment New Zealand managing director Michael Gledading, Runga, Sony Music Entertainment international senior VP Peter Asher, and Columbia U.S. director of international A&R Gerard Babitts.

New-Look MTV Takes Shape

Job Losses In London Now Total 210

This story was prepared by Christian Lorenz, music business and talent editor for Music & Media.

LONDON—MTV Europe is taking its regionalisation strategy a final stage by handing over complete control of its programming and day-to-day business to its regional offices.

Brent Hansen, president/CEO of MTV and VH-1 Europe, announced in November that the broadcaster’s four existing regional services—Northern, Southern, Central, and U.K.—will henceforth execute total control over programming and production, marketing, advertising, and sales activities (Billboard, Nov. 24). MTV expects, however, that 150 new positions will be created in its regional offices, and that some of the London staff affected may be offered new positions abroad.

Hansen has told Billboard that he expects “to see more music on all of our channels.” He adds, though, that “a must-carry statute specific to program or title can still come from me” but says this will be the exception rather than the rule. According to Hansen, the channel will not operate a quota system with fixed percentages for local and pan-European content.

Responding to the news, Rick Dobbs, Poly- Gram’s president for continental Europe, says that “dealing with different centers and decision-makers [at MTV] offers new challenges and opportunities.” He adds, “It’s a push-and-pull situation—we might lose some of the impact of having full network exposure, but we win new opportunities to build artists up through different territories.”

Warner Music Europe VP of marketing Mark Foster hopes the move will make MTV “more responsive to local promotion and marketing activities.” He says, “We can still have the pan-European element; we just need to keep the art. That’s our real local people.”

Zomba Records Europe VP Bert Meyer notes, “Our promotion people in the different markets speak the same language as the local music reps. We already have good contacts in Holland and Germany, so we see the decentralization, though, as “at that stage somebody decided to start a pan-European music TV station, but the public said no.”

TRIBUNAL RULING

(Continued from preceding page)

"The whole European organisation is important because we can show that all these responsible people from different backgrounds and experiences have come to the same conclusion.”

BSkyB maintained that the tribunal should be a lump sum based on its share of the U.K. TV market.

The broadcaster also argued that irrelevant comparisons were not relevant, as other societies were dissimilar to PPI and there were no broadcasters comparable with BSkyB.

PPI estimates that a payment of 3% of relevant revenue would bring in approximately 15 million pounds ($24 million) annually.

They added that the decision to “review the commercial future of the small player” was “not a view the commercial market would take.” They added that “a decision to stop the promotion of the small player in the present state” was “not a decision the market would make.”

Zomba Records Europe VP Bert Meyer notes, “Our promotion people in the different markets speak the same language as the local music reps. We already have good contacts in Holland and Germany, so we see the decentralization, though, as “at that stage somebody decided to start a pan-European music TV station, but the public said no.”

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JASRAC TAKES INTERACTIVE LEAD
(Continued from page 65)

ment with the parties concerned on the proposed rate structure in the near future, although it remains to be seen whether all the industry groups involved will accept it.

"Some people say regulations should be drawn up before new media are introduced, but it's impossible. We have to develop the business first," says an executive at a major music publisher here. "(However) JASRAC needs to establish a rate code for interactive media as soon as possible."

The biggest problem with the current situation, according to a source at a Tokyo-based publisher representing foreign repertoire, is that because there is no formal licensing/royalty collection system for interactive media in Japan, international repertoire is being used in such media without the permission of the original publishers.

"It's ironic that for normal video, there's a check-and-balance system in place, but for this interactive media, there isn't," he says.

"No matter how much money they pool [with JASRAC], let's face it, you could just turn around and say you want $1 million for the synch rights."

The source says he is also worried about the possibility that the interactive-media royalty structure, like that for karaoke, may not give foreign copyright owners the right to refuse use of their material.

JASRAC discounts this possibility, saying the eventual agreement will likely be similar to the existing videogram licensing/fee structure.

The interactive-media rate code will not apply to enhanced CDs, to which a mechanical rate of 6%—the same as standard CDs—has been assessed on their audio portion since September.

"This raises the possibility that JASRAC is going to agree to keep the 6% rate across the board, including the enhanced portion," says the publishing source. "The manufacturers are going to fight very hard against paying an additional fee over and above the 6%, because it costs more money to invest in that enhanced portion, and enhanced CDs sell for the same price as normal CDs."

Independent label Avex has led the way among Japanese record companies in this format, using it for almost all its product.

Royalties for music used in game software constitute a separate category and are now calculated according to an interim one-year formula introduced in October 1996, which has been extended until the end of this year pending a final agreement.

JASRAC plans to introduce an Internet royalty rate whereby those using music on the Internet will pay a basic royalty fee plus either a fixed payment or one based on a set rate, depending on whether the Web site is for profit.

Meanwhile, JASRAC has reached a final agreement with the 14 member companies of an association of online karaoke service operators concerning royalty payments. They will be assessed a basic monthly royalty payment, depending on the number of songs in the provider's database and a unit royalty of 10% of the user fee or 1,050 yen ($8.27), whichever is higher.

In a related matter, JASRAC, along with the RIAJ and the Japan Council of Performers' Organizations (Geidankyo), is holding talks with representatives of online karaoke provider Dai-Ichi Koho concerning the company's digital radio service on digital satellite broadcaster Perfect TV. JASRAC's position is that such a service cannot be considered broadcasting in the traditional sense since anyone with digital recording media can make perfect copies of music featured in the station's programming.

ROGER GRIERSON TAKES HELM
(Continued from page 65)
six months ago.

Grierson, who turned 40 this year, set up Green Records in the wake of the punk era and discovered Do Re Mi, New Christa, Beasts Of Bourbon, Lime Spiders, and Allinlets. Helming PolyGram Music Publishing from 1991, he signed crossover successes Dave Graney, Rebecca's Empire, Sidewinder, and Tumbleweed. He continues to handle Cave with Rick Tanaka through 185 Music Management.

"Festival's probably too administration oriented," Grierson suggests, "and some people there are less in the business of selling records and more in the business of releasing them. But Festival is strong in studio distribution, local repertoire, video, and music publishing."

He intends a restructure that will see an expansion of, and a greater synergy between, the sales, marketing, and promotion teams. A closer relationship with News Corp.'s new media and film divisions will be investigated.

"Festival holds a unique position in the Murdoch/News Corp. portfolio, and they are absolutely committed to reinventing it to make it exciting and find its true potential."

HITS OF THE WORLD

Because of a holiday deadline in the U.S., this issue's Hits of the World contains the previous issue's listings for Japan, Germany, France, Australia, Canada, and the Music & Media Eurochart.

www.americanradiohistory.com
AUSTRIA: Reinhard Stranzinger, formerly the guitarist with Hubert von Goisern & the Alpinakten and now simply called as Stranzinger, has released his debut, most-waited solo album, “Our Oda Nix” (All Or Nothing), on BMG Ariola. The first single, “Da Fei Lied Hase” (The Should Grab Em), takes a critical look at a contemporary society in which money and value are placed above all else. The second single is a cover of Bruce Springsteen’s “All Or Nothing At All.” Stepping into the line-up of front man of his five-piece band, Stranzinger sings with a powerful, gravelly voice driven by his blues/rock guitar. Singing in an Austrian dialect, he covers familiar territory with the lyrics of “Rock’n Roll Star” (not the Oasis song) and “Working Class Hero” (not the John Lennon song). On “Voda” he took a stand against right-wing racism and the intimidation of hatred toward foreigners. Currently opening for veteran bluesman John Mayall on his 24-city tour of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, Stranzinger and his band—Clemens Marx (guitar), Christian Schneiter (keyboard), Walter Cikan (bass), and Bernd Kienzer (drums)—are scheduled to headline their own tour in 1998.

ELEANNE WEINSTEIN

TURKEY: For more than a decade, Turkish artists have been looking for a door to international markets, but with little success. Now, an alternative route has opened up with the growth of world/new age music, and one of the first to take advantage of it is composer/arranger/instrumentalist Hasan Cihat Örter with his aptly named album “Reformation” (Sony Music Turkey). A collection of Turkish classical compositions designed to internationalize the sound and appeal of such music, “Reformation” has been finely executed, thoroughly modern arrangements of Ottoman court music from the 18th and 19th centuries. The result is an agreeable set of pieces played on traditional Turkish instruments (kemenche, ney, komuz) as well as on fretless and acoustic guitars, violins, piano, and other more familiar modern instruments, often disappearing into a synthesized rhythm track. The artistry of the arrangements lies largely in their preservation of an authentic feel despite their modern presentation. The album's limited appeal here in Turkey is understandable. Classical purists are showing more interest, at best, while the sound itself does not fit in with the more common styles of arabesque, balkan, and folk. But this is an album for foreigners, and as such it succeeds. “I am a world musician,” Örter says. “This album is intended to catch the world line.”

ADRIAN HIGGS

U.K.: The sound of Britain's burgeoning Asian underground finally joined the mainstream in November with a major performance at the Royal Festival Hall, one of London's most prestigious concert venues. The fusion of Eastern influences and contemporary Western dance beats pioneered by second-generation U.K.-Asian acts has long been tipped as the next big thing in this country (Billboard, March 29), and this was the highest-profile outing yet for such artists as the Asian Dub Foundation and Nitin Sawhney, generating much national coverage. The Asian Dub Foundation, which plays pan-Asian pop, has just signed to the frrl label, and a single, “Nuxalite,” has been receiving airplay in advance of an album due in February. Adding to an atmosphere that made the evening an event rather than a more concert, DJs from the innovative U.K.-Asian label Outcaste mixed breakbeats from the compilation “Unoutcaste Outcaste Beats” in the bar area outside the main hall. “The U.K.-Asian scene is officially no longer underground but a sound whose time has come,” declared David Jones of the promoter Serious after the show.

NEIL WILLIAMSON

DENMARK: With its 1989 album, “No Fuel Left For The Pilgrims,” D.A.D. became the first Danish hard rock band to break through internationally. Now the group is back with its eighth album, “Simpatiko” (EMI-Medley). While its award-winning “Helpyourselfish” album from 1990 featured elements of heavy metal, the new release goes back to the earlier style that won D.A.D. its following. But still rough-edged with the same work and touches of new instrumentation underscore the familiar urgency and wit of the band's lyrics. The first single, “Empty Heads,” has been gaining airplay in several territories, and a concert tour is in the pipeline. Another heavy rocker wielding his guitar ring is Mike Tramp, former lead vocalist for White Lion, who released his first solo album, “Capricorn” (CNR/Mega), in November. The album will be released in the U.S. early next year by an as-yet-unnamed BMG company.

CHARLES FERRO
Sweden’s Magoria Gets Worldwide Exposure On CNN

by Larry LeBLANC

TORONTO—Many music industry figures in Eastern Canada are incredulous about the swift success of the Ennis Sisters, a folk-styled vocal trio from St. John’s, Newfoundland. In mid-October, they recently released their debut album, “Red Is The Rose,” June 25.

Living in the most economically depressed province of Canada, Maureen, Karen (18), and Teresa (16) had less than a handful of people who knew them before recording the album. Recorded and mixed at First City Productions in St. John’s with $30,000 in funds provided by the provincial government, “Red Is The Rose” has sold approximately 6,000 copies, according to Maureen.

Karen’s voice is primarily in St. John’s, a hub of folk music, and her roots musical activity, and brought a significant amount of local media attention. “Many of her songs which have so far been only at the local level,” says Robert Baut, VP of operations for Tidemark Music and Distribution in St. John’s, which distributes the album in Canada. “The real treat [of their success] is they are so young.”

The girls’ father, John, says that he and his wife, Celine, were quite apprehensive at first about whether they would recoup the investment. “When we put the wealth of our girls’ and the management of them, we thought that, perhaps, we’d be keeping them in the basement for a while,” he says. “We knew there was support for the trio, but we didn’t know how much. Radio stations in Newfoundland took it to right away. It hasn’t been unusual for other girls, but only after eight and 10 times a day on such St. John’s-based radio stations as RIXX 103.5, Radio FM, 92.3, the Oakville, VOCM, VOWR, and OE FM (CHOZ).”

“When we put ‘No Change In Me’ on the air,” says Sullivan, “we immediately got an amazing response. They have sold it as a duet, and the trio appeared on the album. ‘Out From St. Leonards,’ chronicling the performances of two musical groups in Canada’s mainline in the 1960s, is connected to the Irish Descendents, who recorded it on their 1968 debut WEA album, ‘Out To The Sea.’”

“I worked hard [on the arrangement] of ‘Out From St. Leonards,’” says MacLauchlan “I thought the lines of [the Irish Descendants’ version] were too quick, so I slowed [the song] down so you could hear the story. It’s [a] 4/4 [Newfoundland] ghost town. I figured I could paint that with our voices. We were told John had just put ‘No Change In Me’ out, but I loved the sound of it. They said ‘You sound so much I want it on the album. [With the arrangement] I tried to capture that lonely feeling of people [living Newfoundland] not to get work, but that there’s still hope here.”

“MAPLE BRIEFS

At MUCHMusic video network, John Jones becomes senior music programmer. Craig Halket, director of music operations, becomes the network’s program manager.
Better Games Bring Bigger Profits

Improved Technology, Lower Prices Boost Biz

BY DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—With the close of 1997, it’s clear that electronic gaming remains one of the hottest and quickest-growing segments of the entertainment industry. As projected by the Interactive Digital Software Asso (ISDA), 1997’s year-end gaming revenue will reach $3.3 billion. That’s $1.6 billion more than the gross in 1996.

ISDA president Doug Lowenstein says this figure is partly due to a bottom-line improvement in technology and that technology should carry over into the new year.

“The new hardware is permitting more creativity in these products, and we’re seeing a consumer interest develop because the quality of the entertainment experiences keeps getting better and better,” he says. “In terms of the overall market, we see no reason not to expect the first quarter of 1998 to continue on an upward trend.”

Critical factors Lowenstein cites for the industry’s optimistic view are a growth in international markets, as well as healthy sales of game-console systems here. With Sony, Sega, and Nintendo all dropping the prices of their premier consoles (PlayStation, Saturn, and N64, respectively) to $100 this year, the installed base has grown steadily. As a result, game developers are finding an ever-increasing audience for their wares.

Anticipated first-party titles for PlayStation include “NBA Shootout ’98” and “Cardinal Syn.” Activision’s “Apocalypse” and 3D “Pitfall!” games for the system will also bow, along with Electronic Art’s “March Madness ’98” (PlayStation, Windows 95). The latter will feature eight women’s basketball teams, as well as 108 men’s teams.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategically placed to bow at the opening of the baseball season, Nintendo’s “Major League Baseball Featuring Ken Griffey Jr.” is on deck for a March 30 arrival. Other major Nintendo titles include “Banjo-Kazooie,” developed by Rare, makers of “Donkey Kong Country” and “Killer Instinct.” There has been some controversy, however, surrounding Sega, the third-largest hardware maker in the home-console industry.

Developers like Gabe Newell have already announced they will no longer create games for the flailing Saturn platform. Amidst this news, speculation has arisen this year that the company may draw down completely from hardware manufacturing and concentrate on developing titles for existing console systems.

Sega VP of communications Lee McEnany scoffs at the suggestion that the company will retreat from the hardware wars.

“We have no intention of going away at all, and any rumors that we are going to work on an advantage” says McEnany. “They forget you’re out there.”

In fact, McEnany says, the company will release fewer—but higher-quality—games for its Saturn in ’98. Two of its biggest first-quarter titles are “Panzer Dragoon Saga” and “ Burning Rangers.”

Both titles feature 3D characters and environments.

(Continued on next page)

Specs’s May Be Ready For Turnaround

Operating Costs Down, Net Loss Up In ’97

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—While Spec’s posted a loss of $9.1 million in the first quarter ended July 31, management has told Billboard that operational changes made last year leave the chain poised for a turnaround in the current fiscal year.

Some aspects of the company’s annual report, just issued, bear that out. For instance, in the opening letter to shareholders, Ann Hoff, president/CEO of the Miami-based chain, reports that the merchant eliminated $2 million in annual operating expenses during the year.

Sales last year were $865.6 million, down 11.6% from the $775.5 million the company generated the previous year. The sales decrease is due to the closing of eight unprofitable stores.

The net loss of $9.1 million, or $1.74 per share, was about double the loss from the previous year of $4.5 million, or 96 cents per share. The loss resulted from lower gross margins due to increased competition and store-closing charges and other write-offs, including a write-off of $1.5 million, which was incurred because during the year Spec’s adopted the Statement of Financial Accounting Standards No. 124, concerning the impairment of long-lived assets, and a restructuring charge of $215,000. Also, during the year, the closure of eight stores cost the company $98,000.

In addition to a net loss, the company showed an operating loss as selling, general, and administrative (SG&A) expenses, which were $28 million, outpaced a gross profit of $22.3 million. However, if $3 million in depreciation and amortization were subtracted from SG&A expenses, were $25 million, which means that the operating loss before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization was $2.7 million, as compared with adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization of $1.1 million last year.

In looking at margins, gross profit margin was 32.2%, down a percentage point from 1996’s margin. Meanwhile, SG&A, on an adjusted basis, was 36.5% of revenue this year, up four percentage points from 2.5% last year.

The company finished the year with $4.1 million in working capital, which marks the second yearly decline. At the end of fiscal 1996, working capital was $10.8 million, and the previous year it was $16.7 million.

The company has a $15 million secured revolving-credit agreement, with inventory serving as collateral. The total amount available for borrowings is 60% of eligible inventory or $15 million, whichever is less. At the end of fiscal 1996, Spec’s had drawn down $6.7 million. At year’s end, the company had available $338,000 under the revolver agreement. Cash on hand was $55,000, down from the $406,000 the company had at the end of fiscal 1996, according to the company’s 10-K filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The revolving-credit agreement was due to expire in May 1998, but the company obtained an extension to Aug. 1, and the lender waived any

(Continued on next page)
BETTER GAMES BRING BIGGER PROFITS
(Continued from preceding page)

Meanwhile, Sega is hard at work on a new system whose release date is not known yet.

While fierce competition between both hardware and software developers continues to produce casualties—especially in the home-computer gaming world—it has also resulted in a bevvy of impressive products.

GRAPHIC IMPROVEMENTS

Intel, which at the start of 1996 helped make PC gaming more than an office diversion with its P55C processor, is now planning a news story to game developers in August. While the P55C increased the audio and visual quality of games, Intel’s new AGP technology speeds up the flow of graphics. In the first quarter, consumers will begin to see a wider selection of software that takes the advantage of the new chip set.

Paygosky’s “G-Police” PC CD-ROM, which is expected by year end to help showcase AGP will be bundled with computer hardware in the near year.

More traditional PC CD-ROMs from the game-maker include “Shadow Master,” “Wings Of Destiny,” and “Newman Haaf Racing.”

Meanwhile, GT Interactive, which recently announced its pending acquisition of Microprose, enters 1996 as one of the industry’s behemoths. In the first quarter, Microprose will publish “Ultimate Race,” developed by Rallytime Inc.

At the same time, Activision will bow Windows-compatible versions of “Battlezone” and “Sin.”

ONLINE GAMES

Other Win 95 titles include “Starcraft” from Blizzard, which built it’s reputation with such popular games as “Diablo” and “Warcraft II,” and the Nintendo well-known Qade designer John Romero, will release “Daikatana.”

Children can look forward to the hybrid Mac/Win 95 CD-ROM “Disney Interactive Presents Hades” which will drop in the first quarter.

The growing popularity of multimedia online games also bodes well for software companies. Headland Digital Media will release two such games in the first quarter. Its “Net War” and “Chessmaster Live” games can be downloaded over the Internet at http://www.netwar.com and http://www.cheesemaster.com, respectively, or on Win 96-compatible CD-ROMs at stores.

Other titles, such as Fox Interactive’s CD-ROM “The X-Files: Unrestricted Access,” also tap into the Internet. Users of this Win 95 and Macintosh-compatible title can purchase exclusive World Wide Web browser that offers new clues in Scully and Mulder’s most dramatic cases.

A Virgin Megastore. Richard Branson, chairman of Virgin Entertainment Group/V2 Records, appeared at the November opening of the Virgin Megastore at the Downtown Disney development in Anaheim, Calif. Pictured, from left are, Richard Branson, BMG Distribution president Pete Jones, and BMG Atlanta branch manager Tom O’Flynn. BMG distributes V2 product.

SPECS MAY BE READY FOR TURNDOWN
(Continued from preceding page)

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

DISTRIBUTION. Jamon Green is appointed director of national rock music sales at Universal Music and Video Distribution in Los Angeles. He was West Coast regional sales/marketing manager at Motown Records.

CHILDREN’S. Howard Nelson is appointed management/integrated marketing at Sony Wonder/SMV in Santa Monica, Calif. He was director of advertising at the Disney Channel Magazine.

MUSIC VIDEO. Kat Malot is named head of creative services and video production at V2 Records in New York.

She was director of video production at Island Records.

Nancy Grewal, based in Chicago, Gerald Casale, based in Los Angeles, and Paul Morgans, based in London, are named directors at Crash Music Video. They were, respectively, an independent director, a director at Commodation Pictures, and a director at Atlas Films.

MANUFACTURING. Lori L. Beaudoin is named president at Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab in Sebastopol, Calif. She was executive VP/FMG.

ASSOCIATIONS. Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Assn., in Arlington, Va., names Todd Thibodeaux VP. He was senior economist of market research at the Electronic Industries Assn.

RELATED FIELDS. Thomas R. Ryan was promoted to VP of administrative and operations at Sony Music Studios in New York. He was senior director of financial planning at Sony Music.

THE RECORDING INDUSTRY ASSN. OF AMERICA (RIAA) says that Chicago's Cook County Police Department seized 1,186 bootleg CDs in November from Front Row CDs, a Chicago retailer. The recordings were advertised online at a Midwest Wide Web site and allegedly sold over the Internet and through appointment-only visits to the store. The RIAA says that “a number of discs were recorded to recordable CD media.”

MOVIE GALLERY, a video retailer, reports a net loss of $1.8 million in the first fiscal quarter, which ended Oct. 5, compared with a loss of $4.5 million in the same period last year. Revenue increased to $62.5 million from $61.7 million. The Dothan, Ala.-based chain says that sales from stores open at least a year rose 2% for the first same-store sales gain since the first quarter of 1996. The company owns and operates 809 stores and franchises 106.

TRIMARK HOLDINGS, an independent film and home video company, posts a net loss of $659,000 in the first fiscal quarter. Because of higher marketing costs and severance payments for film acquisitions and distribution, in the same period last year, the company had a profit of $19,000. Revenue increased 2.4% to $14.5 million.

BLOWOUT ENTERTAINMENT, operator of video departments within mass-merchant and supermarket chains, says it narrowed its third-quarter loss to $67,009 from $1.7 million a year ago. Revenue fell 2.2% to $7.7 million. Sales from locations open at least a year declined 2.9% in the quarter, which ended Sept. 30.

BORDERS GROUP says that sales from Borders Bookes & Music superstores increased 9.4% in October, to $69 million in the third fiscal quarter, which ended Oct. 26. Sales from superstores open more than a year rose 7.3%. The company has announced that its Internet commerce site, Borders.com, will launch in early January. Overall, the retailer reports net income of $400,000 on $477.3 million in total sales, compared with a net loss of $2.7 million on $415.3 million in sales a year ago.
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DAILY MUSIC UPDATE

Spice Girls Share Their 'Spiceworld'

The Spice Girls launched their second album, "Spiceworld," to press in Granada, Spain, last night. The album will be released worldwide Nov. 3. first single "Spice Up Your Life" bows next week. Click here for the full story.

Inside News...

• New Hermes Set Among Exam Results
• Hasty Grass Takes Ontario's Top Tour
• Party Release: Roxette: For Pople's Sake

Also today:

• View music news from years past at This Day in Music.
• Get every latest music industry news with Billboard Bulletin.

www.americanradiohistory.com
Back on target: Retail Track has been busy the past month following the Camelot Music Chapter 11 situation, among other things, and kind of took its eye off the ball in the other big Chapter 11 case occupying the credit community, Alliance Entertainment. I apologize to my friends at Alliance for neglecting you.

To bring things up to date: The Alliance management team has just delivered its business plan to its board of directors, which was supposed to have voted on it and distributed it to creditors by the time this issue of Billboard hits the street. But at the time of this writing, neither has occurred.

Among the things under way as a result of either the business plan or other factors is the closure of the New York headquarters, with the remaining staff moving into the New York space that had housed Independent National Distributors Inc. (IND). Also, Tim Dahlorp, executive VPF/CPA, has left the company. No word yet on his replacement.

The business plan was to have been voted on and distributed to creditors by Nov. 3. On Oct. 30, Alliance sought a 139-day extension of the exclusivity period for filing a plan of reorganization, which would be built around the business plan. But on Nov. 4, the six major music manufacturers filed an objection to the court, saying that the debtor had not earned the right to seek such an extension. Noting that the business plan was late, the court filing also said the debtor must demonstrate leadership by aggressively reducing existing excessive executive salaries, something which, in the majors’ view, has yet to be done. They suggested that the court grant a 79-day extension on exclusivity, until Jan. 31, 1998.

In pushing for salary reductions at Alliance, executives at the majors have been asking for Al Teller, Alliance’s chairman, to leave the company, sources say. Teller is widely regarded as one of the leading music industry executives, but he carries a high salary, in the majors’ view, even though it was reduced when the company filed for Chapter 11. Moreover, they argue that if Alliance survives Chapter 11, it will probably be a purely one-stop operation, with its Castle Communications and Concord Jazz labels likely to be sold off. While Teller has had distribution operations reporting to him in the past, he is not considered an expert.

But sources familiar with the Alliance camp say that the majors have never brought up the topic of Teller leaving Alliance.

Sources suggest that the business plan also includes the closure of the Santa Fe Springs facility, something which has already been reported by another trade. This is one of the things that the board of directors has to vote on. Sources say that if the Santa Fe Springs facility is shut down, the Alliance One Stop Group would likely keep a sales office in California, maybe as part of an expanded Los Angeles facility. In addition to the Santa Fe Springs facility and the Coral Springs, Fla., warehouse, which probably will be the main distribution center for the one-stop operation, Alliance has long maintained a one-stop in Los Angeles that enjoys a thriving will-call business.

That facility is the inheritor of the old City One-Stop business, which

(Continued on page 76)
AFIM Opens Indie Awards To Nonmembers; Now’s The Time To Get Pumped For Punk

Indie Awards Open Up: In a move that probably will be cheered by a number of independent labels, the Assn. for Independent Music (AFIM) has opened its annual Indie Awards to all independent recordings.

This broadening of the field will probably eliminate what has been an ongoing bone of contention among nonmembers of the indie organization: In years past, the Indie Awards were granted solely to AFIM members, leading outsiders to grouse privately that the trade group was playing with a stacked deck.

However, the now, more level playing field does come with a price to companies that choose not to plunk down their membership fees: A $25-per-title fee will be charged for participation by nonmember label.

Submissions for the 1998 Indie Awards will be open through the end of this year. Questions about the submission process should be addressed to AFIM director of special projects Mary Neumann at 518-861-7057. Neumann is also looking for 450 judges for the awards; call her as soon as possible if you’re interested.

The winners will be announced at the annual awards banquet during the trade group’s ’98 convention, to be held May 13-17 at the Adams Mark Hotel in Denver.

D.N.A Staffs UP: Pip Smith, VP of sales at Distribution North America (DNA), rang up Declarations of Independents to let us know that the Woodland, Calif.-based distributor has hired Gordon Prince as its field marketing director.

Prince, formerly with the indie distributor Motor City in Detroit, will be charged with overseeing DNA’s newly hired field marketing reps. “We thought it would be disastrous to hire all these people and have them run around without a point person,” says Smith, who adds that the hiring of Prince will free him up to concentrate on DNA’s sales efforts.

The reps are now in place in Chicago, San Francisco, New York, Nashville, Baltimore/Washington, D.C., Minneapolis, Seattle, and New Orleans, and Smith says the company is looking for a staffer to handle the Los Angeles territory. The reps will be working all types of accounts in their territories—indie stores, mall-based outlets, Beat Buys, and Borders included.

Calling All Punks: We’ve been dipping heavily into an old-school punk bug lately, thanks to major-label compilations devoted to X and the Replacements. And now a couple of indie-label packages—one out now, one imminent—are further enriching the punk in us all.

Long Beach, Calif.-based Sympathy for the Record Industry has just released “Early Warning,” a handsome two-CD collection of previously unissued material by the Gun Club. The great, chaotic L.A. blues-punk combo, which was led by the late Jeffrey Lee Pierce, who died last year (Billboard, April 20, 1996), has five early studio recordings and a live show caught in Buf- falo, N.Y., in the early ’80s; the collection also includes a full CD of 16 solo performances by Pierce.

Sympathy’s owner, Long Gone John, has gone the deluxe route with this package. In addition to a regular brilliant-box version (containing a 20-page booklet with notes by ex-Gun Club guitarist Ward Dot- son and drummer Terry Graham), the label has released the compilation in a leather-bound edition of 1,500. It’s nice to see the label getting its due posthumously.

In January, T.O.N. Records in L.A. will issue the charmingly titled “Beer, Wine & Good Food,” a collection of live material recorded at the fabled Hollywood, Calif., club Raji’s during the ’80s.

Raji’s was probably the last great punk dive in L.A. Located on Hollywood Boulevard next door to a decidedly down-at-the-heels hotel, the club’s subterranean stage played host to the city’s best known punk acts, as well as such out-of-towners as Nirvana, in its heyday. It was even immortalized in Elmore Leonard’s novel “Get Shorty.” Seedy and wonderful, Raji’s went the way of all flesh when the building housing it was knocked down following the 1994 L.A. earthquake.

T.O.N., which is run by Raji’s onetime proprietor Dobbs, has unearthed live recordings cut at the club by such L.A. worthies as the DREAM Syndicate, Thelonious Monster, the Leonards, the Hangmen, the Keats, and the Rhythm Pigs). Ah, sounds like old times . . .

Flag Waving: That suave cat on the cover of the new issue of L.A.’s Lounge magazine is none other than Joey Altruda, who has become the standard bearer for Cocktail Nation in the City of Angels the last couple of years.

Altruda, who has been playing in L.A. since the ’80s as leader of such bands as Tupelo Chain Sex and the ska-oriented Jump With Joey, says of his current lounge-scene profile and the music that fuels it, “Something finally came around that paid off to me, and I don’t think it’s going to go away. Some of it’s a trend, but there’s a substance to the music.”

Upright bassist Altruda shows off his formidable chops on his jazz-ed up Will Records album, “Kingston Cocktail,” which makes lounge swing with hopping Jamaican ska beats and Afro-Cuban rhythms.

He’s joined on the all-instrumental record by some top-flight allieds. Ernest Ranglin, the fabulous ska guitarist, toured Japan four years ago with Altruda’s group (which also included Jamaican singer Lau- rel Aitkin and saxophonist Roland Alphonso of the Skatalites). Tenor sax ace and veteran session man par excellence Plas Johnson appeared on Altruda’s 1995 Will album, “Cocktails With Joey.” And Ham- mond B-3 organ monster Red Young is a veteran of his own 10-piece swing band, Red & the Red Hots.

(Continued on next page)
INDEPENDENTS
(Continued from preceding page)

Describing his current sound, Altruda says, “It’s kind of like Jamaican lounge music. If there was such a thing, it’d sound like this.”

Altruda hasn’t been restricting his activities to nightclubs and recording studios. In August, the L.A. Chamber Ballet’s choreographer, Raiford Rogers, used an original suite as the basis for the dance evening “Cocktails With Joey,” which won a rave from the Los Angeles Times. “We plan on getting the ballet performed again next year, as well as doing it in New York and abroad,” says Altruda.

He has also been extremely active in film music. Earlier this year, Rykodie released his performances of Daniel Licht’s score for “The Winner.” (The Salem, Mass., label also reissued Jump With Joey’s three albums.) He also had a track in the David Duchovny vehicle “Playing God” and has penned what he describes as 10 “easy listening” songs for the forthcoming Lisa Kudrow/Parker Posey feature “Clockwatchers.” Will plans to release the soundtrack album for the latter film next spring.

Altruda, whose involvement with lounge music transcends mere faddishness, says that the health of the genre bodes well for acceptance of his sophisticated music. “I find now there’s bins in record shops that say ‘Lounge Music,’” and it makes my records easy to buy, rather than just throwing it in the rock bin or sticking it in the jazz section,” he says.

RETAIL TRACK
(Continued from page 74)

was bought by Abbey Road, which in turn was bought by Alliance. But through the ownership changes, Sam Ginsburg, GM of Abbey Road’s L.A. branch, has run herd over the operation. Last time I checked, that operation was doing about $8 million annually.

An Alliance filing to the bankruptcy court breaks out revenues to a degree, but not for the Los Angeles operation. In the month ending Sept. 30, Alliance Entertainment lost $51.5 million on sales of $23.8 million, according to the documents. A large portion of the loss was attributed to an asset impairment charge of $42.1 million.

Gross profit was $310,000, while selling, general, and administrative expenses were $6.7 million, which means that the company had an operating loss of about $6.4 million.

Regarding sales by division, the Alliance One Stop Group accounted for the bulk of sales, with $21.8 million, while One Way Records had sales of $1 million, with the remainder coming from sales at INDI and Concord Jazz.

At the end of September, the company had $85 million in cash, while inventory totaled $165.3 million.

CONSTRUCTION HAS begun on the new Valley Record Distributors distribution facility. According to a press release, the new facility will measure 300,000 square feet and be

(Continued on next page)
Belles' Ringing: With the recent Walt Disney Records release of the soundtrack to "Beauty And The Beast: The Enchanted Christmas," Broadway luminary Paige O'Hara returns to her memorable role as Belle.

The soundtrack to "The Enchanted Christmas," Disney's latest direct-to-video feature, includes 10 newly recorded songs from the film, along with eight traditional Christmas carols.

Among those reprise their "Beauty And The Beast" roles in "The Enchanted Christmas" are Angela Lansbury (Mrs. Patz), Jerry Orbach (Lumiere), and David Ogden Stiers (Cogsworth). New to the "Beauty And The Beast" kingdom are Tim Curry as the villainous pipe organ, Porthos, and Bernadette Peters as the Christmas tree angel, Angelique.

The story is told in flashbacks, with the main body of the action set before the enchanted household objects turned back into people.

The five new songs were penned by Rachel Portman (a 1996 Academy Award-winning winner for her score to "Emma") and Don Black (who collaborated with Andrew Lloyd Webber on "Sunset Boulevard" and other works). Holiday carols include "We Wish You A Merry Christmas," "Joy To The World," and "Silent Night." Also included on the soundtrack is an end credits duet by Peabo Bryson and Roberta Flack, "As Long As There's Christmas," the film version sung by Belle (O'Hara) and Angelique (Peters).

Probably the most challenging aspect of singing Belle this time out was "keeping her sexy young voice while hitting high Ds—I had to avoid doing it like Evita," says O'Hara with a laugh.

"Rachel wrote in a wiser vocal range than [Beauty And The Beast'] composer], Alan Menken did," O'Hara, in a phone call from Las Vegas, where she has been headlining the Flamingo Hilton in "The Great Radio City Music Hall Spectacular Starring The Rockettes," says she is particularly pleased with the way the Christmass songs came out. Producer Paul Schwartz, she says, "really tried to stay true to the [19th century] time period, as far as arrangements. We used a lot of harp, cello, and violin. Nothing electronic here—we wanted it to sound like an old-fashioned Christmas calendar."

Her favorite tracks include "What Child Is This," "The First Noel," and "Do You Hear What I Hear?" "O Christmas Tree," O'Hara notes, is "done a cappella with four male singers in barbershop-quartet harmony. It sounds like they could be carving outside your front door."

It's A Froggy's Life: One of the more impressive audio debuts Child's Play has come across recently is a country-flavored book-and-CD series called "Froggy's Country Storybook," manufactured by Virginia Records of Mamaroneck, N.Y. The series has three major elements, says label president-the Messina:"Classic children's stories which have been countrified, narration by country music stars, and excerpts from country hits punctuating part of the story line."

The first two thoroughly engaging releases are "Goldlocks And The Three Bears," narrated by Pam Tillis, and "Jack And The Beanstalk," narrated by Bryan White.

Each package includes a photo of the artist with series mascot Froggy and a full-color storybook—not a word-for-word read-along, notes Messina, but an encapsulation of the story. "We're not trying to teach kids to read here—but this is purely entertaining," he says.

Entertaining it most assuredly is, filled with humor and down-home touches ("Goldilocks," for instance, the feisty heroine fools not only with the Three Bears' porridge but also with their radio, which happens to be playing "Achy Breaky Heart"). The song excerpts fit the stories so neatly that the unintended could be forgiven for thinking they'd been written for the soundtracks. In fact, all are from hits—originally recorded by the likes of Alabama, Faith Hill, Merle Haggard, the Gatlin Brothers, and Donna Fargo, among others.

"Our staff goes through hundreds of country songs to find ones that fit the stories," says Messina. All have been rerecorded by studio musicians dubbed the Froggy's Country Storybook Players.

Handleman is rackingjobbing "Froggy's Country Storybook" product in a number of mass-merchant chains, including Hills, Meijer, Shopko, and Venture. "We're part of Handleman's Breaks programs," says Messina, "which means we're in listening posts in 1,000 Kmart stores."

Independent wholesaler Silo Music of Waterbury, Vt., is distributing the line to toy and children's stores, and M.S. Distributing is handling record stores. Suggested retail price for each package is $12.88.

"The great thing about product like this is that it has no shelf life," says Messina, who notes that "Froggy's Country Storybooks" are selling not only in country markets but also in areas where country typically does not sell all that strongly.

Messina says Virginia Records "anticipates a minimum of 10 "Froggy's Country Storybook" releases," with the next two titles to be "The Tortoise And The Hare" and "The Emperor's New Clothes," Canadian country artist Terry Clark has signed on to do "The Ugly Duckling." Messina adds that special titles encompassing holidays and lullabies are also in the offing.

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RETAIL TRACK (Continued from preceding page)

Located in Louisville, Ky. That facility, which will be staffed with 300 employees, is slated to be fully operational by June 1998. It will hold about 200,000 audio titles and anywhere from 20,000 to 40,000 video titles.

The new warehouse became necessary with Valley's acquisition of Baby Looney Tunes, which has been joined with Val-Pepco into Star and Valley combined have annual revenues of about $900 million, according to the release.

Just as I was getting ready to head out for vacation, I found a fax from In One Ear, a new record store in Salem, Mass. That store is owned by the leadership of Larry Cohen, who you might remember was most recently at Leesche and, before that, at Borders Books & Music.

The press release says that the store will have 150,000 music titles and will feature CD Information Stations, which will allow customers to sample music as well as provide information about the historical content of the album being sampled.

Making Tracks: Steve Masaro, formerly a regional credit manager with BMG Distribution, has joined CNA Credit Insurance, in the Monmouth Junction, N.J. office as credit manager-underwriter.

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### Merchants & Marketing

**WEB TO PUSH HOLIDAY VID MARKETING**

(Continued from page 71)

Helped by the Web, Warner Home Video and Columbia Tri-Star are undertaking similar promotions. Add-on shelves for CD soundtracks will "slot" into cassette displays for Warner’s "Batman & Robin" and Columbia’s "Men In Black." For Warner, it’s a rationally老实的 younger of the earlier Internet version of "Music From And Inspired By The ‘Batman & Robin’ Motion Picture," featured on the Prodigy network when the movie premiered (Billboard, July 12).

Virtually every major sell-through campaign, starting with Universal Studio’s "Liar, Liar" in late September through Columbia’s "My Best Friend’s Wedding," due Dec. 9, has a promotional partner, with links to these companies’ Web sites. Disney still leads the way, though, and it’s not resting on its laurels, observers note.

The studio’s disguise—already the most visited family Internet site—got a complete revamping, says promotions VP Max Goldberg. "We’re able to make it more interactive, do more with all the elements and encourage our visitors to spend more time," he says.

"For ‘Beauty And The Beast’, the ‘Jungle Book’, and ‘Sleeping Beauty’ we developed more in-depth sites for games with more levels of difficulty and many new downloads. We’re using the same logic and strategy for the direct-to-video ‘Beauty And The Beast: The Enchanted Christmas.’"

Disney lets kids and parents create their own holiday cards with characters from the video, write messages, print them, and mail the greetings. Edging further into home entertainment, "How Belle Throws A Holiday Party" is great for moms looking for new ideas," says Goldberg. "We are looking to capture the spirit of the story on the Web site."

In stores Nov. 1 at $26.99 suggested list, “Enchanted Christmas” is supported by Lever 2000 with a $5 mail-in rebate, backed by a 50 million-free-standing insert in Nov. 9 newspapers. There’s also a link to the Lego Web site. Mattel has two in-park coupons worth $2 and $3 off selected “Beauty And The Beast” merchandise, and Disney will offer a set of four collectible snow domes.

"George Of The Jungle," which hits stores Nov. 2 at $24.99 suggested list, is backed with an insert for good for two free months (retail value $12)

### Billboard Top Pop Catalog Albums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Last Week</th>
<th>This Week</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>KENNY G</td>
<td>MIRACLES — THE HOLIDAY ALBUM</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SOUNDTACK</td>
<td>THE LITTLE MERMAID</td>
<td>15 (2)</td>
<td>2 (0)</td>
<td>-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>METALLICA</td>
<td>LIVE A THRILL</td>
<td>17 (1)</td>
<td>3 (2)</td>
<td>+13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>GLAMOUR &amp; LEATHERS</td>
<td>TONGUE &amp; CHEEK</td>
<td>32 (4)</td>
<td>4 (0)</td>
<td>-28</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>YOUNG COUNTRY</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS IN THE AIR</td>
<td>37 (5)</td>
<td>4 (0)</td>
<td>-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SOUNDTACK</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS ON BROADWAY</td>
<td>42 (2)</td>
<td>5 (0)</td>
<td>-37</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>MARY J BLIGE</td>
<td>MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU</td>
<td>44 (3)</td>
<td>6 (0)</td>
<td>-38</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SOUNDTACK</td>
<td>THE HOLIDAY ALBUM</td>
<td>46 (4)</td>
<td>7 (0)</td>
<td>-39</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>LINDSEY STIRLING</td>
<td>WINTER'S LINGER</td>
<td>48 (5)</td>
<td>8 (0)</td>
<td>-40</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>JUDY GARLAND</td>
<td>THE GREATEST HITS COLLECTION</td>
<td>50 (6)</td>
<td>9 (0)</td>
<td>-41</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>JIMMY DURANTE</td>
<td>THE VERY GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>51 (7)</td>
<td>10 (0)</td>
<td>-42</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>THE MOODS</td>
<td>THE BEST OF THE MOODS</td>
<td>52 (8)</td>
<td>11 (0)</td>
<td>-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>SHERIE RYNNE &amp; ALEX RYAN</td>
<td>FROM A DISTANCE</td>
<td>53 (9)</td>
<td>12 (0)</td>
<td>-44</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>JAMES BROWN &amp; THE JAMES BROWN BAND</td>
<td>THE JAMES BROWN BAND ALBUM</td>
<td>55 (10)</td>
<td>13 (0)</td>
<td>-45</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>JIMMY DURANTE</td>
<td>THE GREATEST HITS</td>
<td>56 (11)</td>
<td>14 (0)</td>
<td>-46</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>CAROLINE</td>
<td>THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>57 (12)</td>
<td>15 (0)</td>
<td>-47</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>THE BEATLES</td>
<td>THE BEATLES FOR REAL</td>
<td>58 (13)</td>
<td>16 (0)</td>
<td>-48</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>BREEZY</td>
<td>MERRY CHRISTMAS</td>
<td>59 (14)</td>
<td>17 (0)</td>
<td>-49</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>MAX WELL</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS SONGS FROM THE HEART</td>
<td>60 (15)</td>
<td>18 (0)</td>
<td>-50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Catalog albums are 2-year-old titles that have failes below No. 100 on The Billboard 200 or holdovers of hit albums. Total Chart Weeks column reflects combined weeks title has spent on The Billboard 200 and Top Pop Catalog Albums. Recording Holiday Assay. Of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 units. RIAA certification for sales of 1 million units, with multi-platinum sellers indicated by a numeral following the symbol * Asterisk indicates vinyl LP is available. Most tape prices, and CD prices for BMG and VISA, tapes are suggested tapes. Tape prices marked CD, and at other CD prices, are equivalent prices, which are projected from wholesale prices. ** Indicate paid or present Heatseeker title. © 1997, Billboard/SoundScan, Inc.
U.K. Gov't Proposes Easing Vid Rules
Minister Looks To Lessening Bureaucracy

BY SAM ANDREWS

LONDON—Keen to attach the label “new” to any video sales, the British Labour government can add the adjective to this relationship with the country's video industry, according to its own minister, Chris Smith. This statement is echoed in the current annual meeting of the British Video Assn. (BVA), which was held in London last week. The minister’s comments were made in response to a question from a member of the video industry. Smith said, “In 1996, when we first examined the impact of video piracy, we found that the BVA had already done its part. Now, we are discussing the possibility of merging the BVA with the BPI (the British Phonographic Industry) to create a single body that would be better able to deal with the problem.”

The minister’s comments were well received by the industry, which is currently facing a surge in piracy. Smith said, “We are working with the BVA to come up with a plan that will ensure that the industry can continue to thrive.”

And what could be hotter than sun, sand, and the world's sexiest women? Playboy's Sex on the Beach. Just in time to give your customers a red-hot winter vacation... while you enjoy sales that sizzle!

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BILBOARD DECEMBER 6, 1997

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www.americanradiohistory.com
HBO Debuts ‘Tracey’ On Tape; A Paramount Poll

HBO TAKES ON TRACEY: Zany British comedian Tracey Ullman is headed to video stores Jan. 27 with a two-disc collection of episodes from her HBO series “Tracey Takes On….” Each cassette contains three episodes from the show, which features Ullman playing 10 characters, including Chic, a male taxi cab driver, doughnut shop owner Mrs. Noh, Nang Nang, make-up artist Ruby Romaine, and homemaker Fern Rosenthal. Each episode revolves around the characters’ views on sex, romance, fantasy, and the like. Suggested list is $19.98.

“Tracey” enters its third season in January. HBO Home Video has 25 half-hours prepped for video and will add another 10 when the season ends.

“The target audience for the show is a hybrid of ‘Ab Fab’ and British comedy fandom,” says HBO VP of marketing Cynthia Rhein. “One of the great things about Tracey is that she’s incredibly well known, but people haven’t had their fill of her. HBO has an opportunity to score big with the video since a relatively small portion of VCR owners also subscribe to cable services. Even if every HBO subscriber tuned into the show each week, that would be only one out of every five VCR households,” she adds.

BBC Video’s success with the British TV comedies “Ab Fab” and “Beeb” proves that the genre has found an audience state-side. Armed with these marketing hooks, Rhein says “Tracey” is her top priority for January. As part of the marketing effort, HBO has landed Virgin Atlantic Airlines for consumer sweepstakes and a voucher program.

Inside each cassette, consumers will find a coupon good toward as much as $30 off a Virgin flight, depending on destination and ticket price. The airline will give away a free trip to London, consumers can enter to win through a form packed in the cassette or at retail. “Everything about Virgin was perfect for the product,” says Rhein. “Choosing it was a no-brainer.”

HBO has also signed up Flowers USA. The chain will include a coupon worth a 15% discount off any flower order. Finally, Ullman will have a new book based on the series in January from Hyperion. HBO will rebate $5 to consumers who purchase both it and the video.

In January, Ullman will be hitting the talk-show circuit to plug the video and book and plans to make a few retail and distributor stops. HBO expects to release four additional titles by the end of 1998.

and a boxed set next Christmas. A “Tracey” direct-to-video is also in the planning stages.

MILLENIUM COUNCIL: Paramount Home Video has come up with a catalog promotion that will take retailers into the 21st century.

In January, the studio launches a three-month consumer promotion on its World Wide Web site, asking video retailers to select their top 20 Paramount movies. From these stores will come “Paramount Pictures’ Millennium Collection.”

People magazine readers will also be able to participate in the poll through the publication’s ongoing “Readers Panel.”

Each of the titles selected by consumers for the collection will feature special packaging. Paramount will offer a selection of gift packs, including a limited edition of all 20. Gift packs containing 10 and three titles will also be available, as will special pricing for individual titles.

A book created for the collection will give the historical background of each movie. It’s to be included in the 10- and 20-title sets. The street date for the “Millennium Collection” is next October.

MORE WEB SITE PROMOS: Columbia TriStar Home Video will use “Men In Black” (MIB) to help promote its catalog titles on its Web site.

The site has been completely reconfigured to fit the “MIB” theme and take advantage of its video release Nov. 28. The title is expected to be the biggest seller of the fourth quarter.

Once at the site, visitors click on various “MIB” icons to get information on other Web sites, including those of Yahoo!, Excite, E! On-Line, and MovieLine.

WONDERFUL SALES: It seems hard to believe that everyone doesn’t already own a copy of “It’s A Wonderful Life,” but Republic Entertainment reports it has shipped another 600,000 units for the holidays.

The title comes in a variety of editions, including a $14.98 “classic,” a $19.98 50th anniversary, a $29.98 deluxe, and a $49.98 laserdisc.
EXPLOSIVE STAR ACTION!

From the Producers of Friday comes the New-to-Sell-Through hit DANGEROUS GROUND starring ICE CUBE and ELIZABETH HURLEY.

DANGEROUS GROUND
A searing action thriller about an ex-freedom fighter who risks everything to save his brother, starring Ice Cube (Friday, Anaconda), Elizabeth Hurley (Austin Powers, Passenger 57), Ving Rhames (Con Air, Mission Impossible).
Rated R. Approx. 96 min., VHS# N4436V.
DUNGEON
Starring Pierce Brosnan, Patrick Stewart, Alexandra Paul (Spy Hard), Pierce Brosnan is a U.S. spy who teams up with Star Trek's Patrick Stewart (Conspiracy Theory) in a daring Alistair MacLean adventure.
Rated R. Approx. 99 min., VHS# N4306V.
DETONATOR II: NIGHT WATCH*
Pierce Brosnan is a U.S. spy who teams up with Alexandra Paul (Spy Hard) in an edge-of-your-seat thriller.
Rated R. Approx. 99 min., VHS# N4306V.
NEVER SAY DIE**
Frank Zagarino is an ex-Marine who is fighting for his life in this explosive action thriller.
Rated R. Approx. 99 min., VHS# N4014V.
LIVE WIRE: HUMAN TIMEBOMB
Bryan Genesse stars in this powerful action film with phenomenal stunts and mind-blowing special effects.
Rated R. Approx. 98 min., VHS# N4380V.
EXCESSIVE FORCE
Thomas Ian Griffith (John Carpenter's Vampires) and Lance Henriksen ("Millennium" TV Series) star in this action thriller about a renegade cop who'll do whatever it takes to get the job done.
Rated R. Approx. 87 min., VHS# N4056V.
EXCESSIVE FORCE II: FORCE ON FORCE
Stacie Randall is the only agent who can eliminate a squad of assassins in this hard-hitting sequel to the original action thriller.
Rated R. Approx. 86 min., VHS# N4037V.
Street Date: 2/3/98

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IBG '98 brings you more than 16,000 listings including record labels, music publishers, wholesalers and distributors, manufacturers, service and supply companies, home video companies, public relations firms, schools, entertainment attorneys, tape duplicators, compact disc plants, and an audio books section that has been doubled in size. Plus, you'll find more than 50 pages of informative ads, and an entire section of manufacturing specification charts on blank tape.

With IBG '98, you will be able to:
- Reach retail record buyers, distributors and importers/exporters in 50 countries worldwide.
- Find the telephone number, fax, E-Mail addresses and websites of companies throughout the world.
- Get specifications on blank media such as blank tapes and diskettes.
- Find manufacturers of jewel boxes and other service and supply organizations.
- Locate a publisher who may have interest in your catalog and/or specific copy-

This is the kind of information that can put you at the top of the industry. And, best of all, it costs just $129 (plus shipping/handling), which is practically nothing when compared to the staggering cost of gathering this information on your own—particularly when you consider that the guide is constantly being updated by our research teams in both the U.S. and Europe.

FOR SERVICE CALL (800) 344-7119. Outside the U.S. (908) 363-4156.

Or fax order to (908) 363-0338.

If interested, send check/money order for $129 plus $6 S&H ($13 for international orders) with this ad to: Billboard Directories, P.O. Box 2016, Lakewood, NJ 08701. Please add appropriate sales tax in NY, NJ, PA, CA, TN, MA, IL & DC. Orders payable in U.S. funds only. All sales are final.

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Top Video Rentals

**COMPILED FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE RENTAL REPORTS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE (Rating)</th>
<th>Imprint Distributing Label, Catalog Number</th>
<th>Principal Performers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE FIFTH ELEMENT</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 82403</td>
<td>Will Smith Gary Oldman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 82090</td>
<td>Jeff Goldblum Richard Attenborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTIN POWERS IN CONTRACO TIME</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>New Line Home Video Warner Home video 73965</td>
<td>Michael Myers Elizabeth Hurley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIAR LIAR</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 83330</td>
<td>Jamie Kennedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROSS POINT BLANK</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Hollywood Pictures Home Video Buena Vista Home Video 10540</td>
<td>John Cusack Mimi Rogers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BATMAN &amp; ROBIN</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 16500</td>
<td>George Clooney Arnold Schwarzenegger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BREAKDOWN</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video 334543</td>
<td>Kurt Russell Kathryn Gifford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACEOFF</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video 330553</td>
<td>John Travolta Nicolas Cage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ROMY &amp; MICHELE'S HIGH SCHOOL REUNION</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Touchstone Home Video Buena Vista Home Video 10483</td>
<td>Mare Winnington Lea Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADDICTED TO LOVE</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 13522</td>
<td>Meg Ryan Matthew Broderick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANACONDA</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 81753</td>
<td>Jennifer Lopez Ice Cube</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JINGLE ALL THE WAY</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 4152</td>
<td>Arnold Schwarzenegger Sinbad</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THE SAINT</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video 011591</td>
<td>Val Kilmer Elizabeth Shue</td>
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<td><strong>VOLCANO</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>FoxVideo 6039</td>
<td>Tommy Lee Jones Annette O'Toole</td>
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<td><strong>THE ENGLISH PATIENT</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Miramax Home Entertainment Warner Home Video 14199</td>
<td>Ralph Fiennes Juliette Binoche</td>
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<td><strong>THE DEVIL'S OWN</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 82463</td>
<td>Harrison Ford Brad Pitt</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DOUBLE TEAM</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 82139</td>
<td>Joe Cortese钅Denise Richards</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NIGHTS ON MANHATTAN</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Republic Pictures Home Video 6296</td>
<td>Andy Garcia Michael Dudikow</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SLING BLADE</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Miramax Home Entertainment Buena Vista Home Video 10487</td>
<td>Billy Bob Thornton</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DONNIE BRASCO</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 82094</td>
<td>Al Pacino Digital</td>
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<td><strong>GONE FISHING</strong> (PG)</td>
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<td><strong>ABSORPTION</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 2596</td>
<td>Cint Eastwood Gene Hackman</td>
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<td>Dimension Home Video Warner Home Video 14199</td>
<td>Neve Campbell Drew Barrymore</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FRIENDS IN CONNIE</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Universal Home Video Buena Vista Home Video 10488</td>
<td>Woody Harrelson Goldie Hawn</td>
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<td><strong>FATHER'S DAY</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 15586</td>
<td>Robin Williams Billy Crystal</td>
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<td><strong>OLD FEELING</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 83214</td>
<td>Bette Midler Dennis Farina</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DANTE'S PEAK</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 8339</td>
<td>Pierce Brosnan Linda Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WILD AMERICA</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 15580</td>
<td>John Tesh Thomas Dean Sadew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MURDER AT 1600</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Warner Home Video 14915</td>
<td>Wes Studi Diane Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRASH</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>New Line Home Video Warner Home Video 1558</td>
<td>Holly Hunter Anthony Hopkins</td>
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<td><strong>B.A.P.S.</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>New Line Home Video Warner Home Video 74113</td>
<td>John Candy Jim swims</td>
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<td><strong>10/22 WEEKS</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Timak Home Video 6685</td>
<td>Mickey Rooney Anne Archer</td>
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<td><strong>THUNDER IN THE GARDEN</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Reel Tope 4002</td>
<td>John Cleve James Bird</td>
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<td>Martin Lawrence</td>
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<td><strong>NOWHERE</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>New Line Home Video Warner Home Video 8465</td>
<td>Shawn Doyle Elysha Damins</td>
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<td><strong>BAD COUNTRY</strong> (R)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 81123</td>
<td>Vincent D'Onofrio Leland Orser</td>
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<td><strong>BOOGEY CALL</strong> (PG-13)</td>
<td>Columbia TriStar Home Video 94953</td>
<td>Jamie Fox Steven Daymond</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MOTHER-IN-LAW</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Paramount Home Video 332473</td>
<td>Bettyty Walls Debbie Reynolds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MICHAEL'S NAVY</strong> (PG)</td>
<td>Universal Studios Home Video 80768</td>
<td>Tom AverillRenee O'Connor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VIDEOS FOR HOLIDAYS** (Continued from page 76)

with Columbia providing the counter-cards.

"We wanted to part of some this promotion," maintains Tom Koren, Columbia Records senior VP. The soundtrack, released in late June just before the movie opened, had sold some 2 million copies before the cassette release.

Working together, the record and home video labels created a joint 30-second TV spot and a display that holds videos and 90 CDs. "We've made about 25,000 available and expect to have them all snatched up," Koren adds. This is our first real opportunity to create a national promotion with Columbia Tri-Star and is a real testament to teamwork".

The theatrical Web site, a big attraction for summer surfers, is being tweaked for home video, Harris says, and that "is intriguing in the help can be to help." "Men In Black" is the theme for the home video site through the holidays into early 1998.

It will be promoted on all the major Internet services, with a premium push on America Online's "Entertainment Asylum" and on the major search engines, such as Yahoo! and Excite. And "Men In Black" is hot-linked to Sony Music's Web site as well.

Columbia's "My Best Friend's Wedding," which arrives in stores on cassette and DVD Dec. 9, will also have a Web-based CD promotion. "We'll be doing some joint radio promotions in key markets with Epic Records, which produced the charted soundtrack," Harris says. "We're still in the learning phase and will continue to examine the different assets and deficits of online marketing for home video." Our strategy is to help.

"We're experimenting each time we add to our foundation, as it's nice to have a model to build on. A lot of Internet is a playground to try a few things, and we expect to build a learning curve that will pay increasing dividends in the future." 

U.K. GOVERNMENT PROPOSES

(Continued from page 76)

output... Video is as much the cutting edge of the development of many of these important economic issues.

Movies and video had benefited in particular from this new approach, he said. "I believe over the course of the last six months we have been able to demonstrate, in relation particularly to film, this government is very serious about this. We have put tax incentives in the budget, something the film industry has been asking for for years at Downing Street. We were determined to do it within eight weeks of coming into office."

"We launched the lottery franchises for film, which we designed to have a run of good movies emerging from the consortia that the money has gone to rather than just one-off spectacles."

In addition, the government was anxious to help the creative sector over one of its principal battlegrounds, that of piracy and copyright theft.

"We want to put real muscle from the government behind getting international agreements that we need in this respect," Smith said. "Smith said. "We are anxious to ratify as quickly as possible the World Intellectual Property Organization treaty." Recent developments in the United States talking to people in the administration and Congress about their process of ratification of the treaty and what we can do to help see it through. I want to seek the earliest legislative opportunity to do that.""
Based vocalist Melissa With.

Shaken & Stirred," an all-star Band tribute featuring Iggy Pop, Aimee Man, Polio, and Chrisie Hynde was issued by Sire Records.

DIANNAM CARROLL
The Time Of My Life
PRODUCER: Gary Burton
Sterling 1015

Whether vocalist Cheryl connoisseur Billie Holiday, who was often described as having a "sweet harmonies" voice, or saxophonist John Coltrane, who was described as having a "racehorse in a symphony," it's impossible to deny the impact of these artists on the development of jazz.

COUNTRY
MATT KING
Flee O’Clock Hero
PRODUCER: Gary Morris
Atlantic 82993

Prolific North Carolina songwriter Matt King’s debut album has been long awaited by Nashville’s songwriter fans, and they’re not likely to be disappointed by it. King wrote or co-wrote all 11 songs here, and they’re crisp examples of his Appalachian sensibility. It helps that he has a convincing troubadour’s voice, but it isn’t always used to best advantage. The title cut, for example, is perfectly suited to his dry, laconic delivery, but “I Wrote The Book” tries to be a Buck Owens-ish racehorse of a song, which it is not and which he can’t keep up with. And production bells and whistles on the song “Pray For Handcuffs” only detract from the lyrics’ impact.

JAZZ
MELISSA WALKER
May I Feel
PRODUCER: Gary Bartz
Enja 8353

With her second album (and label debut), Canadian-born, New York-based vocalist Melissa Walker stakes her claim as one of the most sensitive and engaging of young jazz singers. Backed by a crew that features the stitching of veteran player/producer Rob Bartz and the towering trumpet blasts of her husband, Terrell Stafford, Walker leaped to a warm, creamy rich tone that coaxes such standards as “Johnny Mandel’s "A Time For Love" and "The End"

LA TIN
CECIL CRUZ
Celia’s Dutts
PRODUCER: RIMM 82201

This smart package of some of Celia Cruz’s greatest vocal collaborations highlights its versatile talent and and responsi- ble ambassador of Latin tropical sounds as she effortlessly teams with a broad range of singing titans, including Brazilian superstar Caetano Veloso,.shared the familiar crescendo, and the sultry, dreamy “Making Love To The Air” turn around and record for an artist whose gifts are only now coming to the fore.

ITALIAN
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Riviera Country Christmas
PRODUCER: Ed Kersh
East Coast Records 3037

The label debut for this genre-crossing, hormonally nutty Crescent City ensemble is a raucous showcase for its wild spin on the popular Eastern European revival. Driven by aggressively rolling, Waxman-styled drumming, NOKAS augments the familiar klezmer lineup with electric guitars and banjos, Hammond B-3, and other timbral innovations. Among its few traditional themes is a tango-infused treatment of "Tatiana" and a music arrangement of "D'Illirone Chauveuse (The Silver Wed- ding)." Excellent originals are marked by the gracefully leaning clarinet of "A Venezia Frivola," the tempestuously bitter-sweet harmonies of "Chayel," the no-wave guitar "Kick-Flute," and ethereal tunes as "Kid Klip." "Bump, Bump," which reveal equal influences of electric Miles Davis and Spike Jones.

CLASSICAL
PETER SCHOUTEN/PORT ESSENDON, etc.
Australian Chamber Orchestra, Richard Tognetti
PROMOTION: CMS; Robert Christmas
CLASSICAL: CMS; Robert Christmas

The label of the Australian Broadcasting Corporate, ABC Classics has issued another phenomenal album of her home- grown composer Peter Schouten. His music is the lovely landscape Down by, his lyrical cry in the wilderness.

CONTINENTAL CHRISTIAN
AARON BENDZ
The Classic
PRODUCER: Bob White
Mark Hammond
Star Song 0118

The father-and-son duo of Jeffery and Aaron Benward has previously released two stellar albums marked by passionate vocals and insightful lyrics, but this new release takes the pair to another level artistically. The trademark soulful vocals are still here, with Aaron taking lead more frequently and father Jeffery adding those celestial harmonies, but what sets this project apart is that the singing is driven by edgier, more no-sounding production. The Benwards’ passionate deliver- ing is equally matched by the vibrancy evident in each track. But production and performance aren’t the only elements of a great album; the songs are the cornerstone of "The Classic." ABB has a number of winners, including the title cut, "Moments Of Mercy," and "Leave A Legacy," which were both heralded by Aaron Benward, Jeff Sil- ley, and Lowell Alexander. The beautiful Kevin Stokes/Concinni Harrington ballad "Heal Me" is one of the album’s finest moments. This incredible set will be read- ily embraced by the duo’s longtime fans and should easily win the Benwards a legion of new listeners.

www.americanradiohistory.com
**NEW & NOTEWORTHY**

**DAVID GARZA**

Garza (bass) is a young Canadian-based artist who has been recognized for his unique blend of jazz, R&B, and soul. His music is characterized by a deep sense of groove and a strong melodic sensibility. Garza is known for his ability to create intricate harmonies that are both soulful and sophisticated. His debut album, *Blow* (Go Warner Bros.), has been praised for its fusion of jazz, R&B, and soul influences, making it a standout in the contemporary jazz landscape.

**K.P. & THE TRAILER PARK**

K.P. & The Trailer Park is a band that has been gaining momentum with their soulful, roots-based sound. Their album, *Right Stuff* (MCA), showcases their ability to blend traditional elements with modern influences, resulting in a fresh and engaging listening experience. The band's songwriting is top-notch, and their performances are known for their genuine energy and connection with the audience.

**JOEY STARR**

Joey Starr is a Canadian rapper who has been a force in the music industry for over two decades. His latest album, *Skip It, Eat It* (PolyGram), is a testament to his enduring talent and commitment to his craft. Starr's music is characterized by its raw, unfiltered authenticity, making it a must-listen for fans of hip-hop and rap.

**BILLY THE KID**

Billy the Kid is a young, emerging artist who has been making waves in the music world. His latest album, *Black Box* (Atlantic), is a powerful collection of songs that explore themes of identity, struggle, and resilience. The album's production is top-notch, with a mix of electronic and organic elements that create a unique sound.

**PETER WHITE**

Peter White is a respected guitarist and songwriter known for his ability to create smooth, soothing melodies. His latest album, *Shadows & Light* (MCA), is a celebration of his musical journey, featuring collaborations with some of the industry's most talented musicians. The album is a testament to his ability to create music that is both emotionally resonant and technically proficient.
Bugs: A Life in 101 Vectorizer

Paul McCartney, in the World Tonight (Home Video Video)

BY Paul McCartney

The latest installment in the "World Tonight" series features McCartney in a half-hour special that looks at his life and career, with interviews and footage from his concerts and studio sessions.

SHIRLEY CAESAR: LIVE IN CONCERT (World Gospel Records)

Shirley Caesar is a force to be reckoned with in the gospel music world, and this concert film captures her powerful voice and soul-stirring performances.

Miles: The Legend Behind the Music (In Print)

Miles Davis was one of the most influential jazz musicians of all time, and this book takes an in-depth look at his life and career, drawing on interviews with those who knew him.

Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back (Enter Active)

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The Ghost of Steel (Audio)

Read by Joe Grifasi

Steel's latest novel starts off promising but becomes predictable and flawed, with its main character being a cardboard cutout of a superhero.

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The competition features 15 tracks, including an original song by Liz Story, and a booklet containing thoughts from the artist.

“Capturing the book on CD was a challenge,” says Windham Hill senior director of field marketing Grace Newman, “but the booking original music by Neale keeps the book in the forefront, and the music reflects the enlightening and uplifting experience of reading the book.”

Walsh selects the music as “keeps the spirit of the book, which is the most wonderful experience of some of life’s mysteries. It was difficult choosing the songs because the choices were wonderful in one way or another,” says the 55-year-old former radio talk-show host. “But some of the songs were touching to my heart, and those are the ones I selected.”

Story says translating the book into music wasn’t a difficult task. “I had been working on a lot of spiritual work, so this was easy to do,” she says. “It’s a wonderful book, and I felt it came from what I had already been doing.”

Earlier last month, Earthtone Records released “Transformation Of A Man,” signing original music from former Tangerine Dream member Christopher Franke, who also owns Sonic Images, which markets the band’s CDs.

Franke describes the album as a soundtrack to Chopra’s 1991 book “Unconditional Love,” reading from the book by the author are also included on the CD.

“The idea is that this is a score for the book, because the music reflects the words of the book,” says Franke. “It’s a musical interpretation.”

Other recent audio companions include “Music For The Soul,” keyed to Moore’s 1992 “Cure Of The Soul: A Journey To The Heart And Sacredness In Everyday Life,” which was issued by Angel Records. The label also released a like-titled album, “Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus.” The collection of romantic duets has sold 17,500 copies since its April 1 release, according to SoundScan.

“Music For The Soul,” which features classical works, was released February 23 and has sold 5,800 units, according to SoundScan.

Inxhs’ Huchtenich Mourned In Australia, Worldwide (Continued from page 13)

were 75% sold.

The band members—brothers Andrew, Jon, and Tim Fariss; Garry Beers; and Kirk Pengilly—were at a hotel in Hanoi, Vietnam, when death was awaiting its honor to the further rehearsals, unaware that an hour before his body had been found by a hotel staff member. The tour was canceled; the shocked band is in seclusion. The band members released a statement extending their “love and sympathy” to Huchtenich’s family and otherwise asked the media to respect their privacy.

“Tears were running down the band’s face,” said a statement, saying, “On behalf of the entire Huchtenich family, we are extremely shocked and deeply saddened by the news. Jon, Tim, Jon, Michael. Michael was an inspiring talent who touched many people around the world with his work and his music. He will be missed, and we have come to terms with our tragedy, we ask that the media please respect the family’s privacy, and we will leave it to grief in peace.”

Hutchence had earlier been in the U.S. talking to filmmakers, including Jem Cohen of the avant-garde documentary “Dog In Space.”

PERSIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC FINDS U.S. EARS

featuring Parviz Meshkatian on the other instruments of the ensemble.

Thorough digital remastering for the new CD and accompanying booklet is the result of the efforts of Dwight Gramophone and www.americanradiohistory.com.

"Elegantly Wasted" (1997) — the first batch of a reported $35 million, five-album deal with Mercury — did not fare well. But a survey in a magazine with Duran Duran writer Bob Coates says that he has been getting “more and more responses from fans in the States.”

Financially, however, the entire project has been a disaster. In the past few years, the group has been left with more than $500,000 in debt. The band has been forced to sell off their equipment and release their vaults of rare and expensive items in order to pay off their creditors.

The project was supposed to be a way for the band to get their music heard in the States, but it has not been successful. The band has not been able to generate any buzz for their music, and they have not been able to get their music played on radio or TV.

"Elegantly Wasted" was released in 1997, but the band has not been able to promote their new album properly. The band has not been able to get their music played on radio or TV, and they have not been able to get their music heard in the States.

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The project was a disaster financially, but it has also been a disaster for the band's career. The band has been forced to sell off their equipment and release their vaults of rare and expensive items in order to pay off their creditors.

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This story was prepared by Marc Schiffman, managing editor of Rock Airplay Monitor.

Sarah McLachlan, Fiona Apple, and the Lilith Fair artists in tow—all enjoying great success these days, due in no small part to the success of modern adult radio and the surprise acceptance of singer/songwriters at top 40. While Fiona and the level are riding debut sets to great heights, this is McLachlan’s fourth outing with Arista. So how many other triple-A modern rock acts, starting in the late ’80s/early’90s, have been able to pull off this kind of format success? The answer is not many, as 2000’s “Running Up That Hill,” which went as high as No. 30 on the Hot 100.

McLachlan also gives us2.1 million downloads on Napster. She worked with the Bush reference, Joan Armatrading is the first name that pops into the mind of Dave Einstein, Mercury’s national director of adult rock promotion. “She was one of the artists that was way ahead of her time,” he notes. Einstein’s list is a mix of cult heroes and artists who have commercial breakthroughs, ranging from Melissa Etheridge and Suzanne Vega (who scored two of the genre’s rare crossover hits) to Joni Mitchell, k.d. lang, Emmylou Harris, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Patti Smith, Rachel Sweet, and Chrissie Hynde.

“Without the Pretenders’ ‘Stop Your Sobbing,’” says Einstein, “I don’t think Jewel could have gotten as far as she did with ‘Who Will Save Your Soul.’”

Looking within his own roster, Einstein says that if Texas’ earlier radio hits were “all about the format,” his later hits are “all about the artist.”

“From his seat at the helm of triple-A stations,” says Dave Benson, “the management of many of the stations; an excellent model for the increasing number of people who are joining the format-specific market.”

FATAL FLAW

Speaking of timing, Benson sees a fatal flaw in early triple-A artist development. “The triple-A format was very new, and we were used to just embrace artists and not look for the best songs,” Benson says. The format’s now come to the point where labels, producers, and artists talk to each other, and it’s much easier to launch an artist based on a song rather than an image.”

KTCZ Minneapolis PD Lauren MacLeah put her head together with music director Janne Fredericksen and came up with a list of could-have-been bigger artists, starting with Vega. “She was before her time,” says MacLeah.

She also mentions Lowen & Navarro: “If they got the right producer and the right record company, they might be able to produce something that could cross over from triple-A to modern adult.”

MacLeah sees the likes of Amos, Chris Isaac, Michelle Shocked, and Bruce Cockburn as “artists who were ready to break at a time when they really hit it, but then they wandered off into some conceptual direction” and since have not courted radio with “friendly” music.

“Maybe another one who is set in her ways is Rickie Lee Jones,” says MacLeah. “At one time with ‘The Magazine’ (and albums of that era), she truly had her heart in it. Since then, she hasn’t put out anything that I felt that she cared about.”

Finally, observes MacLeah, “the common thread with Jewel, Fiona, and other Lilith Fair-esque acts is that the songs are pretty mainstream. They’re not too deep. They’re not too folky. They’ve got good production value. There are lot of singer/songwriters in the beginning who were better writers than performers. What these women have going for them is that they’re great performers.”

BOBIE BOWIE HAS BELEIVERS

Bruce Warren, music director for noncommercial WXPX Philadelphia and co-producer of the nationally syndicated “The World Cafe,” kicked things into a rock gear, mentioning two acts who rock the last modern rock crossover boom for a while.

Citing David Bowie’s early, less commercially successful collaborations with Brian Eno on “Low,” “Lodger,” and “Heroes,” he says, “(Continued on next page)
**Adult Contemporary**

**Radio Programming**

"There's no difference between the electronics of Bowie's 'Heroes' and the new U2 album," which is hailed as a breakthrough. "[E]njoy Bowie" were so ahead of their time. Those songs from Bowie work better now than they did back then."

In a similar vein, Warren mentions the Talking Heads. "If 'Remain In Light' came out today, it would be hailed as an ambient/electronica masterpiece," he says. "That record was definitely totally ahead of its time. It still is. There's nothing out in [the current crop of] electronica that comes close."

Warren also cites The Pixies as being underrated and didn't get their due, sonically, lyrically. The soft/loud distortion thing was something that the Pixies had done really well.

He also wonders, "How would the English Beat react to 'Barely Lofts' and the current ska revival!?" Take a song like "Mirror In The Bathroom," you could remix it, tweak them here and there, and they'd be right up alongside Goldfinger and whatever other ska band of the day is out.

Warren also cites the story, the duo of Brooke and Jennifer Kimball, as being "ahead of its time" on "Grace And Gravity" and "The Angel In The House."


WXLE Albany, N.Y., PD Neil Hunter agrees with MacLeash's take on Jones. "I'm not sure she cut through well enough," he says. And he, too, brings up the story, which was the first time triple-A became acquainted with Brooke, who is now set for her second solo album (her first without a reference to the Story), "10-Cent Wings."

Andrea Karr had programmed SWE Cable Radio for years and is now doing promotion with Wind-Up. She picks up the Amos thread, saying, "The song that specifically comes to mind is 'Cornflake Girl.' It's a brand-new single, that would happen. I can't imagine that Fiona Apple didn't hear or wasn't influenced by Tori Amos."

She still calls Mark Lanegan's "Carnival" one of her favorite songs. She also felt strongly about the Jayhawks' "Blue," Massive Attack's "Protection," and Lori Carson's "You Won't Fall" from the Where It Goes album.

Karr also cites Brooke, saying, "She has an exquisite voice and potential." With her next effort slated for an early November release, "it will be interesting to see what happens with it."

Electra's Lisa Michelon cites Brooke but proudly reports that Tracy Chapman and Natalie Merchant, both Elektra artists, had done a lot of trail blazing and publicity are still around today.

In Boston, WXRV PD Joanne Doody points to Clannad. "I loved the music and never understood why they couldn't go anywhere," she says. "That music is so beautiful."

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**Adult Top 40**

**Radio Programming**

"Lofty Spice? Spice Girls made a recent stop by "The Howard Stern Show" in New York to discuss "Spaceworld," the name of their just-released album and new movie, due in January. Stern, third from the right, is pictured here with Victoria, Melanie B., Melanie C., Emma, and Geri."

Robyn Is Here. RCA's Robyn hangs with Why Y (100) Fort Lauderdale, Fla., PD Rob Roberts at the station's recent 24th birthday concert, which also featured Real McCoy, No Mercy, Jon Secada, and Gloria Estefan. Robyn's current Hot 10 hit, "Show Me Love," is her second consecutive top 10 song.

O'Blige. WAMO Pittsburgh's Sly Jock and Kfe Kelley were involved in the recent Budweiser Superfest, which included the hip-hop grooves of Mary J. Blige. Shown, from left, are morning show DJ Sly, Jock, Blige, music director and midday talent Kelley, and MCA Records' Azim Rashid.
Rules of Programming

With Hits ‘Galore’ And New Set Planned, The ‘Never Fashionable’ Cure Endures

NEVER ENOUGH: For someone whose stock and trade involve endures darkness and grace, the Cure founder/lead singer Robert Smith is finding life just like heaven amid a just-released greatest-hits perspective, the band’s first U.S. club dates in a decade, and a new studio album due in 1998.

Add to that the fact that the group is poised to enter its 20th year after selling some 24 million albums since its first single, “Killing An Arab,” charted in 1979. Since that time, in fact, the Cure has become the virtual solo survivor among its class of alternative pioneers born out of the early 1980s.

Smith attributes the Cure’s endurance to the fact that the group has never been a trendy rock icon. “We have never been a fashionable band,” he says. “Perhaps there have been times in different countries where we have been more in than out, but we’ve never relied on that. I think that has helped with the longevity of our appeal that we can judge what we do with the music.”

The other factor: “I still enjoy the music, and I still want to do it.”

The band’s 18-track retrospective, which he would say one thing and the other parties either weren’t listening with an open mind or drew far-out conclusions. “I think there were two completely unrelated conversations and put them together,” he says, illustrating that “things can get to a point where you can have huge arguments with people, look back on it, and realize that you were arguing for the same thing. It happens to the best people at times.”

Smith was just more of an essence.

The process of songwriting over the past 20 years, Smith says, has evolved dramatically, actually becoming an interesting experience. The New Yorker has once said: “When I first started, with the first few singles, I wanted to be the Buzzcocks with drums. Now I’m not afraid of upbeat, three-minute pop stuff.”

“Past within a few years, my life took a downturn, and I felt pretty miserable. There was that struggle with who you are, what you are doing, those things. That’s what I wanted to say.

“But you grow older and suppos- edly wiser, you’re supposed to know answers to questions you posed earlier in life. I suspect most people don’t,” Smith adds. “Now my standards have gone up. My subjects have become broader. I don’t need a mini-breakdown to write a song. As I’ve gotten older, I’ve become interested in more things, and my horizons have broadened. The palette has more color in it.”

Overall, Smith thinks this second single — a mix of that’s what I mean — has had more impact than “Standing On A Beach,” adding that 70% of the tracks on the group’s upcoming album are upbeat, three-minute pop stuff.

“There’s a certain thing musicals that we often come back to, emblematic and musical motifs that just attract me. There’s one particular early-’80s sound and a late-’90s sound, based on the kinds of instruments, but if you look at the whole body of the Cure’s output, you’ll see there’s a definitive Cure sound — except for my voice.”

Some of what’s inspired by what’s fueling modern rock radio now: “I most disregard what is supposed to be contemporary; it’s not of great concern to me. My arguments are that I can do an — to — and classical stations isn’t necessarily what I write.”

The band, meanwhile, has endured numerous personnel changes through the years. However, Smith says that the current lineup is the best in years. “For the first time, with the particular band we have assembled at the moment, there’s a kind of cohesiveness that really brings the sound together,” he says. “I think there have been times where the individuals’ own diversities have made that difficult.

So far, Smith has written six tracks for the upcoming album, which the group recorded during three weeks this past summer. He says that fans can expect to recognize the band’s long ear, calling cards, though, as with “Wrong Number,” the new songs are being pro- duced with more of a dance lean than some of its recent efforts. Again, Smith hopes to have Garibides contribute guitar to several songs.

In the meantime, the Cure will bus itself this Augustember playing near-ly a dozen radio-station holiday shows in major markets. “I expect it to be more successful than the shows. We figure that the show with an air of delight. “We want to do something that people will meet with a bit of a emotional impact. We plan to do it in three or four songs that band has never played before — things I haven’t sung in 10 years.

Already, the Cure has introduced "Galore" with two full-length, sold-out shows in October in Hollywood, Calif., and New York — its first U.S. clubs since 1988, as Smith tells the L.A. Date: “We’ve picked up the Cure’s 1986 platinum ‘Standing On A Beach — The Singles’ (covering tracks from 1979 to 1988) left off.

The new album, which debuted at No. 32 on The Billboard 200 in the Nov. 15 issue, includes one new song, “Wrong Number,” which peaked at No. 8 on last issue’s Modern Rock Tracks.

The cut was recorded in the summer during sessions for the Cure’s next pro- ject, which Smith hopes will hit the streets by late spring or early summer 1996 in its original form, the midtempo “Wish” for the Cure’s January lineup and its female backing singers. Says Smith, however, “There was a different album we were trying to make with a different sound.

After its demo version was recorded with the band — whose current line-up, with Smith, consists of bassist Simon Gallup, guitarist Porl Thompson, keyboardist Roger O’Donnell, and Jason Cooper on drums — it was presented to Smith’s co-producers Mark Platki and longtime contributor Mark Saunders, who sped up the song 10 beats per minute. Then, additional

by Chuck Taylor

“Galore,” released Oct. 28 on Fiction/ Elektra, covers what are considered the band’s most salient years, has helped with the band’s survival, which is more than we ever thought we’d be here, says Smith.

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Pretty faces might conceal nasty traits—ulterior motives, if you know what I mean,” cautions new-generation Philly soulman G. Love. “Maybe your widest fantasies are your worst nightmares.”

I love talking about his No. 38 Modern Rock Tracks hit “Stepping Stones,” which comes from his third OKeh/Epic album, “Yeah, It’s That Easy.” I wrote the song as a love story gone bad, thinking about a girl I knew,” he says. “But it’s also about a friend of mine who I thought was disrespecting me. Sometimes you try to give something to someone, and then they step on it, you. I want people to appreciate them.”

“Yeah, It’s That Easy” is a loose concept album about friendship, both the stones (“Stepping Stones,” “Pull The Wool!”) and the ups (“1-76,” “Take You There”). The record marks the first time Love has crafted a full-on studio album rather than just going in and cutting live with his Special Sauce rhythm mates, drummer Jeff Clemens and bassist Jimmy Prescott. The new tracks feature Love playing with four hand lineups, complete with contributions on Hammond B-3 organ by a Zen master of funk, Dr. John.

Love is still tight with his high school buddies, although he points out that “we get older and life becomes more complex, you start to think about what’s going to make those relationships last. The way I see it, you want to respect people’s changing. And honesty is the key. In the long run, friendships take less time and energy if you just show respect and practice being honest no matter what.”

Love’s hometown of Philadelphia is a totem for him, musicically and personally, as he draws inspiration from his circle and the city’s great legacy of soul music. “Philly has profoundly affected who I am,” he says. “It’s got rhythm, that town.”
**NEW ON**

Mariah Carey, The Breakup, / MC Hammer: He Broke It Down for Me
Roxana Fe Toro: Yo, Fire
Freddie Cafferty, Go! Groove
Lita Ford: I Wanna Be Your Lover
Fiona Apple: Inside Out
Sonic Youth: Goo
Beyonce: Baby Boy
Ozomatli: Hola Kolita
Santana FV Example, Hell Ain't A Dance

**NEW ON**

Continuous programming: 8280

1 Tim McGraw, Everything
2 McLean, Velvet Rope
3 Trace Adkins, The Reel Of Me
4 Roxana Fe Toro: Yo, Fire
5 Michael Peterson, Flawed
6 mareike, What Am I
7 Martha McBride, A Broken Wing
8 Bubblehead, How Do I Love Thee
9 Roko: I Am
10 Tiara, Confession
11 Tiara Wright, It's Over
12 Deana Carter, Did You Go To My House?
13 Mary Margaret O'Hara, Time
14 Phillip Phillips: Pickin Up The Pieces
15 Young Rascals, Delta Lady
16 Tales Of A Million
17 Steven Curtis Chapman, Farther From Heaven
18 Jocelyn Jones, I Miss You
19 Tanya Tucker, Delta Dawn
20 Forty Foot Fishermen, Zero Life
21 Michael Peterson: Here Come The Mummies
22 Nelly, Ego
23 Lalo Ebratt, Eres Mi Amor
24 Stanley Clarke, The Song Of The Century
25 The Pointer Sisters, House Party
26 The Magik*Man, Rhythm Of The Night
27 The Commitments, I'm Not Like Everybody Else
28 The Fifth Dimension, Up Where We Belong
29 The Commodores, Easy
30 The O'Jays, Back Stabbers
31 Jennifer Lopez, Let's Get Loud
32 Christina Aguilera, Genie In A Bottle
33 Matchstick Men, Live To Day
34 The Beatles, Love Me Do
35 The Tango Skybirds, Angel Of The Morning
36 Counting Crows, A Beautiful Day
37 Tom Petty, The Waiting
38 The Smithereens, Sooner Or Later
39 The Carpenters, Top Of The World
40 The Beach Boys, God Only Knows

**NEW ON**

Continuous programming: 1151 Broadway, NY 10001

1 Adams, Snakes On A Plane
2 Metallica: The Memory Remains
3 McLean, Velvet Rope
4 Evans, I'd Let You Go
5 Usher, You Make Me Wanna...
6 McBride, A Broken Wing
7 The Handle, Forget You
8 The Verve, Bitter Sweet Symphony
9 Allen, Nothing's Gonna Stop Me
10 Mariah Carey, Butterfly
11 Pink: There Will Be Peace In The Valley
12 Rascal Flatts, Comin In On A Mountain Train
13 Kenny Rogers: We've Only Just Begun
14 Better Than Ezra: ...What A Day It Was
15 Jimi Hendrix: Purple Haze
16 The Allman Brothers, Merry Christmas, Baby
17 John Lennon: Imagine
18 Pink Floyd: Comfortably Numb
19 Bon Jovi, Bed Of Roses
20 Barenaked Ladies, One Week
21 Matchstick Men, The Face In The Sky
22 Matchstick Men, The Face In The Sky
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28 Matchstick Men, The Face In The Sky
29 Matchstick Men, The Face In The Sky
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**NEW ON**

Sairie Rae, Don't Be So Proud/You Know I Love You
Diana Krall, Did I Stare At My Legs For Too Long?
Diana Krall, Once Upon A December

**NEW ON**

Savage Garden, Truly Madly Deeply
Mark P. roller, 4 Seasons Of Love
Marcia Carey, The Roof

**NEW ON**

Savages, Savage Garden
Sage, Mariah Carey
Sister Hazel, Beautiful Night
Sister Hazel, Haapy

**NEW ON**

Sisters Hazel, Truly Madly Deeply
Sage, Mariah Carey
Sage, The Roof
Sage, Beauty and the Beast
Sage, Beautiful Night
Sage, Sister Hazel, Haapy

**NEW ON**

Sabina Vega, Love You Like A Spades

**NEW ON**

Sisters Hazel, Truly Madly Deeply
Sage, Mariah Carey
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Sage, Beauty and the Beast
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Regardless, the major signing spree continues. High on the list of boldly tout-ed new projects due in ’98 are famed producers House of Spirit, which includes Tara, and Miles’ various acts, including Laura Campbell. “Quite frankly, the sound is evolving so quickly and mutating into so many different concepts that we were always on track and over looked (for a modern rock station). But we couldn’t commit to a lifestyle. We were giving the owner of the disco station during the day, and at night we would try to start this whole new kind of electronic music, and remove the alternative house.”

DOES IT SELL? Despite a glut of product, Levesque says sales are brisker than ever—and not exclusively by the handful of acts that makes the electronic plunge more reasonably effective, if not extremely active. It’s certainly a move that has met with positive response from the audience.

“I think it’s a movement that our market truly is and how to attack it,” says The doors. “The [tours] that we are doing are not going to be rock market, and that’s not relevant. Crowds go to raves because of the promoters putting them on—not because of the music. We are going to miss, and there was an overestima- tion of how many people were going to show up.”

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IN ELECTRONICA’S LONG-TERM POTENTIAL NOW THE FOCUS

(Continued from page 5)

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U.K. Ponders Appetite in U.S. for Its Artists

(Continued from preceding page)

of electronica.

"The expectations came from the people who [had] nothing to do with the music," he says. "It came from the business level, people not involved with it."

Morcheeba's Godfrey says, "Among the product managers in the U.S., I think there has been some misunderstanding. I don't think they understand that things have to be worked on from the start."

Daren Pickles, who with Dave Rann makes up Supercharger, says the U.S. market is expecting something different and commercial movement on a par with grunge.

"The '90s soft rock scene was blown away by the Nirvana and grunge. The problem with electronica was that it was not grunge," he says. "All these bands here are not trying to be the new Pearl Jam."

As a result, labels are hedging this message. John Loken is GM of China Records in the U.S., liaising between China's U.K. office and Sire Records, which handles the label's product in the U.S.

"With Supercharger, you can't follow the standard routes of radio [and] MTV exposure, because it's how you normally hear things," he says. "Instead, it is using alternative dance scenes such as LoTus in L.A. and On the One and XLR8R in San Francisco."

"You can spread your dollars a lot more thinly around the underground press, but the single most important factor is the fan base for it in the U.S."

Says Supercharger's Pickles, "In America they started from the top down [with this music]. Here we started from the bottom up."

CULTURAL FACTORS

Other problems that British acts encountered in the U.S. includes differences in venues, as well as varying attitudes toward live life, all drugs.

The U.K. club scene in the '90s has allowed a counterculture to develop, where clubbers may go for a night out to hear something new, listen to a bit of house music, and have an audience that feeds influences into the mainstream.

By contrast, U.S. clubs are still in a separate world without much mainstream music, says Concrete's Rand. "The club scene here is unlike anything else in the world. It's a bit like Latin America, petting and scene, and we're all so immersed in it. America doesn't have that—clubbing is a black, gay thing there."

Transporting the music out of its intimate, social British club setup into rock venues in the U.S. created the classic "fish out of water" syndrome, the network that had housed the scene didn't exist in America.

Bookers and promoters were enthusiastic, says Fugler of his experience of touring in the U.S., "It was an ambitious tour, we had a lot of people. We had a lot of contact with the people who love this music, we played in those venues and in smaller places, the atmosphere started to swell." U.S. restrictions on alcohol, separating under-21s from adults, dampened the atmosphere, maintains Fugler. "Here [in the U.K.] you have 15-year-old kids trying to blag their way into clubs alongside 40-year-olds who have been doing this for more than a decade."

Gigging both indoors and outdoors has been a part of life for many of the acts. Groups such as Orbital or the Orb have drawn ecstatic responses from festivalgoers over the years, proving an audience of disaffected or adventurous rock fans.

Fugler says Americans don't have the same kind of festival circuit. At festivals, you get builders rubbing shoulders with accountants. It's not a quirky thing.

GUITARS COME TO FORE

It's unlikely to be a coincidence that U.S. audiences have taken to electronic music as the acts have developed a fascination with guitars and emerged as formidable performers.

Republica's Male says the band experienced fans jumping onstage and mobbing as their guitar-laden first single, "Ready To Go," powered up the U.S. charts during their tour earlier this year.

"People have said we opened the door for other bands in America," says Male.

For all its grinding sound, the music is not "rock" as Americans know it, says Pickles of Supercharger, whose Indochina album "Wall To Wall Mosaic" has been playing in as positive as that of any metal act. "For us, it's a reaction against house music here. Rock is where we've arrived at, but it's not where we've come from."

Apollo 440's latest album, "Electro Glide In Blue," features a fuzzed-out cover of Iggy & The Stooges' "I Wanna Be Your Power" as well as " Ain't Talkin' About Dub," which features a climbing Eddie Van Halen guitar riff over the top of chattering drums.

Another factor that has allowed the U.S. business to warm to British leftfield music is that there are currently developed into an album-friendly genre, as opposed to the militantly faceless, single-driven world of acid house of the UK.

Says Rand, "It's about albums and building artists."

It is this line of thought that will ensure that the genre of music gets more than one shot at success in the U.S. market, observers say.

We are here to believe that the U.K. will in time develop a similar music scene nationally. Says Republica's Male, "We've had 10 years of people accepting this music among the U.S. ers, which only cost a few hundred pounds. Here people are used to hearing those sounds. America is only just starting."

Supercharger's Pickles believes the current movement will "save music in this country and end up with the mainstream of house music."

Sunday is a big cinema evening in Spain, the program was long, and other channels showed replays of that day's success and a good selection of movies.

Anderson is equally happy with results. Back in England Nov. 24, she says, "I've been back driving from ear to ear since the event. Considering it was the first show of its kind in Spain and my first big event outside the U.K., I am genuinely and absolutely thrilled. We slept three hours after the show, then spent 24 hours without sleeping editing the TV program."

Spain's public television's international service, TVE, Nacional, can air the event three times, and then AFYVE has the right to take the gram to Latin American TV stations.

"There is no doubt that interest will be high, as a third of the winners were from Latino markets," says Tagarro.

A special award for "the Latino artist with the greatest international impact" went to Martin, whose single "(Utopia, Dona, Treia) Maria" has been a hit across Europe and whose album "A Medio Vivo" (Living Low) is approaching the 1 million unit threshold. It is necessary to qualify for IFPI Platinum Europe certification.

Estefan won two awards, for Latino music artist and for her album "Abriendo Puertas" (Opening Doors). Her husband, Emilio Estefan, attended the show, while the singer herself offered videotaped thanks in the company of another Spanish crossover star, Julio Iglesias.

Spain's sales sensation of the past 15 months, Rosana, won two awards, for female star and for "Lunas Rotas" (Broken Moon), her debut album for Universal Music Spain, itself a fledgling company. "Lunas Rotas" has sold more than 1 million copies, according to the label.

Britain's Spice Girls reversed their fortunes just a week after hitting a career low point by being jeered at another awards ceremony in Spain. Barcelona's Premio Ondas, for refusing to play while photographers were in the TV studio (Billboard, July 1). At 14:30, the time they were cheered during their performance of "Spice Up Your Life" and later collected the prize in a ceremony in the Premio Ondas building. "Lunas Rotas" is the only album in the world and which has grown 18% by October. In 1996, AFYVE reported sales of 51 million units worth 74 billion pesetas ($307 million).

"The whole alternative dance thing has great parallels with the '90s," he adds. "The Beatles' rock took black American music, commercialized it, and sold it back to them. House music comes from America, but it could not be sold to Americans because it was faceless and black."

Even if some acts fail to live up to the expectations of the U.S. market, labels such as Republica that have fixed a niche variety that the scene is throwing up is bound to create something that fits in with everything that American fans want.

And in the worst case, if it doesn't, the rest of the world is taking an avid interest.

As Virgin's Barry notes of the Chemical Brothers, "They had much earlier and more widespread coverage in Japan before the American media knew who they were."

Spain stresses Latin links

(Continued from page 5)

of the artists' live talents, which makes the draw of tours much more desirable.

"There is a wider acceptance of the concept of the DJ as a performer. It's a question of the audience. Now older audiences are becoming more educated about why this isn't just some guy stuck in a box spinning other people's records," says Johnny and Jimmy James of Arkarna. "The more they demand, the harder we're working. The days of getting over with a couple of turntables and some strobe lights is over."

Howard Gray from Apollo 440 argues, adding that the genre's future relies on acts sticking together longer than a couple of "quick-fix" singles.

"For a lot of bands, it's still early days, so no American knows it's about this movement right now seems unfair," he says. "A band needs time to truly develop your own voice, and that's something that Americans has certainly been the case for us."

"We're on our fourth album and have had a hit a little while that's on the whole, it's exciting to be part of something perceived as the cool new thing," he continues. "I've got confidence in our records and of the records of this movement. We're more than a trend."

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BMG CLASSICS

(Continued from page 12)

tail close contact with artists and BMG offices as well as European trading partners, such as key retailers and distributors.

BMG Classics includes the RCA Victor, RCA Red Seal, Unisonica, RCA Gold, EMI, Universal and Virgin records, as well as their catalog and new releases.

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as well as new technology companies seeking viable programming alterna-
tives to the traditional audio establishment.

In fact, music video "webcasting," as the delivery of video programming online is referred to, was a focal point of last month's annual Billboard Online Video Music Video Conference, held Nov. 20-22 at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Two videos were delivered by the Box Worldwide president/CEO Alan McGlade focused on the shifting structures of the music industry and new technology and alliances between such companies as the Box and Streamland through their parent company, Tele-Communications.

Pointing to the progress being made with new digital, broad-band equip-
ment, McGlade said, "The new para-
phrases of a broadband window that allows a greater volume of music to pass through to consumers. Not only is this a pipeline widening, but its capac-
ity will continue to increase, making the idea of just programming a music television channel old-fashioned.

This is what HBO's Bob Glazer, who concentrated on the ram-
fifications of Internet-delivered video during his keynote, also sug-
gested that "channel locked" cable sys-
tems will compete, at least partially, with the customized playlists and services that are available online.

While online video offered through standard 28.8 modems may still be pix-
elated and choppy, Glazer noted that video distribution over the Internet has increased more than 70% in the last two months.

There's no doubt that there is any
http://www.americanradiohistory.com

\textit{INTERNET EXPOSURE RAISES PROFILE OF MUSIC VIDS}

(Continued from page 5)

\textbf{MVTV, BOX TO BOW MULTIPLE CHANNELS}

(Continued from page 5)

\textbf{TVS}
TOP TEN RINGS...
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The Billboard Top Ten Ring is available for any Billboard charted Top Ten artist, musician, song writer, producer or arranger, in any category past or present. Verification of achievement and identity is necessary. Please call toll free, 1-888-545-0088, or fax 1-760-737-5164.
THE TOP-SELLING ALBUMS COMPARED TO A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE AND RACK SALES REPORTS COMPILED, COLLECTED, AND PROVIDED BY

DECEMBER 6, 1997

ARTIST 
AER 
AISSATU BARRO 
ALBERT SHAPIRO 
ALAN BERGER 
ALBERTO QUINONES 
ALBERTO SERRANO 
ALBERTO VARGAS 
ALEXANDER ANDERSEN 
ALEXANDER BERNSTEIN 
ALEXANDER DE MORALES 
ALEXANDER HOLLANDER 
ALEXANDER JACOBS 
ALEXANDER LEE 
ALEXANDER LANDAU 
ALEXANDER MCNEILL 
ALEXANDER MILLER 
ALEXANDER MYERS 
ALEXANDER ROBBINS 
ALEXANDER SMITH 
ALEXANDER STEIN 
ALEXANDER WISEMAN 
ALEXANDER ZIMAN 
ALEXANDRE DE CASTRO 
ALEXANDRE DUMAS 
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| 182 | 117 | 230 | JOHN FOGERTY | WARNER BROS (RECORDINGS) (9.98 14.98) | BLUE MOON SWAMP |
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| 187 | 112 | 235 | LUTHER VANZARDI | VARIOUS ARTISTS (RECORDINGS) (9.98 14.98) | GLOBE DISCO |
Nov. 22 at Billboard Live in West Hollywood, Calif. The clip, featuring Jamiroquai front man Jason Kay slipping and sliding around a room with a moving floor, won in the Alternative/Metal category and best clip honors in the two alternative/modern rock fields. It also earned Jonathan Glazer director of the year honors.

Hosted by VH1 VJ A.J. Hammer, the Billboard Music Video Awards was sponsored by College Television Network and webcast live for the first time by JAMV and Billboard Online. Early in the ceremony, Hammer announced the death of INXS singer Michael Hutchence (see story, page 13).

The show featured the presentation of 28 awards by Hammer and guest presenters Tommy Boy dance diva Jocelyn Enriquez, Jon Forte of Ruffhouse/Columbia act the Refugee Alliance, RCA singer/songwriter Leah Androne, and special guest star Dennis Hopper.

Following the presentation of the Maximum Vision Award, Hammer ribbed Hopper, saying that he didn't appear to be familiar with British act The Full Monty. Hopper, response being quip that he was very familiar with virtual insanity.

Performers at the ceremony included Buzztone/RCA hip-hop act Funkdoobiest, H.O.L.A. and Veronika, and Moe/Universal punk-ska outfit Reel Big Fish.

Taking the honors in the pop/rock field were No Doubt's Trama/Interscope video "Don't Speak," which was named best clip, and Fiona Apple's Clean Slate/Work/Epic video "Sleep to Dream," selected as best new artist clip.

In the contemporary Christian field, de Talk's "Colored People's Poems of Prophet, Priest & King" scored the nod for best new artist clip. Both acts record for Forefront/Chord...
FOREIGN SIGNINGS PAYING OFF FOR GERMANY'S MAJOR LABELS
(Continued from page 5)

speaking world but that still have a solid
following in the GSA region and Eastern Europe. Deep Purple last
year signed with BMG in Germany and will release an album in 1998.

EMI president, GSA, Helmut Fest, one of the more successful "importers"
of German acts, says, "I have always been convinced that it makes sense to sign up U.K. and U.S. acts who have had difficult periods in their
careers in their home countries directly in Germany."

But a more recent development is the trend of signing a group as a place
to break new acts, as a country with a well-developed production
infrastructure and skills and A&R staffs that are in the know of the rest of the world's
markets.

A shortage of suitable repertoire singers to build this dual-market music
played some part in the development, says Fest. "While it's not fair to say that little
come out of the U.S. over the past few years, the problem is 'urban music' has
turned a taken which does not necessarily allow it to be carried into
the world market with the same degree of success," he says. "Rap or hip-hop acts only have any chance of success
in Germany if they are Thesemed and, more importantly, form part of a trend."

ROCK THE VOTE
(Continued from page 12)

with Black Youth Vote, the National
Asen, for the Advancement of Colored
People, and other traditional organiza-
tions to get young People of color reg-
istered to vote. "Rock the Vote is
rejuvenating now, getting ready for the congressional
elections and gearing up for '98," says Frisby. "We want to get young people
registered, educated, trained, activists, get young people to the polls next year, and get them talking
about issues that are important to
them."

"Rock the Vote is different because we target young people using rap cul-
ture," continues Frisby. "We've had
contacts us in this face of young people who might not otherwise
be interested in politics.

Frisby notes that the organization
could "do some things to get us in the
media more," citing the strategic use
of radio to give Rock the Vote a regional presence as well as the successful coop-
eration with MTV in the past to in-
crease national exposure.

"I think the organization is flying under the media radar," the
numbers indicate that Rock the Vote is getting the
job done, Frisby says.

WORD NASHVILLE
(Continued from page 12)

positions when the label closed its
downtown first single with the la-
bel through the end of the year.

Word Nashville's greatest successes were in taking mainstream country
prestige and gaining clout unac-
cepted by the reception the Kenny
Rogers and Collin Raye albums
received at Christian retail. Teague
planned to continue that role with a
new partner.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to build this dual-market music
inside the country community," he says.

Fixation on domestic concerns by
British and American labels has slowed the flow of international repertoire into
the market, making it easier for EMI to
sign "lots of 'ideal' rock bands." "There's some very commercial music
tested by talented musicians who do not get the attention or the recognition they
merit," says EMI's Ken Bond. "The
problem with new talent is, 'Tested,' 'Stranger Than Fiction,' and "The
Race Gray.' Non-German dance acts,
like the Run-D.M.C., whose newest sin-
tal, 'It's Like That,' hit No. 1 on the
Dance Chart, have performed
well for Epic, and Boy George has a deal with dance label Epicwave as a DJ anddance act, as has New York
racer Miguel Mergalino, a co-signing
with Sony France.

Epic is true to its Epic's managing
director, does not think foreign part-
ers are engaged by German compa-
nies' respect for the international market. "Given the low volumes concerned, for-
ign affiliates and partners are not
overly worried. However, if a foreign
label is pressing to sign a German
Europe and Epic's foreign affiliates
could have had the act, a conflict would be inevitable."

GERMANY AS A MARKET

One reason for Germany's emer-
ging role as a major export market
is the economic power. The GSA area is by far the continent's most
important market and has a receptive and dedicated audience, especial-
ly for pop music.

BMG Ariola Munich found just how
great a power it was when it launched
Backstreet Boys, then licensed to the
company from Jive/Zomba. Backstreet
Boys' first album there, "Backstreet to
You," has sold more than 900,000 units, and the single "Everybody" has
done more than 350,000 units, says
BMG.

In its own signing, "N Sync, is follow-
ing in Backstreet Boys' footsteps. With
the group landing five singles on the German chart and its debut album,"N Sync," hitting No. 1 on the album chart, BMG is now launching major
promotion and marketing activities for

After the MGM Grand assault came
to light, Knight was jailed for violating his parole and later
put on the wanted list by Las Vegas
officers. He has since been released
from prison. "I've been on the run
carefully because they are not in line with
trend currents in their home markets."

EMI Germany's direct signings in
took place without contracts in
home markets. Some of these acts—notably Chumbawamba in the U.K.—have returned to success in their
country, without EMI. "If our tastes and market needs are served by
Chinese, it just makes economic sense for us to fill the
gap ourselves," says EMI's direct
signings is singer Anne Clark.

Brem notes that while Columbia were
looking to sign overseas acts or pro-
jects, it would initially have to be suc-
cessful in Germany. "That has to come
first. If there is an exploitation angle, [that's when we sign]."

Polydor Germany's signing of "Bay-
wave" star David Hasselhoff is another example of a German company selling rights to an American act. It is clear that Ameri-
can audiences have never been able to accept Hasselhoff as a singer, he
has had chart success as a vocalist in his homeland with more than 5 million records sold worldwide, according to
his previous label, BMG.

EMI France's managing director Jorg
Hellwig says, "If a foreign act is a
strong market in Germany and is no
longer able to find a good deal in his
country, the German labels have
no choice. But the label does not want
巡航; it would be ridiculous to compete with affiliates."

Epic Records in Frankfurt has
signed a distribution deal for Bad Rel-
igion for the world outside the U.S. and
Canada and has already sold more than 120,000 copies of their first
album, "Tested," "Stranger Than Fiction," and "The
Race Gray." Non-German dance acts,
like the Run-D.M.C., whose newest sin-
tal, 'It's Like That,' hit No. 1 on the
Dance Chart, have performed
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promotion and marketing activities for

The nation's production base, which
has evolved along with the rise in
national signings, is one factor helping
to attract artists. Under managing
director Bernd Dopp, WEA Germany has added three spectacular acts to its roster that have sold well in Germany and
beyond.

Bootleg Collin's' album "Fresh Outta
P' University" and the single "I'm Leaving You" made it straight onto the
national charts; the single currently
stands at No. 60.

WEA produced Collins with MC
Lyte, Thomas D. and S.M.U.D.O. of
The Fantastic Saints, and Vibe's
Wesley and Fredd of Wesley/Parlia-
ment/Funkadelic.

Collins says about his experience of working in Germany, "I guess even if you don't know how to speak some-
other language, you can get a good vibe going on, that says it all" (see related story, page 23).

U.S. singer Randy Crawford signed
to WE Germany two years ago, with
such renowned producers as Jens
Krause and Mousse T, behind, Dopp
is convinced the country is a "win-
time" for all the best new talent out there.

EastWest has also had great interna-
tional success with direct signings, including Sarah Brightman, Willy
Dolphin and Donna Summer's "Dance Processus."

EastWest managing director Hubert
Wandro comments, "We have already
the hottest U.S. labels in the world like Atlantic and Elektra, but there is a need to sign international artists."
BPI, N.Y. Times Launch Entertainment Web Site

BPI Communications Inc., parent company of the Billboard Music Group, and the New York Times Syndicate have joined forces to create Entertainment News Daily, a new Internet site devoted to entertainment news. The site (www.entertainment-newsdaily.com) provides news and other information from BPI publications—including Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, and Back Stage—as well as consumer dailies from around the U.S.

Music coverage is a specialty of the new site. Music offerings include news stories from Billboard as well as highlights of several key Billboard charts.

The new site also includes coverage of films, video, theater, television, and books. Articles are gleaned from the BPI titles and from such Times-associated dailies as the Boston Globe and the San Francisco Chronicle. The site also carries the Times Syndicate’s “TV Tonight” column and specialized fare such as a science fiction column.

The new site is advertiser-supported and free to all Internet users. It also has an archive, offering historical information on the entertainment business for a monthly fee of $4.95.

Then there is the “City Scene” button on the site that links users with the entertainment-oriented Web pages of newspapers in 27 cities in the U.S. and Canada. John Morgan, BPI's VP of electronic media, says plans are under way to broaden the site's news sources to include the Times' international publications.

‘Top Pop Singles’ Has More Info Than Ever

“Top Pop Singles 1955-1996” is the eighth edition of the most referred to book in the music industry. The updated edition offers more facts and features than ever before. This essential research tool contains two new significant additions which more than double the number of titles of the previous edition. For one thing, all B-sides are now included. Secondly, the flip side of every charted vinyl single, as well as additional tracks on charted cassette and compact disc singles make their debut in “Top Pop Singles 1955-1996.”

Another first is the inclusion of all the hits of Billboard's Hot 100 Singles Airplay chart within the main artist and title sections. Now, all of the non-single hits by artists such as No Doubt, Alanis Morissette and Smashing Pumpkins appear in chronological order with their Hot 100 hits.

Arranged alphabetically by artists, a typical entry in the book begins with an illuminating artist biography. Following in chronological sequence are the artist’s hits with each hit’s chart history (debut date, peak position and total weeks charted). Also included are indications of RIAA gold and platinum certifications plus thousands of notes of interest.

The new edition is available in selected bookstores or from Record Research at 800-827-9810 or fax 414-251-9452.

Billboard Music Awards
Las Vegas • Dec. 10, 1997
For more information, contact Susan Mazzaro at 212-536-5173

Billboard's 1997 International Latin Music Conference & Awards
Biscayne Bay Marriott, Miami, Fla. • April 5-7, 1998
Billboard's 13th Annual Airplay Monitor Awards
Century Plaza Hotel, Century City, Calif. • April 5, 1998

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L.S.G. Is More Than Sum Of Its Parts

Gerald Levert, Johnny Gill, and Keith Sweat have all gotten a taste of the Hot 100 hit parade, but now that the three stars have teamed up to form a supergroup, they are back in the upper reaches of the chart. "My Body" by LSG (EastWest) bounces 5-4 in its sixth chart week. Of the three, Sweat has enjoyed the highest peak position, reaching No. 2 in 1996 with "Twisted." The follow-up, "Nobody," peaked at No. 3.

Gill has been to No. 3 with his "other" group, New Edition, for whom "Hit Me Off" was a top three hit in 1996. As a solo artist, Gill had another No. 3 track, "Uhh You The Right Way?" in 1999. Levert’s biggest hit until now was "Casanova," a No. 5 single in 1987 recorded with his group, Levert.

On The Billboard 200, the LSG album, "Levert, Sweat, Gill," entered at No. 4 last issue. That’s a higher chart position than any of the artists have achieved on their own. Gill peaked at No. 8 in 1990 with a self-titled album, Levert went to No. 18 in 1984 with "Groove On," and Sweat hit No. 5 in 1996 with his self-titled album. Gill reached No. 1 part as of New Edition since then.

29 AND COUNTING: Now in his ninth week at No. 1 on the Hot 100 with "Something About The Way You Look Tonight," Elton John will probably stay to the top 10 at least until the beginning of 1998. That will extend his record of having at least one top 10 song every year to 29 consecutive years.

3 SPECIAL: Would you be impressed if an artist had 37 chart-topping albums, 34 of them consecutively? That’s the record held by the most successful anthology series in history. "Now That’s What I Call Music! 38" (EMI/Virgin/PolyGram) is No. 1 on the U.K. album chart compiled by Chart-Track (see Hits of the World, page 68). The series began in December 1983 as a joint venture between EMI and Virgin and has continued ever since, at the current pace of three double-CDs a year. PolyGram became a partner in the venture in 1992. "Now That’s What I Call Music! 4" is the only volume in the series to miss the No. 1 spot. That edition, released at Christmas 1984, peaked at No. 2.

One Fine Day: Lou Reed’s "Perfect Day" has charted in the U.K., but never in the U.S. The song, originally heard on the 1972 album "Transformer," was a British chart entry for Duran Duran (No. 25) and Kirsty MacColl (No. 75, both in 1995). Now the song has been transformed into a charity recording, with proceeds going to the BBC Children in Need fund. Released on Chrysalis, the song moves 5-4 on the U.K. singles chart this issue.

B2C: The BBC is also showing up on the U.S. chart this issue. The first Led Zeppelin album to chart in four years debuts at No. 12. "The BBC Sessions" (Atlantic) is the fourth entry for the group in the ’90s and the most successful. The previous high was the No. 13 peak of the four-CD set "Led Zeppelin" in 1996. The BBC album is the highest-charting Zeppelin release since "Coda" went to No. 6 in 1982.

Broadway Bound: Paul Simon’s "Songs From The Capeman" (Warner Bros.), featuring songs from the forthcoming Broadway show, debuts at No. 42. The original cast album of Broadway’s newest hit, "The Lion King On Broadway" (Walt Disney) debuts at No. 200. While "Beauty And The Beast" is still playing on Broadway, the soundtrack to "Beauty And The Beast: The Enchanted Christmas" (Walt Disney) opens at No. 144.

Accurate Title: “Long Time No See” is the name of Chico DeBarge’s new album. The set enters The Billboard 200 at No. 86 and is the first album by him to appear on the chart since hiszyonymous debut in 1987. Unlike his siblings, Chico was never a member of the group DeBarge.

YEAR-TO-DATE \nOVERALL UNIT SALES \nTOTAL 577,940,000 615,869,000 (UP 6.6%)
ALBUMS 475,779,000 499,674,000 (UP 5%)
SINGLES 102,161,000 116,195,000 (UP 13.7%)

YEAR-TO-DATE \nALBUM SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT \nCD 341,407,000 381,402,000 (UP 11.7%)
CASSETTE 133,152,000 117,083,000 (DN 12.1%)
OTHER 1,220,000 1,189,000 (DN 2.5%)

OVERALL UNIT SALES THIS WEEK 14,094,000 11,776,000
ALBUM SALES THIS WEEK 13,103,000 10,816,000
CHANGE UP 7.6%
CHANGE UP 8.9%
CHANGE DOWN 2.1%

THIS WEEK 1996
14,391,000 11,859,000
CHANGE DOWN 0.7%
CHANGE DOWN 8.5%

ALBUM SALES BY FORMAT
CD 9,098,000 8,420,000 (UP 8.1%
CASSETTE 2,650,000 2,374,000 (UP 11.6%)
OTHER 28,000 22,000 (UP 27.3%)

Rounded Figures For week ending 11/9/97

Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected, compiled, and provided by

An Update on BMG Events & Happenings

Billboard DECEMBER 11, 1997

106
A Johnny Mercer songbook:

k.d. lang
Joe Williams
Paula Cole
Rosemary Clooney
Brad Mehldau
Cassandra Wilson
Kevin Spacey
Alison Eastwood
Clint Eastwood
Alison Krauss
Kevin Mahogany
Diana Krall
Tony Bennett
Joshua Redman

"The best tribute of all to Savannah and its native son, Johnny Mercer. From k.d. lang's "Skylark" to Kevin Spacey's "That Old Black Magic," this is the most enjoyable listening to come out of a movie in years."
—Jack Mathews, Newsday

"Paula Cole delivers a brilliant reading of 'Autumn Leaves'" —Variety

"The soundtrack, composed of Johnny Mercer classics, is splendid." —Liz Smith

Produced by Matt Pierson and Clint Eastwood
UNBELIEVABLE

In 1997, Bad Boy has held the #1 spot on Billboard's Hot 100 chart for 22 weeks and the R&B singles chart for 17 weeks - nearly 40% of this year's top hits!

IT'S NOT A GAME!

PUFF DADDY & THE FAMILY

"Can't Nobody Hold Me Down"
#1 Hot 100 Single and R&B Single for 6 weeks - Triple Platinum

"I'll Be Missing You"
#1 Hot 100 for 11 weeks, #1 R&B Single for 8 weeks - 4x Platinum

"Been Around The World" - Already Top 20 at R&B Airplay

"It's All About The Benjamins"
Now at R&B and Pop, Remix (featuring Dave Grohl & Rob Zombie, Tommy Stinson and FuzzBubble at Rock now!)

From his #1 debut album, No Way Out - Now past Triple Platinum

THE NOTORIOUS B.I.G.

"Hypnotize"
#1 Hot 100 Single and R&B Single for 3 weeks - Platinum

"Mo Money Mo Problems"
#1 Hot 100 Single for 2 weeks, #2 R&B Single - Platinum

New Single, "Sky's The Limit,"
at R&B and Crossover now

From his #1 album Life After Death
Now past 7x Platinum

MASE

"Feel So Good"
Top 10 Hot 100 Single, Top 5 R&B Single
Already Gold

From his #1 debut album, Harlem World - Now past Platinum

Our thanks to everybody at radio, retail, press and video - especially Arista Records for a truly unbelievable year! We couldn't have done it without you.

CHANGING THE FACE OF MUSIC...ONE #1 HIT AT A TIME.

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