Japanese Label Avex Undergoes Reorganization

BY STEVE MCCULURE

TOKYO—Avex, the indie label that in its 10-year history has become one of Japan’s top three record companies, has announced a major reorganization as it prepares for a series of big releases early next year and gears up for its fall 1998 stock market debut. “We need to prevent ‘big-company disease,’” says Avex chairman Tom Yoda, noting that the Avex group of companies now employs 500 people. The biggest change at Avex will be the company’s existing four-division structure trimmed to two: administration and business operations. Avex’s international division has been merged into the business operations division’s international repertoire (Continued on page 109).

Western Music Thrives As Niche Genre

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Mention the term “western music,” and many people automatically link it with country, as in the antiquated phrase “country & western.” Though the two genres do share rural roots, today’s western music is a thriving niche market that is far removed from its country cousin. Michael Martin Murphey, Riders In The Sky, Red Steagall, Trudy Fair, Don Edwards, Sons Of The San Joaquin, Ian Tyson, and other western acts are finding their music buoyed by alternative retail outlets, a strong live music scene, film exposure, and grassroots marketing (see story, page 101). Even up-and-coming acts like K.W. Hampton, the Hays County Guis, Randy

Sales Spikes Expected For Stars Of Billboard Awards

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LAS VEGAS—LeAnn Rimes, who nabbed the most honors at the 1997 Billboard Music Awards, is also likely to be the big winner at retail this week, thanks in part to the exposure she received on the show, broadcast live Dec. 8 on Fox from the MGM Grand Garden Arena here. In addition, other multiple award-winner—Toni Braxton, Spice Girls, Elton John, Dru Hill, and Puff Daddy—and the diverse lineup of performers are primed to experience a bump at the register, retailers say. “LeAnn Rimes won multiple Billboard Music Awards. She’s got the hot hand. And she performed,” says Al Wilson, senior VP of merchandising for the 90-store, Milford, Mass.-based Strawberries chain, a division of

RETAIL TRACK

Blockbuster Said To Be ‘Shopping’ Its Music Biz

BY JOHN LANNERT

As he prepares to expand his steady rising thespian profile via his star-ring role in Paul Simon’s upcoming Broadway musical “The Capeman,” Marc Anthony is also laying the

(Continued on page 108)

WARNER, REPRiSE, N’ville Split

BY CHET FLIPPO

NASHVILLE—Citing the increasing independence of Warner and Reprise and the need to give each label its own focus, Warner/Reprise Nashville president Jim Ed Norman announced the separation of the two labels Dec. 4. Norman appointed senior VP/GMs for the Warner Bros. Nashville and Reprise Records Nashville labels and says that each label will now have its own marketing department. Separate promotion departments and artist rosters were established for each label two years ago. Reprise continues its radio promotion partnership with Giant Records, known as the Giant/Reprise Promotion Collective. Bill Mayne, formerly senior VP of promotion for Warner/Reprise, was named senior VP/GM of Reprise. Former Warner/Reprise senior VP of marketing Bob Saporiti is now senior VP/GM of Warner Bros. Both will report to Norman and to Warner/Reprise executive VP Eddie Reeves, who formerly held additional duties as Warner/Reprise Nashville GM. Norman says other executive appointments are forthcoming (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 5). (Continued on page 14)

New Alliance CEO To Refocus On Core Biz

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—With the completion of a business plan, Alliance Entertainment Corp. is aiming to re-emerge from the Chapter 11 process by the middle of next year. That’s the word from Eric Weisman, the company’s newly named president/CEO. Weisman, who has been CEO since July, and before that senior VP of business development, replaces Al Teller, who is stepping down from day-to-day operations as of Jan. 1 but will remain as chairman of the company’s board of directors (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 10). (Continued on page 105)

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NEW YORK—An investment consortium that includes Bob Morgado’s Marlorey Music Group has agreed to acquire a significant equity stake in Platinum Entertainment.

According to a proxy statement issued by the label’s parent company, Platinum will issue to the investment group 20,000 convertible preferred shares and warrants to purchase up to 50,000 shares of common stock. The deal was set to close Dec. 12 (beyond press time). Currently, there are 5.3 million shares outstanding. The stock closed at $5.26.

As part of the deal, two Platinum executives—Steven Devick, chairman/CEO of the company, and Andrew Filipowski, a director of the company—and two members of the investment group, have agreed to purchase 2,500 shares of the convertible preferred stock of the company and warrants to purchase 40,000 shares of common stock for $2.5 million.

In addition to New York-based Marlorey Media, the investment group consists of Atlantic Equity, Marlorey Music, and two independent music companies–Jazz Valley and Trojan Records–which are owned by Mike Williams.

“This agreement gives Platinum a significant equity stake in the company’s continuing success,” says Andy Crutchley, Platinum’s chief operating officer. “It also provides an avenue to strengthen its international presence, and the transaction will help finance additional industry and financial expertise.”

Morgado, the former chairman of the Warner Music Group, and Steven Devick, a former executive at Sony Music, are considered making an investment, he considers three ingredients. “No 1. is the people; No. 2 is the strategic interest; and No. 3, the personal interest. That combination gives it an advantage in a marketplace otherwise dominated by big companies. For our purposes, we concluded a fairly strong affirmative.”

Morgado, chairman of Marlorey, says that Platinum’s niche strategy allows the label to be a strong player in its own right. “They don’t pretend that they will compete with strong national companies for contemporary hit music,” he says. In addition, he says that Platinum has a strategic relationship with other things that Marlorey is doing.

Devick, Platinum’s chairman, says that in making synergies with Marlorey, the deal will help alleviate debt, which the company used to grow its business. Rather than pay off the debt from the development of the label, when it enters a niche, Platinum has made four acquisitions since it was formed in 1991, buying R.E.M. Music Inc., a Christian label; Double J, a publishing company; and Intersound, which produces music in a variety of formats, including gospel, country, and R&B, and has a 60% interest in House of Blues Music Co.

The most recent deal, closed Jan. 1, of this year, was for Intersound. In that deal, Platinum paid $24 million in cash for the label and $5 million in notes and assumed $12 million in debt. To finance the deal, the company took out a $25 million term loan, as well as draw down its line of its $10 million revolving credit facility.

Currently, the company has lined up a $30 million revolver with the Bank of Montreal, which is contingent upon the company raising $10 million in equity. The Marlorey/Alabama/VP-Kalladain deal will fulfill that requirement.

In addition, Devick points out that after Platinum targets its niches, its next phase of development is to “grow international.” When Morgado joined Marlorey Music Group, he considerably strengthened that company’s international presence, he says.

Last year, Platinum reported a net loss of $9.3 million on net revenue of $24.4 million for the 12-month period that ended May 31. If Intersound is included for the first five months of 1997, net revenue would have been $37.4 million, according to the proxy statement. It is important to note that Platinum’s VP and partner at Marlorey, projects that Platinum will have gross revenue of $80 million in its fiscal year ended May 31.

He says that the combination of Marlorey/Alabama/VP-Kalladain brings musical, financial, and entertainment expertise that went to help platinum grow to the next level.

Richard Esposito, executive VP at Marlorey, notes that in addition to the value-added in niche genres, Platinum is good at exploiting brands that others have developed. The roster at Platinum’s family of labels includes such diverse acts as Puffy’s The Lox, Boys II Men, and Beach Boys, Peter Cetera, the Alan Parsons Project, Kansas, Crystal Gayle, the Ohio Players, Eddie Rabbit, and the Gap Band.

He says that those of artists, as well as the contemporary Christian artists in the Platinum stable and the potential to get a new product, could provide content for Marlorey’s Asian operations.
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In the past 10 years, the recording industry has managed to generate huge profits by reselling and re-releasing its vast musical legacy via the CD. It has been my great fortune to have a career that has allowed me to see many of the records with which I started my career become part of this legacy and ultimately be deemed viable by major record companies for release. From the standpoint of both art and commerce, the importance of retaining great music is undeniable. However, my level of satisfaction regarding the sonic quality of CD reissues of records originally released on vinyl that I produced has varied greatly. As I have come to find many of my colleagues sharing in my ambivalence, I felt it was none of my place to share some of my observations with our industry.

In doing this, it is not my intention to offend those invaluable professionals in our industry who know better, but rather to raise the consciousness of their endeavors to maintain the highest possible standards. If the original mastering notes were available for every record the major labels wanted to reissue on CD, such documentation would certainly be very useful, but not definitive. Why? Not to downplay the creative contribution of the mastering engineer of the ‘50s and ‘60s, but the mastering of pop music onto vinyl disc at that time was largely governed not by creative but by technical considerations unique to vinyl.

A mastering engineer living exclusively in the world of vinyl has a myriad of practical considerations to contend with before his/her considerable skill and finesse could be applied to the creative use of equalization and compression. These included getting the loudest level possible onto vinyl disc without the needle jumping the groove (skipping) by "chewing" with the overall level, widening the groove, or attenuating the bass during problem spots lasting for a split second or compensating for lengthy album sides in order to prevent the sonic (Continued on page 3.)

The magazine's logo and issue date are visible on the page.
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Immortal/Epic, New Line Team For ‘Spaun’ Promo

■ BY STEVE TRAIMAN

NEW YORK—Immortal/Epic Soundtrack and New Line Home Video are teaming up for a cross-merchandising campaign designed to benefit both “Spaun—The Album” and the forthcoming VHS and DVD home video releases of “Spaun.”

The Immortal/Epic Soundtrack album is initially shipped to stores just before the New Line Cinema big-screen opening of “Spaun” in August. “It hit The Billboard 200 chart at No. 7 and has stayed on ever since,” says Al Musocco, the label’s West Coast marketing VP. The set stands at No. 184 this issue on The Billboard 200. According to Soundtrack Source.

(Continued on page 109)

More Chains May Pull Prodigy Set If It’s Not Sticked

■ BY DON JEFFREY

NEW YORK—The latest Prodigy album has been removed from about 4,500 retail stores in the U.S. due to “objectionable lyrics” and could be taken off many more if the product is not sticked.


One industry executive estimates that the album has sold 400,000-400,000 units of the recording before it was pulled from the stores.

At press time, Target, the other major discount department store chain that carries music, is in talks with the electronic band’s American label, Maverick Records, about shipping “parental advisory” stickers to place on the albums. An executive at Target indicates that if the packaging isn’t altered, the record label might be taken off of its approximately 800 stores.

A spokesman for Musicland, the largest specialty music chain in the U.S. with 903 stores that sell CDs and cassettes, says it is also in negotiations with the label about sticking the album. The product is still in the stores, and there has been no decision to remove it if the talks fail, the spokesman adds.

Maverick’s GM, Russ Roiger, was not available for comment at press time.

Other specialty music retailers, such as Tower and Virgin, are not demanding stickers on the product.

(Continued on page 102)

Braxton Sues Arista, LaFace Over Contract Cites ‘Seven-Year’ Law In Saying Deal Is Invalid

■ BY CHRIS MORRIS

LOS ANGELES—Invoking a 60-year-old California law limiting the duration of personal-services contracts, R&B pop vocalist Toni Braxton has filed suit against Arista Records and LaFace Records, asking a state court to void her agreements with the labels.

In an action for declaratory relief, filed Dec. 5 in California Superior Court here, Braxton maintains that under Section 2855 of the California Labor Code—the so-called “seven-year statute,” which restricts the length of personal-services pacts to seven years—her recording agreements with LaFace and its parent and distributor, Arista, executed in August 1989, were invalid as of August of last year (Billboard Bulletin, Dec. 8).

The suit also claims that, at the outset, the documents will be invalid as of Nov. 1, 1998, seven years after Braxton commenced her services under the terms of the contracts.

No monetary damages are sought in Braxton’s action.

Braxton is only the latest major artist to employ the seven-year statute in a contract dispute with a label. It has been used in the past by artists including Don Henley and Metallica as a lever in the renegotiation of existing contracts. Most such disputes have been settled out of court.

Braxton is among the most successful crossover divas of recent years: Total SoundScan, based on its audited 1996 LaFace/Arista debut has sold 4.8 million units, while its 1996 follow-up, “Secrets,” has sold 4.7 million. The latter release, which climbed to No. 2 on The Billboard 200, stands at No. 183 on the chart this issue, in its 77th week.

Her suit goes to great lengths to establish a California jurisdiction. Although Arista is headquartered in New York, and LaFace is based in Atlanta, the action notes that Arista maintains offices in Beverly Hills, Calif., while LaFace partner Kenneth “Babyface” Edmonds, the group’s principal producer, “furnished recording facilities for [Braxton’s] recordings at his home in Beverly Hills.”

The suit also notes that Braxton has performed in California, which the suit alleges, Arista and LaFace “paid for Braxton’s moving expenses,” and concludes that Braxton wishes to remain in California in order to render services in California for the convenience of Edmonds.

The case apparently represents a last resort on the part of the singer.

(Continued on page 149)

Ritz, Grapevine Deal Links Top Irish Names

■ BY NIGEL WILLIAMSON

LONDON—The merger of Ritz Music Group and Grapevine Records brings together as corporate siblings some of the biggest names in Irish music.

The $3.5 million (€4.8 million) deal, which has been under negotiation since February, was signed at the beginning of this week, and the company with combined annual revenue in excess of 12 million pounds ($19 million).

Grapevine artists include the Irish performers Mary Black, Christy Moore, and Sharon Shannon, while the Ritz stable is headed by the platinum-selling Daniel O’Donnell. Other Ritz acts include Foster & Allen and Charlie Landsborough, while Grapevine’s non-Irish artists include Joan Baez and Emmylou Harris.

Under the deal, Mick Clerkin will remain chairman of the Ritz Group, which he established in 1970, but Paddy Pender, one of the founders of Grapevine, will take over day-to-day running as CEO.

Steve Fernie, with whom he co-founded Grapevine in 1991, has been bought out. The group has purchased additional office space next door to Ritz’s Wembley headquarters in north London, and a full move should be accomplished by February.

“The merger will allow us to expand and develop worldwide as well as provide new opportunities for artists on both labels. It seems a logical move from every side,” says Clerkin, who started in the business managing Irish show bands.

“This is an exciting deal for us,” says Pendergast, “it enables us to do things with our artists which we couldn’t do otherwise. It’s no secret that Grapevine had suffered from cashflow troubles.”

Although the agreement is with Ritz’s sister company, Graeme Buxton, the group has purchased additional office space next door to Ritz’s Wembley headquarters in north London, and a full move should be accomplished by February.

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(Continued on page 199)

WEB EVENT FEATURES AMOS VIDS 1st Pay-Per-View Venture To Benefit Charity

■ BY DOUG REECE

LOS ANGELES—In a charitable effort aimed at raising funds for the Washington, D.C.-based Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), Atlantic Records artist Tori Amos will open up her music video catalog to consumers for the first-ever online pay-per-view charity event.

Beginning Thursday (18), users making a one-time minimum $5 donation to RAINN will have unlimited access to view via video-streaming technology 14 Amos music videos, including a clip for "The Shirt," never before shown in the U.S., during a four-week period.

Amos, who serves as a chairperson on RAINN’s board, says, “Ever since RAINN was started I have seen the incredible help it has given people. When I was approached to tie in with RAINN, I was thrilled, because I know how valuable the Internet is to people who may not be able to get information otherwise, and it also provides them with an avenue to reach out for the help that they need.”

The charity-enhanced pay-per-view package WithRaiAlid, will be hosted by Atlantic at www.atlantic-records.com and Seattle-based RealNetworks at www.real.com.

The latter company, which specializes in online video and audio streaming, initiated the project in part to help Atlantic’s new RealSystem 5.0 Commerce Solution, which is tailored to make on-demand and live online events secure and functional.

According to RealNetworks executive producer of music services Chris Otto, the pairing with Amos was a natural extension from previous collaborations with the artist.

Before the commercial release of her single “Caught A Lite Sneezor,” for example, Amos allowed RealNetworks to debut the song on the Internet via the company’s earlier RealAudio 2.0 technology.

Earlier this year, RealNetworks also promoted RAINN on WebActive, its site dedicated to political activism.

Toyohiro, Atlantic’s vice-president of multimedia (U.S.) Nikke Slight says that the project seemed an ideal way of promoting art and activism.

“It is the first music project of its kind on the [World Wide] Web, and we wanted very much to work with RealNetworks to bring this great opportunity to RAINN, which is a cause close to Atlantic’s heart and Tori’s,” says Slight.

(Continued on page 102)

Supreme Court Heats Case On Parallel Imports

■ BY BILL HOLLAND

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Supreme Court heard oral arguments Dec. 8 on a major copyright-related case that involves the legality of parallel imports and gray-market goods.

The court’s ruling early next year will decide which of two sections of the copyright law takes precedence—one that prevents unauthorized imports and another that may allow them (Billboard, Dec. 11, Nov. 22).

Although the copyrighted material at issue in the case, Quality King Distributors Inc. vs. L’Anza Research International, are the labels on hair products, the case has wide-ranging implications both here and abroad for all copyrighted products produced domestically but sold abroad at a discount, including sound recordings.

(Continued on page 103)

ASCAP Alters Internet Online License System

■ BY CARLA HAY

LOS ANGELES—Performing right organization ASCAP has updated its Internet online license agreement for those who want to use ASCAP music on the World Wide Web.

The modified license includes three rate schedules for new licenses, such as Web site operators, to determine which schedule best fits their needs.

ASCAP had previously offered a more generic online licensing agreement without customized features. Part of the new online ASCAP license also includes a reduction of its minimum license fee from $500 to $250. Although all three U.S. performing rights organizations (ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC) have their own Web sites that (Continued on page 109)
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Billboard joins Atlantic Records in their 50th Anniversary Celebration with a special tribute to Ahmet Ertegun. In addition to an in-depth, exclusive interview with Atlantic's founder, Billboard's January 17th salute will include a historical overview of the company, emphasizing its evolution, pioneering efforts and achievements. Also look for a complete greatest hits' chart of Atlantic's best-selling albums and singles to date. Don't miss this spectacular celebration. Call your Billboard representative today.

Contact
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Issue Date: January 17
Ad Reservation Close: December 18
Miles Breaks New Ground
With ‘23AM’ Set On Arista

By Larry Flick

NEW YORK—On his second collection, "23AM," Italian DJ-turned-composer Robert Miles reveals an ambitious new sound that reaches far beyond the much-copied dance style of his 1996 worldwide smash "Children." Given positive initial reaction to the set, due in U.S. stores via Arista on Tuesday (16), Miles has begun a new career path that transcends temporary club hits.

The project was officially launched stateside Dec. 8, when the label began soliciting radio airplay for the first single, "Freedom." Featuring guest vocals by disco icon Kathy Sledge, Club DJ's were shipped a two-record set of U.K. remixes of the track Nov. 24.

Although the soothing, quasi-classical piano sound that distinguished "Children" remains prominent, "Freedom" has a notably more ambient pop texture and a languid shuffle groove that renders the track as accessible to adult radio formats as it is to youth-driven airwaves and dancefloors. It's a musical shift that some programmers felt was necessary.

"Completely duplicating "Children" would have been a grave mistake," says Dave Lalla, GM at WMSC Montclair, N.J. He says "Freedom" has "gotten "excellent" phone" during its first week on air. "This new song has a good sense of familiarity, but it also has other elements that makes it fresh and attractive. It's a great song."

Erin Brady, music director at WBBS (B-96) Chicago, agrees. "I was pleasantly surprised by the single," he says. "If it gets the right amount of promotional energy from the label, it could be extremely successful. There's certainly a hole at radio for a record that sounds like this."

According to Jay Krugman, senior VP of marketing and COO of the label, "23AM" is part of a strategy that is designed to broaden the label's appeal. "There's nothing out there right now that sounds like this, and that's our strongest weapon," he says. "Children" was a special record that defined a specific moment in time. None of the sound-alike records have been able to capture that magic. With "Freedom" and "23AM," Robert has created something equally powerful and unique. "Children" is no longer a hit record; it has become a hit record because of Robert's ability to reach new audiences beyond those that followed him in the dance music genre.

Musicians and producers are already raving about "Freedom," with many telling Arista they think the single may be bigger than "Children" when it reaches the Top 40. The label is also soliciting promotion ideas from its partners, as well as booking a huge TV taping, and we became close friends. We still are to this day."

"It was a struggle to get "Children" out in 1981, then worked for famed producer Joe Gibbs for six months, where she met reigning reggae stars of the day Dennis Brown, Yellowman, J.C. Lodge, and others. Armed with those contacts, she decided to tackle concert promotion, directing a music festival and promoting a concert by singer Marcia Griffiths.

"But by 1988, I noticed that there was a great deal of good press on reggae," Quattro says. "People didn't know what was going on in the Miami/South Florida market. There was no way to get information on the artists. That's where the magazine idea came from—to fill this void. I had already become acquainted with the stars—[Brown], Gregory Isaacs, Third World—so it was easy to ask, 'Let me take a picture and do an interview.' They were always very enthusiastic, cooperative, and supportive.

After the first few newsletters disappeared quickly in eager fans' hands, Quattro took the next step and, with then-partner Michael Williams (bass player and leader of Jamaica's Zap Pow band), upgraded Reggae Report to a magazine. At Clift's suggestion, Quattro put a price on it. "I used to give it away," she says, laughing. "I wanted it to be the best magazine for reggae because I felt such a connection to the artists." Quattro continues. "I knew where they were coming from. I could relate to it; we were friends. I would be able to provide the latest, most current information to the fans on the reggae stars. That's why the interviews were always my thing. We would have interviews with the international reggae column because a lot of people in those days were not convinced that reggae had a market outside Jamaica."

"It's become a very popular section," she adds. "I credit Bob Marley's [international] "We tours with that. They were mind-boggling." Today, Reggae Report can boast of introducing countless fans to reggae and Jamaica as an important source of information.

"I credit Sara Gurgen, executive editor, for the quality of our editorial," says Quattro. "And we have a great sales team, one of whom have been there from the beginning. Our slogans are, "We can't keep magazines with our readers in mind" and "From the stage to the page."

Highlights of the magazine also include top 10 charts from around the world. "We get E-mail from everywhere—Italy, Spain, South America," says Quattro. "Radio and sound system DJs from every country submit their top 10 lists. It's a great way to track the music, because we see that a song that's popular in Richmond, Va., is also on the chart in Rome, Italy. The cause is a great one, even if it has a long way to go as far as distribution."

People from 45 countries subscribe to Reggae Report. "It's not [a] huge market, but they're there," Quattro says. "They're very supportive. Those fans have kept me going, because it certainly hasn't been easy.

Among the obstacles faced by Reggae Report and other reggae magazines is lack of advertising dollars from record companies and retailers of reggae-related products from Jamaica, the U.S., and everywhere else.

"We made it our job to let people know that those records are there," says Quattro. "We made it our job to review them, and they show up in our charts. But the record companies should do their part now and promote and market the records to this audience that we've been marketing to. They should support us so we can keep doing that.

"After 16 years," she adds, "they should just accept that we're not a passing fad and that we need to be financially supported."

The other looming obstacle blocking Reggae Report's continued growth is unscrupulous distributors. "Many aren't honest about their sell-through numbers, and they take months and months to pay us," says Quattro. "Five years ago, we lost about $60,000 with one Midwestern distributor, and we had to turn to bankruptcy. That's just one example. Now I'm very selective about distribution offers. I would even consider giving [the magazine] away for free if I had the funds to do it and there was a way to control distribution. We are nationwide, and shipping costs are very high; we spend thousands of dollars to ship the 'gears,' so the money has to come from somewhere.

And money is what's currently uppermost in Quattro's mind. "Reggae Report is seeking investors," she says. (Continued on page 108)
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**Netherlands’ Anouk Off To Soaring Start With Dino Debut**

**Netherlands’ Anouk Off To Soaring Start With Dino Debut**

**THE HAGUE, Netherlands–**With the release of a 12-year-old female pop prodigy, the Netherlands’ Anouk, this city looks set to reclaim its title of Beat City No. 1, a moniker the locals once used to distinguish it from the nation’s capital, Amsterdam.

With help from the city’s musical origins, including the late Queen Noor, Anouk Teweels has put the Hague back on the map. Unusually in these times and in this market, the artist has emerged from the live scene.

In only two weeks, her debut album, “Together Alone” (Dino Music), reached the top slot in the Mega Top 100 Albums chart and went gold with sales of 50,000 units. With a pan-European (excluding the U.K.) and Asian Pacific release through the BIM imprint under her belt, her international reputation is growing daily.

In the week beginning Nov. 29, “Nobody’s Wife” was still holding at No. 2 in the Mega Top 100 after 11 weeks. The album, released Oct. 27, dropped back to No. 4 in its fifth week.

Jean Broeks, buyer at the country’s largest retail chain, Free Record Shop, with 140 outlets, reports 9,000 units sold so far. Weekly, we sell on average 1,000 copies, which is unbelievable for a debut artist,” Broeks notes.

Anouk’s strong debut has been guided by fellow Hague citizens Barry Hay and George Kooymans, lead vocalist and guitarist, respectively, with veteran rock act Golden Earring.

Frits van Swoll, A&R manager at repertoire owner Dino Music, still echoes the moment that Hay and Kooymans walked in with a demo tape of Anouk. “I was totally knocked off my feet. OK, it wasn’t exactly Dino Music, but as we said, it was as best known for our releases in the poprock genre, but there’s no way around good music.”

Dino subsequently offered Anouk a long-term recording deal on the spot, while Hay and Kooymans committed themselves to supplying song material and to production along with John Sonneveld, Golden Earring’s longtime staff producer.

Anouk was introduced to the Dutch public by her Hay/Kooymans-penned debut single, “Mood Indigo,” in November of last year, but there was little response. Hay and Kooymans were preoccupied with writing for their own album, and Anouk started writing songs with her artistic partner, Bart van Veen. Among those songs was “Nobody’s Wife,” the song that broke her instantly nationwide.

“That song was already a crowd-pleaser at my live gigs,” says Anouk, who still has a part-time job as a nursery school teacher. American song-

writer Frank Carillo (with whom Kooymans had collaborated before) provided two more songs—funky stomper “Fingerprints On Your Skin” and bluesy ballad “Time Is A Jailer”—for the 11-track album. In addition to “Mood Indigo,” the album contains one more Hay/Kooymans track, “Fluid Conduction.” All the rest are Anouk/van Veen originals, which was fine with Hay and Kooymans. “We didn’t want it to be an Earring project,” says Hay.

**‘LIKE RINGING A BELL’**

“So anything that came from her, we could only encourage,” he adds. “This is Anouk. She’s a natural hard-core, unpolished gem you don’t meet every day. We didn’t have to rewrite anything.”

Hay’s introduction to Anouk nearly didn’t happen. “A contractor working in my house kept on raving about this girl who could sing like ringing a bell. I didn’t want to come across blasé, but that’s something we hear every day.” The contractor took Anouk to Golden Earring gig, and Hay recalls seeing her, “My first impression in such cases is always, ‘Please don’t tell me she can sing.’” After a few duets locally, Hay was convinced and talked Kooymans into backing her.

That contractor was her ex-husband, Edwin Jansen, who later took on managerial duties under the banner of AT Productions. “I’ve supported her from day one, when she was only a backup singer in a soul band. Initially it was nothing more than a hobby which grew out to be proper artist management,” recalls Jansen.

“Everything was very low-key and low budget until the moment Hay and Kooymans stepped in.”

The typical music-business hassles he and Anouk encountered before everything came good is reflected in the lyrics to the “The Other Side Of Me.” Says the artist, “Nobody believed in me before. This song is meant to say, ‘Scared of this girl? I am. And this is where I’ve got to.’” Seven-five-gig are lined up for her in the Netherlands until the summer, after which international tours are planned.

With Anouk having been discovered by chance, Dino’s van Swoll notes that “it has been a mighty long time [since] an artist came out of the live circuit” instead of the marketing department. Anouk is not a ‘bland project’ which has been put together by clever marketers. She’s a genuine live artist.”

Tune in to any modern Dutch station, and you’ll hear “Nobody’s Wife.” Even after 38 plays a day, every 1 3/4FM music programmer Ben Hoijndijk can’t get enough of it. “It might be loud on the surface, but skin-deep there’s a beautiful song,” he says. “Every other spin reveals a little more of its inner strength. A rock song with balls is a gift to radio in these ballad-flooded times.”

Her video is in high rotation on MTV Europe’s Northern region. A special show featuring Anouk presenting her favorite videos has already been filmed for broadcast on MTV Europe at a later date.

At Dutch local music TV station TMF, her video has been top of the bill for weeks.

Van Swoll attributes her success to her talent, delivery, and looks, plus the all-important factor of timing. “It’s the first time a ‘girl in rock’ is a local,” van Swoll says. “Up to now such female rockers were all American. What’s more, she’s a whole deal younger than the likes of Alanis [Morissette] and Meredith [Brooks], which makes her even more appealing to each other of the same age.”

Yet, says Anouk, “I’m definitely not the next Alanis, as I’m coming from a blues background. I used to listen to my mum’s record collection, which was mainly comprised of legendary bands and soul singers like Irma Thomas, Laura Lee, and Etta James. That’s the real thing to me.”

The raw sound, reminiscent of Nirvana with its quiet verse and wild chorus progressions, was intentional, says Hay. “Our purpose was that it shouldn’t sound too produced,” he said. Simplicity works best with this kind of music, which is sort of in-your-face stuff. We recorded it at George’s [Steenbergen] Lane in Belgium with sessioneers and more or less banged it out on tape in one go. No multilayered overdubs. Pure is the way the album will be released internationally—the set is due in most European and Asian Pacific territories in the new year, with the exception of Scandinavia, where it launched Dec. 4. “I don’t like to be repackaged, remixed, and restyled,” Anouk says.

“As everything happened in no time in Holland, it could do the same abroad, we feel. So we leave it pure as it is,” says Maarten van Swoll, Anouk’s appointed managing director at BGM Benelux, Dino’s joint-venture partner and owner of the international exploitation rights.

Anouk’s international career will kick off in Sweden with a live appearance at the Lucia gala this month in Stockholm.

Although Arista U.S. is reportedly interested in releasing her album, Anouk doesn’t see herself stepping into the footsteps of Golden Earring, who enjoyed a top three single with “Rad Love” on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in 1973. “No way,” she says. “The States have too many great singers of their own. Who’s waiting for me?”

In the wake of Anouk’s success, she is drooling Billy The Kid, another band from the Hague, with her as a suitable candidate for a potential signing at Dino. “We feel like one big family in our town’s rock scene, and we want to have access to each other as much as we can,” she says. A one-off triple bill with Golden Earring in their hometown is currently under discussion.

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**ARTISTS & MUSIC**

**RECORD COMPANIES.** Island Black Music in New York names Beverly Paige VP of media relations. She was head of black music publicity at InterScope Records.

TVT Records in New York promotes Patricia Joseph to VP of soundtracks and A&R. She was director of A&R.

Susan Genco is promoted to VP of business and legal affairs at Arista Records in New York. She was prior director of business and legal affairs.

RCA Records in New York names Valerie Grant VP of West Coast music sales.

Sony’s EMI, New York’s VP of international, Reiner Striemer is appointed VP of human resources at Capitol Records in Los Angeles. She was VP of human resources at Castle Rock Entertainment.

Epic Records in New York promotes Karen Gruning to director of international marketing. She was manager of international press.

Geffen Records in San Francisco promotes Adrian Moreira to regional sales manager. He was Northwest marketing manager.

Provident Music Group in Nashville names Doris Batcher sales coordinator of national accounts and distributors, Maria Hoyos coordinator of international marketing, Vickie Whillis human resources director, Elise Keenan senior accountant, and Mary Ratzman accounts payable supervisor. They were, respectively, marketing assistant at Benson Label Group, international coordinator at Provident, human resources assistant at Provident, staff accountant at Provident, and assistant to the office manager at World Class Talent.

Brentwood Records in Nashville names Joseph Cassell A&R director. He was seeking a position at the Benson Label Group.

The Benson Label Group in Nashville names Leslie Tayman public relations manager. She was choral marketing coordinator at Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing.

Sublime Records in Nashville appoints Robert Pozanski marketing director. He was VP of operations at Straight Up Management.

**RELATED FIELDS.** The Karpel Group in New York names Craig Karpel VP of A&R. He was VP of the classic division at Boney/Bryan-Brown.

Jeff McClusky & Associates in Chicago appoints Neela Marnell director of artist development/production management. She was manager of college marketing at Atlantic Records.

Spitz, Friedman, Libien & Gottfried in New York names Lynn Levy director of arts and entertainment client services group. He was an independent consultant.

The MAGNUM Cos. Ltd. in Atlanta names William C. Segal GM. He was PD for the R&B stations at the Atlanta Committee for the 1996 Olympic Games.

Metropolitan Entertainment Group in Montclair, NJ, promotes Lori Alporte to talent buyer of the concert division. She was assistant talent buyer.
Mark Eitzel Springing A 'Trap' On Matador Records

BY BRADLEY BAMBARGER

NEW YORK—Seldom does a title so perfectly encapsulate an album's concept as does the moniker of the edgy singer/songwriter Mark Eitzel's upcoming Matador disc, "Catching A Trap And I Can't Back Out. 'Cause I Love You Too Much, Baby.'" The album is Eitzel's most artful collection of songs, brooding, haunting and serpentine, with the singer's words as the central and longest-reaching element in most of the songs.

Eitzel is best known for his songwriting, and this album is a testament to his skills. He has written and recorded numerous songs that have become popular hits, and his music has been featured on many films and television shows.

Eitzel's music is often praised for its depth and complexity, and his live performances are known for being intimate and engaging.

In writing about Eitzel's music, one critic wrote: "Eitzel's words are powerful and moving, and his music is haunting and beautiful." Another critic noted: "Eitzel is a master of the word, his songs are a testament to his talent."
ROUNDERS 'SING IT!' (Continued from preceding page)

Wardell Quezerque and Victor Goines to write charts for the session. Most of the material is fresh originals by such writers as Dan Penn, Steve Cropper, Homer Banks, Gary Nicholson, Donnie Fritts, David Egan, and Mike Reid.

Thomas says that the kind of ego-driven infighting that sometimes mars such all-star get-togethers was absent from the session: "We really didn't have a problem, where you get the normal cuteness and bitches among women on shows. I was like the mother hen, and everybody else was the little chickens."

Like Rounder's Browne, Thomas sees "Sing It!" as an opportunity to draw new listeners for herself and her two co-stars.

She says, "We honestly do not get a lot of airplay, and to have three talented women who have to struggle the way we struggle to keep gigs, to keep an audience, to try to get new audiences to discover us and realize that we are a talent to be reckoned with, it's difficult. This album should, if nothing else, get us introduced to people who would normally not know of us or have even heard of us before."

The trio, which so far has performed live dates at the New Orleans House of Blues and at La Zona Rosa in Austin, has taped an episode of the PBS show "Austin City Limits" for an early '98 airing.

"That's the linchpin of the marketing plan, and the timing of it's great, because it's about a month after the release," Browne says. "All of the stations that are going to play it have to pull it down within the week of Valentine's Day. So between the 14th and the 21st [of February] is the window on the first run of 'Austin City Limits'... We're working with PBS to offer underwriting and premium type stuff with this record."

Rounder is also looking at the possibility of national TV advertising on such cable networks as VH1 and Lifetime.

"On the promotional front, we're working the record to the triple-A format primarily, also our blues and soul [stations]," Browne says. "Publicity is working hard and getting good response so far. The record has a nice hook to it—there's something for a writer or press to get their teeth into, the three [singers] together. We feel good about getting a significant amount of national press. We're going to do some catalog promotions with retail and one-stars."

Since Ball, who was raised in Louisiana, and Thomas have both been frequent attractions at Jazz Fest, Browne says, "We're going to try to build some special events around Mardi Gras and the Jazz & Heritage Festival. We'll probably have a promotion around Mardi Gras time, and we will send the winners to the Jazz & Heritage Festival. It will serve as an incentive to retail to promote the thing—the retailer a trip to Jazz Fest and the consumer a trip to Jazz Fest and maybe some radio people."

Currently, tour plans are uncertain. Says Thomas, "We hope to, if all of our schedules work... Nothing as of yet has been finalized, but it sure would be a fun thing to do."
WARNER AND REPRISE NASHVILLE SPLIT

Warner/Reprise Nashville will continue to operate as the corporate parent of the two labels. Sales, publicity, creative services, artist development, and administrative staff will remain under the Warner/Reprise umbrella.

In Bill Mayne and Shimmel’s view, “the company is so big we have two people who have worked together shoulder to shoulder for years and have made incredible contributions to this company as a team,” says Norman. “While they will still have access to each other, what an exciting and thrilling opportunity this is for us as a company to now let both of them begin to articulate their separate visions and ideas about how one promotes and markets artists. They’re both consummate professionals.”

“Why am I doing this?” Mayne asks. “It’s just a little bit more interesting. It’s my 10th anniversary with the company. It’s a real challenge that excites me greatly. I’ve been overseeing promotion for three labels [Warner, Reprise, and the Giant Company]. It feels as though we’ve just got so deep doing this. I welcome the opportunity to take Reprise and develop it into the premier label in Nashville. We can take what is already here and develop it into a small but very significant presence. We’re planning to make some major changes. Jack Purcell will continue as national promotion director of Reprise, assuming Mayne’s duties there.

“The great thing now,” says Mayne, “is that we’ll have two separate identities. We have a lot of new talent. With all the new artists, we’ll have a lot of new opportunities for the company to grows stronger.”

As for Reprise, he says, “We’ll probably stick to our umbrella—all the current acts. We’ve got Dwight Yoakam. We’ve got The Vaughns of Alabama. We’re starting a new artist, Morgan Rice. She’s a real talent. And I know she’ll be a hit. And we have a lot of new artists coming through.

Saporti, in addition to serving as senior VP of marketing for Warner/Reprise, originated and developed the label’s international department (Billboard, Nov. 29).

Saporti says he plans no immediate changes in either artist roster or staff.

“My philosophy has always been to create an environment in which an artist can flourish. I believe that people who believe that they have the potential to make records are going to make records. It’s going to be a world where they have the opportunity to do what they want to do. I’m not going to get involved in the detailed record business, after all. It’s not a brain surgeon, or I wouldn’t have gotten the job. With the staff, I allow people to be productive and to go as far as they can go. But, no, I don’t have a master plan. It’s all about the artist, and that won’t change.”

Toni Braxton

(Continued from page 6)

A source confirms that before the action was filed, she had held discussions with her label about adjusting the terms of her contract.

The vocalist did not discuss the suit with reporters backstage at the Billboard Music Awards Dec. 8 in Las Vegas. However, she pointedly did not thank Arista, LaFace, or Edmonds during two onstage appearances to collect awards in the R&B and adult contemporary categories, which included the nationally telecast awards ceremony (see story, page 1).

LaFace COO Mark Shimmele, who was in Vegas for the awards show, said he is “optimistic” that the dispute can be settled but declined further comment.

An Arista spokesman did not respond to a call from Billboard seeking comment.

Taupin, Elton Recall Diana In Acceptance Speeches

The following are Bernie Taupin’s and Elton John’s acceptance speeches at the Billboard Music Awards Dec. 8 after receiving multiple awards for “Candle in the Wind 1997.”

Bernie Taupin:

“The only description for this is very, very rare. As you can imagine, I’d sooner not be standing here today receiving something that relates to a tragic moment in time, a moment that will be embalmed in our hearts for a lifetime.

“On the other hand, the profound joy of what the song has achieved,” he said, “is my wish that the ugly head of cynicism and hatred for what the song did not ignite to take a moment out of the selfish quest for the negative, to see this song in the truest sense of its meaning (‘Un-Break My Heart’).”

He dedicated the song to the recipient of the Century Award, Billboard’s highest honor for distinguishing achievement.

“Deana Carter revealed to me, he’s in the hospital from surgery. Speaking of people who make a difference, courtesy of technology, my old buddy Elton.”

Elton John:

“I was surprised to see those words there tonight, but I’m here in New York at the Fashion Institute to thank Billboard magazine for helping us remember our beloved friend.”

SALES SPIKES EXPECTED FOR STARS OF BILLBOARD MUSIC AWARDS

SALES SPIKES EXPECTED FOR STARS OF BILLBOARD MUSIC AWARDS

(Continued from page 1)

of Trans World Entertainment. “Under that scenario, it should ignite [her album ‘You Light Up My Life’—Insensitivity Songs] and the rest of her discs.”

The young country chanteuse was named artist of the year and album artist of the year by the country artist, top country artist album, and top country singles artist. In addition, her five-time platinum debut album, "Blue," earned top country album honors.

In an interview, Rinse summed up her album: "I try to give people a little bit of everything. I’ve got pop, country, and gospel. I think that’s why I’m reaching people from 2 to 82."

Rimes, who performed her Top Country Singles chart-topper "How Do I Live," was one of nine acts that performed during the show, plus others included Spice Girls, God’s Property Featuring Kirk Franklin, Arsenio, Trisha Yearwood, Garth Brooks, Third Eye Blind, Usher, and David Cassidy.

Performers and multiple award-winners who had sufficient "face time" at the podium were likely to benefit the most at retail from the broadcast, Will said.

The show opened with a rousing version of "Spice Up Your Life" by Spice Girls, who were feted with album of the year for the five-times platinum "Spice," as well as awards for new artist of the year, album group of the year, and Hot 100 Singles group of the year.

In an interview, Spice Girls artist of the year and album artist of the year, said, "This award was the best thing that ever happened to us. "These awards are (the fans’) choice," said Emma Bunton, aka Baby Spice. "That means so much to us, as a band." Added Geri Halliwell, aka Ginger Spice, "We really appreciate this award so much, because it is based on sales and airplay, not just judges’ decisions."

In spite of the celebratory feel of the program, there were several bitter-sweet moments.

Toni Braxton was named female R&B artist of the year and later picked up trophies for AC artist of the year and AC album of the year. The artist of the year, "Un-Break My Heart," and non-television awards for dance music club play artist of the year and dance music club song of the year (for the remix of "Un-Break My Heart"). She dedicated her trophies to her grandmother, who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

Country singer/songwriter Van Morrison, the recipient of the Century Award, Billboard’s highest honor for distinguishing achievement, was unable to attend the show, presenter Deana Carter revealed, because he’s in the hospital from surgery.

"I’m talking about a group of people who make a difference. Speaking of people who make a difference, courtesy of technology, my old buddy Elton."
COSTELLO'S 'BIG' ADVENTURE. Here are two more reasons to look forward to 1998. Ethan and Joel Coen have a new movie, "The Big Lebowski," due out in February. And the Feb. 10 Mercury Records soundtrack to the film is a hugely genre-jarring compilation of tracks featuring a grab bag of artists ranging from Bob Dylan ("The Man In Me") to Kenny Rogers with the first Edition ("Last Dropped In") to Gipsy Kings ("Hotel California") to Elvis Costello, who penned a new song for the film.

Costello's involvement with the project, and the creation of the quirky "My Mood Swing," reads like a piece of Coen brothers fiction in itself. The artist was in New York in mid-October and had breakfast with pal T Bone Burnett, who is serving as musical supervisor on "Lebowski" and was in town to produce an unrelated project. Burnett mentioned his work with the Coen brothers to Costello, who invited Costello to join him at a meeting with the filmmakers that afternoon at the Brill Building, the legendary music industry spot.

"They invited me in, and within a couple of minutes we were talking about song choices—I was even so bold as to suggest a few pieces," Costello says. "The conversation quickly wandered to the topic of Costello coming up with an original song for the film to accompany a critical bowling scene. "I went from meeting to working with them in 29 minutes," he says.

After the meeting set, Costello and his wife moved quickly, whipping off "My Mood Swing" in just two days before it was time to meet Burnett to record the track at the designated time of 11 p.m. Despite the wee-hours prearranged timing, Costello says he arrived at the studio and he and his wife had to drive around the block a few additional times so they could finish the lyric. "When you hear it, you'll never guess it took two people to write," he says. "It's a nonsense song about things like people peeling off their clothes like a tangerine and writing housecodes and all sorts of cheap tricks." Costello was still scrumbling down notes on scrap of paper when he wandered through the door.

"We sat down, and I played them the song once. The first time we played it seriously it was recorded," he says. "The reason we didn't do it before midnight was that we played it another seven times to make sure that first cut was the right cut."

At just a little more than two minutes, "My Mood Swing" is one of the shortest songs Costello has penned in a long time. "It's just a rock 'n roll song, not any more or less than that," he says. "The tall order was the fact that there was already so much great music in the film that we didn't want any new thing written to stick out like a brand-new pin. So it was good that we went about it without it getting too precious. Regardless of its length, Mercury and Costello plan to get the song heard by as many fans as possible. Costello already is looking to play it on "Late Night With David Letterman" near the time of release dates, and other publicity runs are being scheduled.

Contest, for one, is tickled to play a part in a Coen brothers production. "They don't make the kind of movies where they cut a lot of scenes together so they can have a song. Their use of music is pretty soft and subtle, it might be coming out of a transistor radio or something," he says. FYI, for the trivia-minded: Costello's favorite Coen brothers flick is dark horse "The Hudsucker Proxy."

PRODUCTION NOTE. Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis have signed on to supervise music for Fox's upcoming "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" and to produce the accompanying MCA Records soundtrack. The film, an adaptation of the novel by "Waiting To Exhale" author Terry McMillan, stars "Waiting" leading lady Angela Bassett and will be in theaters some time in 1998; a film date has not yet been set. If sales of Arista Records' star-studded "Exhale" soundtrack—produced by "Beck," and featuring Whitney Houston—are any indication, MCA can expect a very happy new year for its next R&B-infused soundtrack. "Exhale" has surpassed sales of 5 million units and finished at No. 4 on the Billboard Top 200 Albums chart for 1996.

MATADOR'S MOVE. Matador Records is winding down 1997 by jumping on one of the most popular record-company marketing bandwagons of the year: the creation of a separate film soundtrack imprint. The label's early-December release "Welcome To Sarajevo" (The Real Thing, Billboard, Dec. 6) marked the first album to be hawked under the Matador Soundtracks umbrella. Although the label has not yet lined up any soundtracks for next year, Lyle Hysen, president of Matador's in-house Dooromat Publishing division, says it will be looking to glean selected soundtracks from Capitol Records' relationship with MCAwestas well as other film projects that fit the label's niche.

"Capitol just handed us "Welcome To Sarajevo" at the last minute. We'd like to be involved with projects a little earlier and perhaps find ways to get some of our bands involved," Hysen says. In addition to "Sarajevo," Matador has released three indie film tracks—for independent "Half Cocked," "Amateur," and "Brain Candy."

F OR THE RECORD. To clarify an item in the Dec. 6 column, the soundtrack to "Good Will Hunting" and "Boogie Nights" 2" are being released by Capitol.

MARK EITZEL SPRINGING A 'TRAP' ON MATADOR RECORDS

(Continued from page 13)

The powers-that-be at Matador have been "friends and fans" of Eitzel's for a long time, according to co-president Gerard Cosloy, with the label having issued a 7-inch single of Eitzel's "Take Courage" in 1992 as well as "Son," an album by the Teiling Midgets featuring Eitzel. "We always wanted to work with American Music Club," Cosloy says, "although we were never really in a position to do so."

"I think the new record is closer in spirit to some of his earlier work than the Warner solo stuff," Cosloy adds. "I think he really made this record for himself, but I know a lot of people loved those AMC albums." Formed in 1986 in San Francisco, American Music Club released a string of poetic albums haunted by ghosts of country rock. The quintet's discography includes the early gems "California," "Frontier," and "United Kingdom," on Demon; the tunng "Everless" on Alia, along with an EP spotlighting the roving single "Rise" and haunting B-side "Channel 75," the grand reprise how "Mercury," featuring a classic songwriter's lament in "Johnny Mathis' Feet"; and the swan song "San Francisco," which included a masterful, minor-key masterpiece of "California Dreamin'" as a secret track. Reprise also issued an EP in '94 stressing the wry fable single "Hello, Amsterdam" and several rare tracks.

Chris Vanderloo, co-owner of Other Music, an alternative specialist shop in New York's Greenwich Village, confirms Cosloy's view that Eitzel's following from the American Music Club days persists. The group's catalog is a steady seller at Other Music, as is his solo "Songs Of Love Live" (Demon, 1991). Last summer, sales were spurred when Eitzel played a packed-in-store with Buck. But the recent Congo Norvell record on Jet Set has been selling, too, "with a lot of people buying it just because Mark is on a few tracks," Vanderloo says.

Indie rock is down in general at Other Music, with such electronica acts as Roni Size in ascendance. Still, Vanderloo says, "the main indie rock labels like Matador and Touch and Go do a good job with their bands. With the new Eitzel, it won't be a major seller, but I think Matador might be able to tap into his AMC audience better than Warner Bros."

For "Caught In A Trap," Matador is following its usual marketing tactics, emphasizing retail promotion, trying to maximize Eitzel's profile as a critics' favorite, and relying on its friends at college radio. Before Christmas, the full album will be serviced pervasively to college outlets and selectively to community, triple-A, and modern rock stations.

Cosloy acknowledges that getting much commercial radio play for "Caught In A Trap" is unlikely, something that hurt both Guided By Voices' "Mag Earwig" and Betty Seerverett's "Dust Burnings"—two promising Matador releases from this year that failed to break beyond the bands' "friends circle."

But, Cosloy says, "I believe that a record of quality can find an audience even without the support of commercial radio. Radio would make things easier, of course, but we won't ever leave it at that."

Touring will help the cause, as Eitzel is a compelling live performer. He completed a 20-date solo acoustic tour of the U.S. in November and plans to play shows in Europe in February/March and more in the U.S. in April. Before going on tour, the ever-prolific Eitzel will be in Los Angeles working on a batch of songs for a film based on the novel "Left-Handed Woman" by Peter Hamill.

"I write as many songs that would never see light with just an album a year," Eitzel says. "So I feel very fortunate that Warner Bros. allowed me to do a record with Matador. There aren't a lot of people who sell as few records as I do that still get this sort of treatment."

Eitzel plans to have his next Warner album out by early '99, having written a dozen more songs with Buck and a huge batch on his own. He'll probably work with his former American Music Club mate Bruce Kaplan on the record, which Eitzel promises will be "full of hit songs. Every one. Just wait."

Eitzel is managed by the New York-based Mange Tha! His U.S. tours are arranged by New York's Twin Towers; in Europe, he's booked by the Agency for Underground, his songs are published in Fug/Malo Life (BMI).
CARNE'S COMING: Veteran R&B vocalist Jean Carne, who has contributed to an amazing array of albums and songs, including the first two titles by Earth, Wind & Fire, Grover Washington Jr.'s album "Strawberry Moon," and the Temptation's hit "If You Don't Know Me By Now," is back with "Love Lessons," her new album on Place One/East Pointe Records, due the first week of January.

Carne, who also recorded two albums for Omni/Atlantic in the '80s, will make a new quick, appearing at February listening parties in Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, D.C.

According to director of marketing Marianne Stormer, the labels hope to ship 100,000 units of the album in the first quarter based on positive feedback from radio and retail.

Though the artist stands to garner a fair share of attention in the R&B community based on her hit "Love Lessons," Stormer expects the album to blend in other formats as well.

"We haven't selected a single yet, but I would say that this is a real crossover album," says Stormer. "I'd expect the CDB0101, jazz stations, and old- and new-school R&B to react, because its style is so diverse."

SPACE AGE: Pianist/entrepreneur Jeannie Novak is finally getting around to releasing her debut album, "Reign Of Fire," nearly three years after she recorded it.

Still, it's not as though she hasn't been busy in the meantime. In fact, as the founder of online independent-artist music site Kaleidoscape (aka Kspace), the artist coincidentally established a means of marketing her new album.

Kspace, located at www.kspace.com, acts as a forum for indie acts trying to get a foot up by selling and promoting their music on the Internet. According to Novak, some members have also developed radio contacts through the site.

Novak also took pre-orders for the album after distributing free cassette samplers through the site this summer.

"I had everything except for the mastering and the packaging done by early '94, but I was getting so bombarded getting everyone else's music online that I just put it on the back burner," says Novak.

"It actually took a client offering to do the mastering as a barter to get on Kspace that reminded me about my music and how important it was to me," she adds.

Though Novak began selling the album strictly over the Internet in October, it will be released on newly founded Kspace Recordings in early '98, targeting gift and bookstore chains.

Making up for lost time, Novak also plans to release her sophomore album next year and is working on a compilation of Kspace artists due out early next year.

ROADWORK: MQ3, whose "Noo Trybe/Virgin album "Mozaic" is due in March,
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Mushroom Set Moves Him From Pop Base To R&B

This article was prepared by Mike McGeever, programming editor of Music & Media, and Paul Sexton.

LONDON—International star Peter Andre has faced a court battle to become a soul man.

British-born Andre, who grew up in Australia, enjoyed great success in Europe last year with his first Mushroom album, "Natural," in 1996, building a large teenage fan base with catchy pop singles and his open-shirted, pimp image. That album was never released in the U.S., and Andre and his label and management team have taken a bold approach to breaking him there in '98.

His second album, "Time," released across Europe in November, sees Andre moving from his pop base into R&B territory with the help of some influential new friends: The album includes playing, writing, and production assists by such R&B champs as the Refugee Camp All Stars, Montell Jordan, Coolio, and Brian McKnight.

Andre is signed worldwide to the independent Mushroom, which has offices in its native Australia and the U.K., and is published by Mushroom Music. His Australian deal is in affiliation with Melocian, which first signed Andre on the back of a local talent contest. The label operates a licensing deal with BMG throughout the rest of the world, with the exception of North America, in which markets it is considering various bids for Andre's signature.

Mushroom A&R and project manager Dean Stratton says of the album, "It's a case of moving on, trying to get a more mature audience while maintaining the pop side of things. We've just gone up a step productionwise and songwise."

The artist made his name on the international stage with poppy singles like "Mysterious Girl" and ballads like "I Feel You," as sales of the "Natural" album climbed to 1.2 million worldwide, according to his London-based management and promotions company, Blitz. But Andre did give a taste of the groove to come on another of his 1996 best-sellers, "Flyin.'" He says he pursued the R&B muse for artistic rather than commercial reasons.

"I would never have attempted to go with this type of music, with an R&B feel as opposed to pop, unless I worked with artists who live and breathe that kind of music," he says, adding, "I was making the album myself, [without having] lived in the place where that music originates, people might not take it seriously.

"Also, there's a certain positivity that I have, knowing that the people who worked on the album wouldn't put their names to it unless it would work. This album is an indication of my direction; it's a step closer to where I want to go. It's not the ultimate R&B album for me, but I want it to be seen as a great pop-R&B album."

Andre has become a familiar face in Britain, where he was the celebrity chosen for the high-level media opportunity of switching on the Christmas lights Nov. 7 on London's Oxford Street. Following the summer hit "All About Us," the ballad "Lonely"—the second single from "Time" in Europe and Asia—and was released in late October. It became an instant top 10 single in the U.K., his sixth to achieve such status in just 17 months, but did not have the longevity of previous releases.

Mushroom will release the single "All Night, All Right" internationally Jan. 12, while the album version features Coolio, rapping on the single is provided by Warren G. The song's strong disco-era feel is helped by its quotations from Taj & The Expressions' 1978 smash "Boogie Oogie Oogie."

Andre's co-manager, Sue Harris of Blitz, hopes that will be the song to kick-start the "Time" album, especially in the U.K., where early sales have been slower than expected. BBC Radio One added the track to its playlist five weeks before release; another U.K. programmer backing Andre is Paul Charlie, group OD of the Eazy Radio Group. The artist recently performed at the launch of that group's top 40 rhythm-crossover outfit Vibe FM, covering "Lonely".

"Peter still has that teen appeal, but he now has a certain cool credibility," says Chartier. "The new album puts him in a different sphere altogether.

(Continued on page 22)

Multitalented Dara Defies Categorization On 1st Solo Set; Braxton Battles LaFace, Arista

This column was prepared by guest columnist Janine Convey, managing editor of R&B Airplay Monitor.

ROUTES MUSIC: "Everything I do is so different from the thing I just did before," says Ohu Dara, who has distinguished himself in the last 30 years or so as a jazz cornetist, guitarist, band leader, composer, singer, dancer, and actor. "It's like I'm going to a different world every time I perform. One day I may go out with the trumpet, next day I might go out dancing, next day I may do a show with Rita Dove, the poet laureate. I also get a chance to teach performers. That's what keeps me going— the newness of what I do."

The newness of what Dara does is also in the combination of old sounds he brings to bear on his first solo recording, "From Natchez To New York." Atlantic Records. Jazz purist and black theater aficionados may already know his name: Dara has played with jazz greats like Art Blakey, Henry Threadgill, and Julius Hemphill; he's recorded with Taj Mahal, Nana Hendry, and Yusef Lateef; he's composed scores for several acclaimed theatrical works, including "The Plums" and "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom"; and he led two early '80s bands, the Okra Orchestra and the Natchezippi Band.

Producer Yves Beauvais had long been a follower of Dara's work and spent seven years trying to bring Dara to a record label. Commercial R&B music can sometimes become repetitive and predictable, the efforts of alternative R&B stylists aside. By comparison, Dara's blend of Caribbean, African, blues, jazz, R&B, ragtime, and funk sounds fresh—equal parts simple roots music and slick contemporary groove. Dara, who is the father of popular New York rap group Onyx, "(If I Had A Dream)," embraces all kinds of music, even the hip-hop sounds utilized by his son.

"Contemporary rap is really the ebb of all the music we've produced in this country. It incorporates all the rhythms of the world," says Dara, who says he has never had any formal art training. "It's in their music, and their poise. Above all, it's something quite different, rather than everything that people say in private. There's a truth in it. I like artists who express who they really are; no matter who likes it, whether it's good or bad, they have street language.

Do father and son influence each other? "No, he does his own thing, his concept is his own," he says. "I'm an old-school rapper,

Dara's musical brilliance may evolve from his use of traditional sounds and styles. The album's opener, "Okra," is a 1914 of a market vendor set against lifting, South-African-style guitars. "Harlem Country Girl" is a three-quarter-time story of urban love. "Zora" is a down-home country blues, marked by Dara's wailing guitar work. "Dare Me Baby" is a seductive love fest. Ohu Dara's公积 Mayanna Bernard over shuffling crotchet-lead blues that recall 1920s-era speak-easy sounds. And "Jungle" is a bigly laments featuring rapped lyrics by Nas. Some of the album's pieces have been heard in context. It's semi-autobiographical. It has songs in it that came from various theater pieces, songs I'd forgotten I'd even written. Each song fits a different part of my personality," he says.

Dara has no plans to tour in the new year but is preparing to mount a stage play of poetic vignettes at George Mason University in Virginia.

BEATS N' PIECES: Toni Braxton's lawsuit against LaFace and Arista stating that her contracts with the labels are no longer valid is a bold move (see story, page 9). The much-lauded singer allegedly initially signed agreements that have not provided her with industry-standard remuneration for sales of her albums. Insiders fear that unless LaFace settles the matter quickly, a court battle could prove both costly and embarrassing to the label, the biggest cost being that the popular Braxton could wind up wowed and won by another label...

... Industry veteran Miller London, president of Urban Network magazine, was honored with a lifetime achievement award Wednesday (17) by Los-Angeles-based Kammie Entertainment. The gala, co-hosted by comedians Michael Colyar ("Martin," "Showtime At The Apollo") and Ajai Sanders ("Def Comedy Jam," "Fresh Prince Of Bel Air"), recognized his more than 25 years in the recording industry, much of it spent with Motown Records, where he was senior VP of sales before moving on to senior VP/GM of black music at A&M Records, and then VP of product development, sales and marketing, for RCA in New York. Congratulations to London.

African-American musicians and artists from the San Francisco Bay Area will get separate honors Jan. 10, when One Way Entertainment annoucned the African American Music Awards. The event will be held at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center, and proceeds will benefit the Oakland Boys & Girls Club and the On-The-Run Program for exceptional children. Expected at the event are actors Dianne Reeves, Gregory, Kenny Blank, Natalie Desselle, and Alison Dean and recording artists Too Short, Tony Toni Tone, the Dramatics, J. Spencer, and Incognito. A collective of music industry professionals committed to promoting and developing talent from the Bay Area. For more info, call 215-878-2559.

In Good Spirits. MCA act Immature filmed the video for its latest single, "Give Up The Ghost," Nov. 10 at various locations in Los Angeles. The video was co-directed by the band's manager, Chris Stokes and Bizzy Bone of Bone Thugs-N-Harmony, who wrote the track. The plotted on the set, from left, are Madeline Randolph, senior director of A&R, R&B music, at MCA Records; Stokes; Romeo of Immature; Bizzy Bone, LDB of Immature; Marilyn Bachelor, national director of R&B marketing at MCA; Batman Of Immature; and Cim Nottage, director of music video production at MCA.
**TOP R&B ALBUMS**

**DECEMBER 20, 1997**

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**Pacesetter**

**Hot Shot Debut**

**New**

**Most Active**

**Greatest Gainer**

**MONEY MAKES THE MAN**

**IN STORES NOW**

**Heatseeker Impact**

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*Albums with the greatest sales per this week. Recording Industry Asia (RIAA) certification for shipment of 500,000 album units. RIAA certification for shipment of 1 million CD albums, with platinum titles indicated by a numeral following the symbol. For boxed sets, and double albums with a running time that exceeds two hours, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs and/or tapes. *Masters Edition* LPs are available. These title prices, and CD prices for RIAA and/or tapes, are suggested. Sales figures charted are based on retail sales. Heatseeker Impact chart based on retail sales. Heatseeker Impact chart based on retail sales. No charts for this week. Indicate past or present Heatseeker titles. © 1997, Billboard/PER Communications, and Soundscan, Inc.*
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**Billboard Hot R&B Airplay**

**December 20, 1997**

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Cardwell Proves To Be A Diva To Die For On 'Joi'

Cardwell has it all sorted out. That's never been more apparent than the split second when the tribal disco heat of "Soul To Bare" gives way to the seductive jazz/funk romance of "Crying Eyes." The latter is Cardwell's eponymous new album on EightBall Records. The woman has found a way to simultaneously pay the rent and nourish her creative spirit—and neither act compromises the other.

On 1995's "The World Is Full Of Trouble," Cardwell effectively emancipated herself from a slew of pop-like figures who threatened to render her just another clubland puppet with a big voice and fierce hair. However, unless you consumed the album, you might never have gotten that point. Each single—though masterfully assembled—suit underplayed trends—rarely resembled Cardwell's original compositions. And there were a few singles in which the irony of her lyrics and the nuances of her voice were lost in the mix.

During that time, the concert scene became Cardwell's best friend. Locating her to merging the booming beats that DJs required with the substance that she refused to relinquish. Even in that context, she battled to not get lost in the sauce, winning the right to dump her DAT tapes and perform with a band four nights out of five. Nearly three years later, the idea of Cardwell taking the stage with only a tape and a mike seems utterly beneath her.

Her next challenge was to duplicate that unique energy in the studio. Not easy. But she nails it on "Joi Cardwell." On the surface, the success of her sin-da-air anthems "Power," "Found Love," and "Turn Back Time" have a mild "if-you-can't-beat-em-join-em" feel. Go beyond the percussive frenzy of each track, and you'll risk drowning in lyrical twists and subtlety.

While she's devised a way of serving house music that is both timely and intelligent, Cardwell clearly refuses to toe the company line. Her clubland—evident during the R&B revisions of "Power" and the current single "Run To You," as well as on the sizzling, Madon-naqueous "We'll." In fact, it is during these numbers that Cardwell pays off on the soul diva potential she's long promised in her live gigs. Placed within arrangements that combine elements of classic soul, lean funk, and traditional jazz, her greatest gift—her voice—pops palpable. Worked out falling into a trap of derivation or cliché, Cardwell makes a convincing case to be snagged by a major and molded into the female equivalent to D'Angelo and Maxwell that everyone seems to be in search of.

And that's why singing her to the enviable point of virtually having it all. In a world where too many dance albums comprise three singles and seven overdubbed extensions, Cardwell has managed an triumphant. We can only imagine where this gifted woman will take us next.

Get Lifted: With Faithless all the rage throughout much of the world, it's no surprise that folk are clamoring for more material from Cheeky Records, the musical camp over which studio wonderkind Roni produces. "Metropolis." "Paparazzi" will benefit from several high-profile guest appearances, most notably Everything But The Girl chanteuse Tracey Thorn, who lends her torchy pipes to the single "The Tree Knows Everything." Plans are already under way for a spring U.S. tour with Adam F supported by a full band. The idea of hearing his music fleshted out in a live setting makes us all tingly with anticipation.

After nearly a decade mostly performing other writers' material, Sybil has finally grabbed the chance to fully express herself as an artist. She's penned every cut on "Still A Thrill," her first album for Coalition Records U.K., and the results are just smashing. With the input of producers Gary Miller and Craig & Nobby, she deftly dabbles in credible funk, old-school R&B, and plush house music—bringing with it a new sensibility to every track. Clubheads are already familiar with the title track and "Why," both of which have been enjoying successful turntable spins. They're a fitting prelude to a set that includes the rousing disco-spiced twirler "If We Love Each Other" (which demands single release) and the sleek, jeep-friendly cruiser "Ready For Love." All along, Sybil performs with deceptive ease, never seeming to break a sweat whether she's scaling to the upper regions of her range or getting down 'n gritty.
Logic will not begin soliciting airplay for “It’s Raining Men... The Sequel” until January.

"We’re going to attack them once the programming is back [to normal] in the new year."

The act also includes the C+C Music Factory hit "Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now); Keep On Jumpin’", a duet between Wash and fellow club icon Jocelyn Brown; and a rerecorded version of "Strike It Up." The Black Box song was re-released because RCA refused to release the original recording for the Logic set.

"The surprising part [of the compilation] was realizing that I had done as much work as I have," says Wash. "And I still have enough for a volume two."

Wash has no plans to assemble such an album in the immediate future. She is still looking forward to completing several more projects, though she’s not setting any dates. "I may have run out of ideas, but the people around me have not," says Tony Bennett’s recent resurgence among the youth as one of her inspirations. "I don’t intend on doing dance music all my life."

A totally gospel- or ballad-driven set and a few Broadway musicals top her list of possible directions.

In the meantime, Logic is planning an "Are You Martha Wash’s Biggest Fan? Prove It!" contest. Contestants will fill out a multiple-choice quiz concerning key facts about Wash's musical history. Entry forms will be available at independent and chain stores and via a print ad in the January issue of Dance Music Authority magazine. Wash will personally select a winner from the correct entries, who will be flown to New York for her album release/tour kickoff performance.

At radio, stations will play several songs from "The Collection," and listeners who correctly identify will win a chance to attend the same launch party/tour kickoff event in New York.
Nashville—Wide hayes originally intended to call his new Columbia album "Tear Up From The Floor Up" after the song of the same name, which represents the raucous, strong-willed tradition of traditional country music he champions.

However, other interests prevailed, and the album, due Jan. 27, is titled "When The Wrong One Loves You Right." The album is also missing version of the classic Glen Campbell song "Wichita Lineman," which will do particularly as well as a single earlier this year, so it was dropped from the

Changes Strengthen Hayes' 'Wrong'
Columbia Set Gets 2nd Start In 'The Day'

BY CHET FLIPPO
NASHVILLE—Wide hayes originally intended to call his new Columbia album "Tear Up From The Floor Up" after the song of the same name, which represents the raucous, strong-willed tradition of traditional country music he champions.

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Pleas: Rockabilly legend Carl Perkins has suffered two strokes in past weeks. The 65-year-old singer is recovering at home in Jackson, Tenn., after being treated at Baptist Hospital in Memphis. Perkins, who has been maintaining an active tour schedule, canceled a "Prime Time Country" taping but plans to play a Feb. 28 benefit show with Billy Ray Cyrus in Jackson.

Olivia Newton-John is in the studio here with a different producer each day. Producing her in different sessions are Don Cook, Tony Brown, Gary Burr, Chris Farren, and John Farrar. Her RCA Nashville album is scheduled for a July 1998 release ... Warner Bros. group Little Texas, citing dwindling radio play and record sales, plans to disband at the end of the year ... John Berry signs an exclusive management contract with Friar's Management and will be managed by Miles Copeland and Anastasia Pruitt ... Bob Dylan has recorded a duet of the song "Lonesome Highway" with bluegrass great Ralph Stanley for the latter's upcoming album of duets, due in April from Rebel Records.


ON THE TUBE: CMT reports that its new "CMT Request Line" program has yielded a major surprise. The weekly show (airing Mondays at 7 p.m. EST) debuted Sept. 15, and, as CMT VP of Programming Hartaba, the show's producer expected requests would be large and made on the show's 900 phone lines. "But," says Hartaba, "after country.com [www.country.com], CMT's and TNN's Internet site came online, we thought it was a natural, but we weren't sure how many country fans have computers. So, besides the 900 number, we had a site on country.com.

The surprise? "Since the debut," Hartaba says, "we've had over 100,000 requests and dedications. Ninety-five percent of those that have come over the Internet. So, I think we can safely say that the core country consumer is Internet-friendly.

CHRISTMAS CHEER: "A Hill Country Christmas" by Willie Nelson with Bobbie Nelson in a warm, intimate, acoustic, and unconventional approach to Christmas standards and Nelson songs. Bobbie Nelson's church piano is just the right touch, and Gene Autry joins in on "Here Comes Santa Claus." The one new Nelson original on the album, "El Ninio," is a lovely Spanish-flavored song and is obviously not about the weather phenomenon of the same name. The set is on Finer Arts Records of Denver.

ROY AGAIN: Barbara Orbison tells Nashville Scene she'll be releasing commemorative pieces over the next year, leading up to the 10th anniversary next December of the death of her husband, Roy. In addition to a Celtic album of his songs (Nashville Scene, Nov. 27), Orbison plans to release a CD and a video for a show. Roy did in 1965 in Holland. "It was bootlegged in Europe for years," she says of the video. Titled "Combo Concert," it features Roy and his band the Candlesmen at the height of his popularity. The CD has five additional tracks from Roy's only French show, at Paris' Olympia Theatre, also from 1965. "They introduced him as Elvis Presley," she says. Now Nashville-based, Orbison says she'll release this product on her Orbison Records and new product on her Orbly Records.

RCA's Thompson Brothers Have Drive To Score At Radio

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE
NASHVILLE—Different music demands a different approach, and that's what RCA is doing with the Thompson Brothers Band. After last month's immediate public appetite with a 1996 EP "Coca-Cola On Mainstreet," the trio's debut disc, "Blame It On The Dog," will be released Jan. 27.

The label's goal has been to get the group as much exposure as possible before the release of the album. To accomplish that, RCA staffs have had the trio on an extensive radio tour and had it opening for other acts as well as headlining club gigs across the country. The label also sponsored three showcases in Denver, Boston, and New Orleans.

The group has also recorded an "Always, Coca-Cola" jingle that will air nationally on country radio stations for six weeks prior to the release of the album.

"We wanted to make sure people saw them live. We have kept these guys on the road, says RCA Label Group senior VP/GM Hutch Waugh. "We've kept them playing everywhere. They have a van. They travel. They never sleep. I was on the road with them for three days, and I never saw them actually sleep. They just keep going. They are working like a well-oiled machine. They are playing in front of radio stations and anybody they can.

"We've put a tool in spreading the word about the trio. We got great response to it," notes Waugh. "We've also used that EP all around at retail and radio as an awareness piece. Then there was the 'Cool Disc,' a clear disc that had four songs on it. It was an advance that had a little information about them and four or five songs. We sent that out to radio, just an awareness piece. We started getting airplay on that on WUSY [Chattanooga, Tenn.]. They got top 10 phones and top five phones for a few weeks before the single ever came out. (The single is "Drive Me Crazy").

The Thompson Brothers band is a country blend country flavored with a rock edge reminiscent of Steve Earle. This sound has been a blessing and a curse. "To hit radio, it might take us a little longer than normal because the [music is] different," says guitarist/vocalist Andy Thompson.

THE THOMPSON BROTHERS BAND
Son. "It seems like we're getting a pretty decent response from radio people. There are some people who might not get it at first, but the people who do get it and into is seem to be passionate about it."
### HOT COUNTRY SINGLES & TRACKS

**December 20, 1997**

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*Certification for sales of 1 million units, with multi-platinum titles indicated by a numerical bromley symbol.*
CHANGES STRENGTHEN HAYES’ “WRONG ONE”
(Continued from page 25)

a pretty impressive pre-existing fan base. That’s the reason they sold his gold album off one single last time. And he was voted New Male Star of Tomorrow in the TNN Awards, and that’s fans voting. It’s got a pretty aggressive manner. The video goes to CMT (the week of Dec. 1). At retail, we’re in the middle of a songwriting back to the country, marketing, pricing and putting out of the box with virtually every account in the marketplace. We’re going to treat Wade like the superstar he is.

Kruski says the label plans an active Internet campaign. “We’ll have contests that are being developed,” he says. “We’re going to have a lot of fun with that. We’ll be utilizing a lot of different, creative ways you can buy it: contests all the way down to tertiary markets. We’ll have contests with all the video outlets, regional as well as local. We’ll have a direct-mail campaign to his fan base. We’ll have coordinated radio and satellite radio. There’s a lot of ways we can get fans out there just waiting for the right music, and we feel Wade and [producer] Don Cook have delivered the music. So, we won’t leave any options untapped.

Kruski says that the “Wichita Lineman” lunges for the real estate that all the hit songs have, popularize, and Wagner agrees that it’s not an issue. “He’s still doing it in concerts, and the fans love it,” he says. “Wade has no hang up about it.”

“We’re taking the grass-roots approach to this album project,” Wagner adds. “These days, radio seems to be an artist on the first album campaign and not at all after that. We’re getting back to that. We’re going into his top 20 sales markets with him for a couple of days, and do in-station events, intimate events.”

Hayes says that overall the album is a bit of a departure for him, “but you can tell it’s still our kind of music. I think the big difference is that this album is a little more mature, especially with the production of Reid Perry and Debbie Schwartz, who is the assistant director of artist development at Nashville’s RCA Label Group. Schwartz says the sales hike is especially gratifying because of the benefactor. “The entire St. Jude Children’s Hospital of Memphis. That project inspired Reid Perry and was co-executive produced by Debbie Schwartz. It’s another example of the great musicianship that Midtown provided by Mark D. Sanders and Steve Diamond and it’s one of the best I’ve ever heard. I wrote a lot of songs, and I can’t wait to write more,” he says. “I’m able to tell that story like that. I was lucky with that one—I was the first guy to hear that song after it was finished. It was hot off the press. I’m nearly as shy now as I used to be, but I was scared of that song when I first heard it. It gave me goosebumps. That’s the first choice for a lot of people to sing along. When they released ‘Wichita Lineman’ as a single, I was begging them to release ‘The Day That Shop Was Robbed,’ kind of out of a little.”

Hayes says that he wishes “Wichita Lineman” were on the album. “I usually write songs very well in advance,” he says, “so this is the first one that doesn’t have one.”

Hayes says the toughest part of his job these days is finding the right songs, which he notes is not all that different from the traditional approach. “It’s getting tougher and tougher to find traditional songs,” he says. “And the more songs that you’ve written that are distributed to two tunes on the album. “I know people have been saying that,” he says, “but I think audiences are interested in him.”

Hayes is managed by Mike Robertson Management and is booked by the William Morris Agency. His publishing is through Sony/ATV Tree (BMI).

Each member is signed to Sony Music Publishing in Nashville, and the trio also released eight of the 11 songs on the album. “Their harmonies are amazing, and they’re great songwriters, Waugh says, “they are constantly writing and coming up with new songs ideas.”

Enie makes a guest appearance on the song “Pick Up The Tempo.” Another of the band’s heroes, Bill Lloyd of Foster & Lloyd fame, produced the Thompson project, even lending to the sessions of one his biggest hits that appeared on Foster & Lloyd’s “Faster & Louder” album cover.

Lloyd helped the group capture the energy that is captured on the recording, and Lloyd says, “they have a lot of energy,” Waugh says, “and they have great songs. Great songs will always find the right ears. We haven’t done a performance with them yet where people didn’t want them back.”

Managed by Jay Barron of Barron Entertainment and booked by the William Morris Agency, the group is looking for an opening slot next year and in the finished stage of making it to the round. Andy Thompson says.

On the retail side, Waugh says, the label is securing interesting posts and in-store play. The label also plans to explore opportunities to promote the group to the college market. Another part of the Thompsons is that RCA is letting the band take the album on the road to sell at shows. “We just want to get the music in people’s hands,” Waugh says.

After 11 years together, the Thompsons are happy to be getting their music out to the masses. “Even since we were just three guys making music in a basement,” says Wahty, “this is what we always thought we’d do.”

COUNTRY ARTISTS & MUSIC

BILLBOARD DECEMBER 20, 1997

www.americanradiohistory.com
**TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS**

**DECEMBER 20, 1997**

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**COMPiled FROM A NATIONAL SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE AND RACK SALES REPORTS COLlected, COMPiled, AND PRODUCED BY SoundScan**

**Notes:**
- Billboard Top Country Catalogs is a weekly chart that measures the sales of country music albums. The chart is compiled weekly and ranks the top albums based on sales data from retail stores in the United States.
- The chart is released on Billboard magazine and also available online.
- The chart is divided into three categories: Top Country Albums, Top Country Catalogs, and Top Country Catalogs ( summaries).
- The chart is published by Billboard magazine, a weekly publication that focuses on the music industry.
- The chart is used by record companies, retailers, and artists to gauge the popularity of their albums and make business decisions.
- The chart is compiled using sales data from various sources, including retail stores, online retailers, and streaming services.
- The chart is updated weekly and published online, with historical data going back to the early 1950s.
**HIGHER GROUND**

by Deborah Evans Price

**IS THE SEASON:** The holidays wouldn't be complete without Christmas music, and fans can get in a festive mood with a little help this year from a variety of Christmas tours. One of the most successful outings is Amy Grant's Christmas tour. Her Nashville albums have sold millions, and she's back in her hometown for the past five years. This year, for the first time, she has taken her Christmas show on the road, visiting 19 cities between Nov. 21 and Dec. 21.

Grant performed Dec. 3-4 in Nashville, with proceeds benefiting local charities. As always, she and her guests created wonderful holiday magic. Michael W. Smith, Gary Chapman, Vince Gill, the Kolins, Faith Hill, and the Nashville Symphony joined Grant at the Nashville Arena for an evening of music that ranged from playful selections like Chapman's "Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer" to Grant's beautiful rendition of "Break Of Heaven (Mary's Song)," a song about Mary's feelings as she anticipated Jesus' birth. The whole evening was one memory after another: Grant made each person in the arena feel like they were sitting around her living room watching friends singing their favorite Christmas songs.

On Dec. 5, I attended another wonderful Christmas concert: when the Bishops performed their annual Christmas show at the Smyrna (Tenn.) Town Center. The event capped a busy day for Kenneth Mark, and Kenny Bishop and fourth release from his label. They began the day by treating Billboard staffers to breakfast and a few songs in the conference room. Then Homeland Entertainment held a release party for the group's new album, "Reach The World," at the label's Franklin, Tenn., offices.

The act's Friday-night concert featured favorite Christmas tunes as well as selections from its new album, including the rousing "What I Have," the Caribbean-tinted "Something New Under The Son," and the cappella "Hey Get The Whole World In Hand." Of course, the night wouldn't have been complete without the group's big hit, "You Can't Ask Too Much Of My God." I just love this song. If there were one song I could recommend that everyone in the world listen to, it would be this. The truth it contains is powerful, and I never get tired of hearing the Bishops' moving performance. It was a terrific evening of music and fun, with Kenneth's joyful sense of humor adding immensely to the audience's enjoyment.

These two concerts, along with Collin Raye's performance with the Nashville Symphony (his "What If Jesus Sang For You" and "Like That," but the crowd cheering, have been among the best Christmas shows I've seen this season, but for fans across the country, there have been many to choose from, including the Young Messiah tour, featuring Carman, Margaret Becker, Greg Long, and other artists. A long-time holiday favorite, the Young Messiah hit the road again this year after being temporarily retired for a season. The multi-artist Emmett helped the tour get off to a good start—"Some are selling very well, and some are not," Emery says. "It's not as consistent across the board. Usually patterns are set, and you can tell how every date is going going to the show. It's more like a roller coaster this year. And I don't know what to attribute it to other than we're playing a lot of markets we've never played before."
Artists & Music

In the **SPIRIT**

by Lisa Collins

A YEAR OF MIRACLES: From the miracle recovery of Kirk Franklin after his headfirst into a stadium orchestra pit, to Ron Winans' 14-hour life-threatening heart surgery, to the platinum success of God's Property in a feat never accomplished by a debut gospel act, 1997 was a year of miracles. It was a year of affirmation even to gospel insiders that what they were singing was just as worth of shouting about.

While labels like Holy Roller and First-Lite Records struggled for airplay and shelf space with acts like Doc McKenzie and the Los Angeles Voices Of Watts, the year was marked by the domination of gospel's major labels, which churned out hit after hit in what is being termed by some as the urbanization of gospel. It's a trend that continues to spiral upward to a greater level of commercial success, propelled by a cadre of image-conscious and highly stylized gospel acts who've carved out a niche for themselves among the arteries of music by dispelling the age-old notion of gospel as the music of choice for one's grandmother.

With Zomba Music Group's acquisition of Benson in February, New York-based Verity Records (Zomba's arm) has become gospel's largest major. Traditional, pion- neering labels like Tye Ncott got creative in order to stay competitive in their launching of specialty projects like the "We Sing. . . Gospel's Greatest Hymns" series.

Bishop T.D. Jakes—the most-requested evangelist on the nation's African-American religious front—foraged new ground with the February release of "Woman, Thou Art Loosed," which has since sold upward of 500,000 copies. Following suit was Dr. Beverly "BAM" Crawford, whose Harmony Records debut, "The King Is Coming Any Day," received a warm reception.

Not surprisingly, gospel became more multimedia in its reach. There were tieups on Broadway with "This Is My Song," which starred Tramaine Hawkins, CeCe Houston, and Shirley Caesar and enjoyed an impressive limited run. And At Wad's Tour of Life, which became the most commercially successful tour in gospel history.

BeBe Winans stepped behind the camera into the role of TV producer with the recent taping of his hourlong TV special, "Bringin' In The Holidays With BeBe & Frnak," while Universal Televiision snatched Franklin to produce and star in a comedy series that will begin next year. B-Rite Records came out of the blue to score platinum with God's Property, which slammed onto The Billboard Piit Band No. 3 with 119,000 units in sales. This was coupled with a high retail profile and premium MTV rotation its first week out, while also opening doors on high-visibility TV shows. With a whopping 11,000 in sales the first week out, John P. Kee proved he was still a major contender with his latest release, "Strength." A 20% increase in sales across the board from artists like BeBe, Franklin, Hammond, and Caesar in fact marked gains throughout the industry at large as well as Christian mainstream retail.

The rules of creative expression have been rewritten. No longer does the traditional "50% of your hit out of your mouths behind a record that has "Jesus" in it." Today's gospel artists enjoy greater creative bounds and as a direct result have become bolder, more open, and less restrictive in their expressions of faith. That is the biggest growth of all: An industry that has found its force in the collected strength of greater numbers across the board finds its true measure of success is more than a confirmation of market share. It's also a matter of spirit grounded in the manifestation of the miracles that have made gospel's message all too real.

Friends of French Opera: Erato's new "Werther" makes Kent Nagano's departure from the Opera National de Lyon all the more regrettable. The conductor has a firm grasp of this sometimes elusive material, and his soloists—Jerry Hadley, Anne Sofie von Otter, and Dawn Upshaw—are first-rate.

Friends of Italian Opera: Philips Classics has a new Covent Garden "Don Carlo," led by Bernard Haitink, that is especially strong in the guy department: Roberto Scandiuzzi in an unsurprisingly and expressive Phillip II, and Dmitri Hvorostovsky (Rodrigo) and Richard Margison (Carlo) are a match for him. The only disappointment is the capping of Galina Gorchakova (Eleanor).

Friends of German Opera: EMI Classics and the Deutsche Grammophon are seeking to rectify their recent neglect of Richard Strauss with the "Salome" series. Available from both labels are the Deutsche Oper Berlin's "Salome" conducted by Simon Rattle, with Ruth Jenkins and Helmut Schiötz. The first star-studded release has been the Met's new production, with Kathleen Battle and Christian Gerhaher. The recent "Elektra" with Birgit Nilsson and Siegfried Jerusalem has won a back-to-back standing ovations receipt.}

**CD REVIEW**

**December 20, 1997**

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Our 1997 Stellar Awards Nominations - Proof of the Power

Hezekiah Walker & The Love Fellowship Crusade Choir
Nominated for: Artist Of The Year, Choir Of The Year, Urban Gospel Performance Of The Year and Contemporary Choir Of The Year

Virtue
Nominated for: New Artist Of The Year, Contemporary Group/Duo Of The Year and Urban Gospel Performance Of The Year

Albertina Walker
I'm Still Here
Nominated for: Traditional Female Vocalist Of The Year

Various Artists
The Real Meaning Of Christmas
Nominated for: Special Events CD Of The Year and Instrumental Performance Of The Year (Ben Tankard)

"Verity Records, The Power Of Truth & The Artists Who Love To Sing It"
AN EARLY HOLIDAY, FOR FAVOR: According to the Recording Industry Assn. of America's midyear figures (Billboard, Aug. 30), the U.S. Hispanic market is chugging upward at about a 5% clip. However, SoundScan's sales data is painting a much different portrait, at least for the first 11 months of 1997.

According to SoundScan, the domestic Latino market tallied 11.6 million units from January through November. Compare that number with the 15 million pieces that SoundScan reported were sold in the entire year of 1996 (Billboard, March 15), and it immediately becomes evident that there's a dire need for a spectacular holiday season.

Indeed, Latino executives nowadays are inciting a line resembling a chorus once warbled by Alvin and his chipmunk buddies. "Christmastime, don't be late."

That is because holiday sales make up 25% to 30% of the annual statistics in most markets. But given that percentage, the U.S. Hispanic market would need to more than triple in December to match the monthly January-November sales average of 1.05 million units.

That is asking a lot, especially since there are no new blockbuster titles by crossover Latino artists in the market on par with, say, Selena's 1995 set "Drowning Of You" (EMI/EMI Latin) or Julio Iglesias' 1996 album "Tango" (Columbia/Sony). It can be argued that SoundScan is not tabulating the sale of every Latino title in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. But the January-November tally does offer solid indication that the muy grande export arena is hardly booming.

Reasons from industry insiders for the downturn are numerous and plausible. Among them are fewer Anglo retail outlets than before; competition from other entertainment products, such as computer-related gear; and an overabundance of product being released to a consumer base that is not rapidly expanding, if at all.

One reason not offered for the sales drought is the accies drop of catalog product. Proof is in the statistics.

The market for hit product actually has remained steady. From December 1996 to December 1997, 4.8 million units were sold for titles appearing on The Billboard Latin 50, only 4% lower than the 5 million pieces moved in the corresponding period one year earlier. Thus, the bulk of the overall sales drop must be due to the decline in catalog albums.

Evidently, consumers of Latino product are terminating their conversions from other formats to CDs.

The 4% decrease in charted titles in 1997 follows a year when sales in the U.S. Latino market were up 11%, thanks to Selena and out-of-the-box debut albums by Fonovisa's teen idol Enrique Iglesias and Sony Discos' songstress Shakira.

That sales scenario was not repeated in 1997, although several notable notables reached hefty new sales plateaus, including WEA Latin's Luis Miguel and Maná's RMM's and Marc Anthony, Sony Discos' Alejandro Fernandez (newly crowned as a pop troph), PolyGram Latino's Grupo Limite, EMI Latin's "Las Tocancas De Tijuana," and Fonovisa's Los Tigres Del Norte.

Rapidly, the aggregate numbers by the aforementioned acts nearly filled the gap left by the diminishing presence at Latino retail of Selena and two other (Continued on next page)
NOTAS
(Continued from preceding page)
crossover stars: Epic/Sony diva Gloria Estefan and NonStop's Glenn Close/AG veteran the Gipsy Kings.
Complete catalog stats are not available from SoundScan, but clearly the hit titles will have to shoulder much more of the sales load this holiday season for the market to match its 1996 performance.

SÁENZ OUT, ZABALA IN: Hiqo Zabala has been named managing director of Warner Music Spain, replacing Julio Sáenz, who resigned his positions as managing director and president of Latin North American operations.
Zabala, a founding member of Spanish pop/soul outfit La Unión, formerly was managing director of Warner Music Spain. Sáenz is expected to pursue other interests in the music industry.

POR FIN THE IFPI MANUAL! Gabriel Abravu, CEO of Latin American trade association FLAPF, has confirmed that after much delay the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry's (IFPI) new statistics manuals have arrived to Latin America's regional trade group in time to tally the 1997 sales year.
The IFPI Market Data Reporting Manual, Abravu says, forms "the standard definitions and procedures for reporting and collecting music market data for international comparison.

Now, if the record labels would just send in their sales data on time.

STATESIDE BRIEFS: EMI Latin has signed Geraldito, a joint venture with Los Angeles indie Alacran. The pre-teen brother of PolyGram Latino's star Nacho Pedro Fernández, Geraldito is slated to drop his label debut in March. PolyGram Latino has signed José José, son of famed balladeer José José.

Sony Discos esteemed Tejano crew La Mafia has inked an pact with the agency of a Mexican-based Representative of Apodaca.
Tejano veteran Gary Hobbs, a long-time Latin act, has signed with Sony Discos.

Artists & Music

CHART NOTES, RADIO: After two weeks on the penthouse top 10, Marc Anthony's "Y Hubo Alguien" (RMM) registers a 500,000 listener gain to maintain its No. 1 position on Hot Latin Tracks for the fourth successive week.

"En El Jardín" by Alejandro Fernández and Gloria Estefan (Sony Discos/Sony) appeared poised to top Hot Latin Tracks last issue with a 20-2 jump, but the dual ballad upset by the already high-charting "La Carrera" by Banda El Recodo in its third week on the chart.

Leaping 38-10 is Luis Miguel's "Contigo (Estar Contigo)", (WEA Latina), the other ballad likely to battle "En El Jardín" for chart supremacy in the coming weeks. Luis Miguel owns three titles on Hot Latin Tracks this issue, along with Fernández. Fonovisa's Marco Antonio Solís notchs two singles on Hot Latin Tracks, including "La Venia Bendita", which has stayed atop the regional Mexican chart for 10 straight weeks.

Similarly, "Y Hubo Alguien", released to coincide with the premiere of "Enamorado" off the Latin Tracks this week, and "En El Jardín" rules the pop chart for the fourth week in a row.

LATIN TRACKS A-Z

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A Short-List Of German Global Hits

Country Continues To Contribute To Int'L Pop

BY ELLIE WEINERT

MUNICH—Pop songs with origins in Germany have been making successful trips abroad.

That current success is a continuation of the nation's past contributions to the contemporary pop scene.

To name a few: “Blame It On The Booogie,” charted by the Jackson 5, was written by Mick Jackson; “The Power Of Love,” recorded most recently by Celine Dion, was written by the team of Candy De Rouge and Mary Applegate; and “All My Life,” sung by Chaka Khan, was penned by Irmgard Klamm and Felix Weber.

Here are some other recent hits by how German compositions have traveled around the world:

- One of the most unique Cinderella stories for a German copyright in the international arena belongs to alternative rock band Rammstein (Motor Music/PolyGram) from the former East Germany. Two songs, released from the group's debut album, “Herzzeit” (Heart Time), appealed to film director David Lynch. Consequently, the songs, from “Shide” and “Heirate Mich” (Marry Me), were IMG Music, and appear on the soundtrack to Lynch's movie “Lost Highway.”
- Originals, along with songs from the compilation albums “Invisible Skin” and “Leap of Faith,” tracks from Nine Inch Nails, Marilyn Manson, and David Bowie.

The act had approached Lynch to produce a video, which did not work out due to the director's busy schedule. However, the atmosphere of the songs, written by the band members, and specifically “I Swell For Film,” did not only did Rammstein's music appeal to Lynch, the first two singles, “Engel” (Angel) and “Du Hast” (You Have), had scaled the German singles chart, while the band's album has reached No. 6. Since the release of “Engel” and “Herzzeit” in April, both have enjoyed gold status with sales of 250,000 copies, with the album heading for the platinum mark (500,000 copies). The band has been performing major open-air festivals in Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and the U.K., with the album released in Mexico, Spain, Greece, Sweden, and France.
- Publisher/owner Andreas Schlöbi of the dance label Stargate Music, who runs the independent dance label X-IT Records, can boast world-wide-selling copyrights by the dance group Sash! The group, comprising dance producers/paramedics Thomas “Alis- lon” Lüdens, Ralf “Kappi” Kappmeier, and DJ Saeche Lappe, struck it really big with its second single, “En- core Une Fois” (One More Time) (Mighty/Polystar), which has been a hit on the U.K. singles chart. Meanwhile, the single has sold 1 million units in Europe. It reached No. 2 on the Eurochart Hot 100 Singles chart in Billboard sister publication Music & Media and topped the Billboard Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart in the U.S. with “Oh I Love You Baby,” which added for the group include North America, Asia, Australia, and South Africa.
- Schlöbi, originally a freelance promoter who set up X-IT on the basis of his expertise with club promotion, licensed the worldwide rights for “Encore Une Fois” to the Hillserv, Netherlands-based Byte International, which then sublicensed the track to such labels as Multiply (U.K.), Ultra/fff/France (U.S.), Freem Ace (France), FMA (Italy), Scandinavian Records (Scandinavia), Ginger (Spain), and Quality Recordings (Germany). The cluster of releases means that independent dance labels can create worldwide hits.
- The band's second single, “Hit Seine” has remained on the top of the German chart, with chart positions in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Hungary, and the group's album, “It's My Life,” has reached the top 10 on Music & Media's European Top 100 Albums chart on the strength of sales in Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and the U.K.
- Kai Matthias, producer/writer of the Echo Award-winning trio of MR President (WEA), is enjoying European-wide success with every single so far from the group's debut album, “We See The Same Sun.” However, the band's most successful track to date remains “Coconuto” (published by Warner/Chappell Music), which reached No. 2 on the U.K. singles chart. In the U.S., the song reached No. 21 on Billboard's Hot 100 in September. Other markets in which the song has been successful include France, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Mexico, Japan, and New Zealand.
- The songwriting team of Peter Freudenthaler and Volker Hinkel of the pop group Nord, who are signed to EMI Music Publishing, has written 19 tracks for the disc, which has been released in Europe but in Asia-Pacific markets. Their song “Lemon Tree” won “song of the year” in the annual airplay awards from the Music Industry Association Corp. Ltd. and has been covered by Tai- wanese artist Taicy Su, in addition to being released in opposite sides of the globe. “Lemon Tree” is being used as an advertising jingle for tea in Italy, and there is interest in the band's recent single “Where Did She Go” for an upcoming commercial.
- The producer/songwriting team of Joseph Toreillo and Dee Dee Halligan, who previously enjoyed worldwide hits with the artist Haddaway, have been riding high with “Can't Take My Hands Off You” (A La Carte Music) as record- ing artist. Meanwhile, the group's vocal trio. The group's debut album, “Love, Sweat & Tears,” which yielded three hit singles in Germany, recently was certified gold in Denmark (20,000 units) and charted in Sweden and Belgium. A French version of "Can't Take My Hands Off You" titled "Aurine Fille As Monde," as recorded by teen act G-Squad (BMG France), was a top 10 hit in France and achieved gold status in the U.K.
- The band has also been released for an upcoming release in Canada.
- The songwriting team of Klarn- and Weber co-wrote and recorded “Anything For Your Love” with Skip Scarborough, and they have seen the track picked up by the current album for the jazz band’s member, Nancy Wilson (Sony Music). The duo also penned two tracks, “Love Is A Wonderful Thing” and “Come Into My World,” for “Tonight Is The Night,” the debut album from German dance act Le Click (Logic). The album was released in two weeks, and included in the U.K. and the U.S., this past summer. The debut single, “Call Me” (written by Norrie Katzenmeyer/Saw/Weider/Deady/Mayne and published by Get Into Magic/Beam/Private Area/Songs of Logic) climbed to No. 4 on the Billboard Hot Dance Music/Club Play chart in April, setting up the follow-up single “Don't Go.”
- The songwriting team of Dietmar Kowohl and Peter Bischoff-Fallenstein, previously won the award with “I'm Gonna Miss You” (Millian Valli) and currently collaborating with Diane Warren, returned to the Hot 100 this past summer with the track “I Just Want To Dance,” recorded by Arista/BMG act No Mercy.

HAPPY NEW YEAR: For two independent publishing operations on opposite sides of the globe, the year is ending with alliances. For Randy Rondon, who represents such publishers as Arch, Aris, Lopez, Bourbon, Budde, Buble, Coplete, Criterion, and Frankly, and Leyland, and Simon's catalog.

In the last few years, Haeggqvist reports, Gazell has been building its own original copyrights through a number of co-publishing deals and has reactivated the Gazell label, first established in 1949. The co-publishing deals include those with Maypole Music, Plumber Music, Saraf/Wagenknecht, and Andromeda.

One particular point of pride at the company is that it subpublishes the Swiftwater catalog, containing the works of Dave Frishberg, in a deal with David Rosner of the Los Angeles-based Swiftwater Music Co., which administers Frishberg's catalog. Two years ago, Frishberg was brought to Stockholm to be introduced to a private audience of music industry folks, and recently he returned to record an album for the Gazell label (distributed there by Warner Bros.) of his own songs. His classics "Peel Me A Grape" and "My Attorney Bernie" are done in Swedish. The album is due in March.

By the way, when Haeggqvist attends the January MIDEM meet in Cannes, he'll have attended all MIDEM gatherings since the organi- zation's inception in 1966. Not too many music industry executives have that track record.

PRINT ON PRINT: The following are the best-selling folios from Warner Bros. Publications:
4. Jim Brickman, "Picture This.
5. Smashing Pumpkins, "Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness."
The singing idols of his youth, including Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby, singled him out as the best of the pop stylists, and Tony Bennett remains awed at such assessments. He learned to swing with the jazz masters partly because a vocal coach urged him not to imitate singers, but to gain individuality by understanding the music of the instrumentalists who played the storied jazz joints of New York's 52nd Street. He relates pop music to his famous (and profitable) pastime, painting, and to impressionist composers such as Delius and Debussy.

Bennett's family upbringing was such that he can say that he never had to learn to like people; it came naturally to him. Although a younger generation for which rock 'n' roll is still king has taken to his artistry, he believes rock may have had a significant influence in distancing parents from their children. Bennett told of his life, his times and his thoughts along the way in an interview conducted in his apartment on Central Park South in Manhattan.

What singers did you admire as a teenager and why?

Well, you know, some of us fortunately have older brothers, and when my brother was 14 he sang in the Metropolitan Opera vocal choruses and had solo spots. He was known as the Little Caruso. He was really the shining hope of our family during the Depression. And he had great teaching. So we were automatically influenced by music. To communicate and have self-esteem also. I gravitated toward Al Jolson and Eddie Cantor from the radio days. Bing Crosby, of course, was a big, big influence because I had an aunt who was Irish. We used to go to her house, and every night I listened to every Bing Crosby record ever made by that time. Because of Bing, I was introduced to Louis Armstrong, because they recorded duets like "Fisherman" and "Small Fry."

Did any of these singers influence your early singing style. If so, who?

Of course I idolized Frank Sinatra, who was 10 years older than me. I was a male counterpart to the bobby-soxers. I used to sit in the Paramount Theater as a fan through seven shows watching him sing with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. What an education! He ended up not just being my mentor, but my best friend through the years. It's unbelievable. First being a fan and then many years later being shocked to find out in a 1965 Life article that Frank considered me the most exciting person that he ever watched as a performer. I couldn't believe it. I started out as a singing waiter in Astoria, and all of a sudden Frank, Bing Crosby and Dean Martin come along to say I was best singer they ever heard. It's one thing to be successful, such as having a couple of hit records, and then all of a sudden I get these accolades. Eventually, this made a major change in my life. For the better, actually. At first, it threw me for a curve. I had to live up to those accolades, but I said to myself, "Wait a minute. It's just like someone putting on a clean shirt or something."
"I n t e r v i e w"

It was for the Democratic party in Astoria. They had one of those local fund-raisers. They invited me to sing there. I only have pictures and my family telling me about it. I don’t remember it. It was years later that I walked across the Triborough Bridge. I guess they opened it in 1936 [1939]. I cut the ribbon with Mayor LaGuardia. They had me just singing, marching along together with everybody. There were pictures of that incident. As the old masters remember him as being a very sociable and nice person and they gave him an opportunity. They told me, “Just come and sing to this guy,” and that’s how I got there. I had comedians Jan Murray and Milton Berle. They first put me on at Leon and Eddie’s in Manhattan on a Saturday or Sunday night when they invited amateurs to perform. They liked the way I sang and they said, “Put him on there. Put him on.” I got a big break there. Pearl Bailey put me in her show in the Village, and Bob Hope came and saw me sing, and said, “You’re going to sing with me, kid.” He gave me my professional name. I used to use the name Jim Bari because my father came from Bari, Italy. In those days, you needed a name that everybody would remember. He said, “I invented that name for you. We’ll call you Tony Bennett.” He took me on the road, and I’ve been on the road ever since.

Under what circumstances did you make your first professional appearance as a singer?

What’s the story behind your first signing to Columbia Records?

Mich Miller heard about Bob Hope taking me out on the road, and there was an audition record that I had of Crazy Rhythms and "Fascinating Rhythm." I also did "Boulevard Of Broken Dreams." It was just a piano and voice demo with Tony Tamburello, who was my coach at the time, a very good coach.

Your first hits were really the power ballads of the day like "Rags To Riches" and "Because Of You." How did your interest in the great Broadway and film writers develop?

When I returned from serving as an infantryman in World War II, Ken Hamilton, a tremendous school, under the G.I. Bill Of Rights. I learned a lot about the stage and songs from musicals. And my vocal coach, Mimi Spear, who worked right on 52nd Street, told me, "Don’t imitate singers, because you’ll just be one of a chorus if you imitate Sinatra or Bob Eberly or Dick Haymes. Imitate the musicians whose names you see on the awnings on the brownstones across this street. There’s Art Tatum, there’s Benny Golson, there’s Oscar Peterson, there’s Stan Getz. Find the musicians that you like and imitate them. Don’t imitate singers. Otherwise, you’ll just sound like someone else."

You’re a big fan of American pop culture, aren’t you?

The United States is so great. It offers a great palette because you have so many different nationalities here. Yet, the biggest influence is Jewish music, primarily from Broadway with Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Harold Arlen. There is American improvisation in pop music that is the only thing we ever really created that’s our own. It’s our best ambassador. I travel all over the world and per-form. They know the Gershwin songs. They know Duke Ellington. They know all of the jazz artists.

Who is your favorite popular composer?

The great one is Harold Arlen. But not because he wrote "Stormy Weather," which I first heard in my dad’s record collection. But because he was a songwriter who understood me, producers who didn’t understand me. The trouble with corporate America—not just the business, but every business—is that the minute you emerge in these is no longer powerful. They have to show they’re worth. They have to show what they’re presenting is not what the guy is. We present. So you run into that danger every night. And along great, someone inspires you—Marvin Gaye, great, great, great to help me. All of a sudden, a new comes in and we’re not doing what Mitch was doing. I got a 17-volunteer collection on the history of art. I’d take on the day present. Seventeen volumes of art, and I said, "Tell me the first thing that a guy’s going to write if he’s 50 volumes?" And it opened with the idea that we’d tell the creative what to do. So I told them. They should be allowed to be trusted and do it. Once again, I can’t take it personally.

Richard Rodgers was once asked what was his tion of art. I think he gave one of the best answers he heard. He said, "Art is the expression of the meeting of in technical. Do you feel that’s accurate?"

The best description I ever heard in this vein was, what constitutes a good song, which I was taught never compromise on, and look for only good songs. A good song is what musically affects you. It’s very similar to Richard Rodgers said. Music affects you emotions. Words affect you intellectually. When you get the combina-tion of the two, you have a well-crafted song. That’s a song.

D O W N T O W N B A S I E ’ S B A N D

G + E + S + W + H + M

WALLER

T he Good Life

Facts & Firsts Of A Rags-To-Riches Career

B Y D O N W A L L E R

T ony Bennett, born Anthony Dominick D'Amato on Aug. 13, 1926, in Astoria, Queens, New York City, U.S.A. Italian grocer father, American seamstress mother. Learns vocal work ech model on St. George, NJ. Grows up in part of Newark, NJ. Then there’s Stan Getz. Find the musicians that you like and imitate them. Don’t imitate singers. Otherwise, you’ll just sound like someone else.

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How's Danny B? He'llManage

The father sings, the son shines, and the sky's the limit.

In a parallel universe outside of show business, oftentimes a son will take over or inherit the family business. Danny Bennett, son and manager of Tony Bennett, turned that concept on its ear. Inside the world of show business, a father will often manage a child, or a father will manage a brother, but Danny's managing of his father's career is a unique arrangement that has blossomed from the 1990s. Tony Bennett's career has been jump-started with his introduction to a whole new generation of music fans, and it was Danny's gut instincts and marketing savvy that helped get him there.

How did this come about? To talk with Danny Bennett is an eye-opening lesson in growing up in the music business and the instinctively-learned lessons that no college course could ever hope to teach. My first guests had been Tony's daughter, and we met to talk about the Beatles show at Shea Stadium, and we got to meet the Beatles and hang out in the dressing room. The music bug had bitten, and within weeks Danny was learning guitar while his brother started banging drums. Another family friend was music master Dee Anthony, who introduced him to a lot of touring British bands at the Fillmore East.

POST-DUCK DISCUSSION

The Bennett brothers played in high-school bands, and when they graduated, their band—Quack Duck—was signed to Warner Bros. Unfortunately, the band's career was short-lived, and in 1970, when Danny was 25, his dad approached him with an interesting idea. “He was between managers and also between labels at the time,” Danny recalls. “He knew how interested I was in the business side of the business and one day he just asked me if I would be interested in getting involved with his career. He just sort of presented it that way. Let's take it step-by-step and see if it works.”

That discussion turned into a full-fledged business partnership. “Tony was very trusting at that point, but again it's a matter of results,” Danny remembers. “We worked very closely at first. There were certain avenues Tony wouldn't necessarily have thought of going down. But I said, if we're going to expand your market, we have to go where that market is.”

So Danny first started branching out with Tony's television appearances and press coverage. Where it had once been just Johnny Carson, now it was Carson, but “let's try Letterman too.” If Tony's press had been limited to jazz publications or magazines aimed at an older demo, Danny took him to Jon and college-oriented press. “I just applied what I instinctively knew about marketing.”

One thing that came out of Tony was a guest appearance on “The Simpsons.” As Danny recalls, “One day, they called me up and asked me if Tony would do a song for them. I love the show, but Tony wasn't as interested in it. He checked it out and liked it, so I talked it over with him and told him that what I really wanted to do was pitch Tony as a character. ‘The Simpsons’ had yet to have guest characters on, and even though that's because a staple of the show, this was a new concept. When I pitched it,” Danny continues, “Matt Groening [creator of the Simpsons] called back the next day and thought it was a great idea.” So Tony became one of the first guest characters on “The Simpsons”, but that was only the beginning. A guest stint at the 1993 MTV Awards show with the Red Hot Chili Peppers led to a relationship with MTV that resulted in Tony doing “MTV Unplugged,” for which he won a Grammy for Album Of The Year in 1995.

“Marketing isn’t a bad word,” Danny explains. “Now, marketing can be bad when you compromise the music, but there you had a situation that was fun, it was part of the experience. For me, marketing became a gut instinct rather than a learned one.” But that hasn’t stopped the halls of academia from calling. “Sometimes, college kids come up to me and say, ‘We just spent the last three days studying the marketing of Tony Bennett’,” Danny chuckles.

NEVER- SAY-DIE ATTITUDE

Label president Donnen Wenner felt it was the special bond between Danny and Tony, and Danny’s never-say-die attitude, that contributed to their success. “When you have someone like Danny, who believes the impossible is just a step away, he inspires you to do your best work,” Wenner believes.

As Danny reflects on what managing his dad has meant to him, he explains, “To be a great manager, there has to be a very deep respect for what each other does. When you’re a manager, you’re only as good as the artist when it comes to managing or marketing. Tony had the courage to try things that others wouldn’t; they paid off for us. I mean, he’s 71 and getting younger.”

To say Tony is a great vocalist doesn’t come close to describing who this marvelous man is. To the world, my dear friend is a master at interpreting lyrics and notes. His talent at handling the beautiful music we both love is quite incomparable, and he’s a pretty good painter too! To my wife Barbara and I, Tony is a true and good friend. He is a soft-spoken brother whom we dearly love.

—Frank Sinatra
Congratulations on your 50th anniversary as one of America's greatest entertainers.

You look great!
You sound great!
You are great!
A perfect poster child for Italians!

Amore, Good Friend...

Bob & Dolores Hope
Ralph Sharon

Bennett's longtime accompanist digs the adventure and keeping it fresh.

Now 74, Sharon began his professional career at age 16 when he joined the original Ted Heath big band's lineup. Relocating to New York in the early '50s, Sharon backed female singers from Chris Connor to Rosemary Clooney before landing what he calls "the best job in the world—at least in the music business." BY DON WALLER

Ralph Sharon has been playing piano alongside Tony Bennett since 1951. A true Cockney—born in London's East End within the sound of Bow bells—Sharon, now 74, began his professional career at age 16 when he joined the original Ted Heath big band's lineup. Relocating to New York in the early '50s, Sharon backed female singers from Chris Connor to Rosemary Clooney before landing "the best job in the world—at least in the music business."

"Tony is a very inspired person," Sharon explains. "He's very dedicated to making whatever time we're playing sound as good as the first time we sang and played it. I've never known him to slacken—his determination is quite amazing—and that's also been very inspiring to me 'cause if that guy can do it, then I've gotta do it as well. That's how we keep it fresh."

"We haven't changed the keys that we do the songs in over the years, but some of the tempos have changed—we definitely swing a little harder now."

"And we have found that certain songs that make beautiful records do not play in front of an audience. On the other hand, there are some songs that aren't even that well-known, that do really score with the audience. There's a Duke Ellington thing called 'Love Scene'—which not too many people know—but every time he sings it, that gets a good hand."

"But he's constantly changing. Every couple of months, he'll usually put three new songs in the show. And those might be things we used to do a couple of years ago. He's gotta do the hits, but other than that, he can change anything."

"He's got a great feel for what will fit him," Sharon marvels, "although I was the one that found 'I Left My Heart In San Francisco.' There were a couple of songwriters in New York who knew I was working with Tony. They gave me a song, and I put it in a drawer, because most of their stuff was not for him. Later, we were going to San Francisco for an engagement, and I happened to be looking in this drawer for a shirt and I saw the title 'I Left My Heart In San Francisco.'"

There were a couple of songwriters in New York who knew I was working with Tony. They gave me a song, and I put it in a drawer, because most of their stuff was not for him. Later, we were going to San Francisco for an engagement, and I happened to be looking in this drawer for a shirt and I saw the title 'I Left My Heart In San Francisco.'

We were in Hot Springs, Ark., when I first played it for Tony. When we performed it in San Francisco, the people liked it, but we thought it was just like singing 'New York, New York' in New York. But the Columbia Records man there at the time—this is '62—said, 'When you guys go back to New York, record that, because you'll sell some records in San Francisco."

"And from that, it became a worldwide hit. Slowly."

"In discussing the fine art of backing a singer, Sharon is quick to point out that "being an accompanist is not an inferior role. I find that accompanying someone is a great challenge, because the one thing you have to do is stay out of the way, but also be very forceful in providing a background, a cushion for the singer. And you also have to play certain chords and certain feelings that will inspire the singer to do something better, so it's a very careful line that you have to tread. Anything that Tonya can get on records with Ellis Fitzgerald is delightful. That's the correct way to do it."

"But it's a great feeling playing with Tony, because it's an adventure. After all these years, I always know something good's going to happen. And some nights, something wonderful will happen."

"Some nights, it's just nice, but there are those certain moments when it's like...great... Everything is right: He's singing wonderfully, and the group is perfect. And I just look forward to that. I think that's where my life is with these shows, and that's where I think my life is, too. Because, when you're doing that, it's everything—it's the whole thing."

"Sometimes, the most memorable nights come from unexpected sources. "We were playing at the Nugget in Sparks, Nev.—this is quite a few years back—and the headliner was Bertha the Elephant," Sharon recalls. "Tony was in the middle of singing this beautiful quiet ballad, when this Bertha let out the most tremendous gust of wind from the rear end and broke Tony, myself, and everybody in the place up. We couldn't play. The audience was screaming with laughter. We often talk about that: 'Remember Bertha the Elephant'?"

As for what qualities have made Bennett so beloved to generations of fans, Sharon says, "I think that's 'cause he's such a sincere person. There's no U.S. about him. As people see him singing on TV or on stage, that's the way he is. He's the most unaffected person that I've ever met in this business."
We’re proud to be a part of your outstanding career.
SOMETHING (COLUMBIA) 1970

There’s an entire genre of kitsch music, document-
ed most impressively on Rhino Records’ “Golden
Throats” series, which features singers and TV stars of
an older generation revealing their terminal un-hipness
by inexplicably warbling pop hits from the ’60s. The under-
lying conceit, of course, is that the ’60s scene and the music
that informed it was simply too cool for its essence to be grasped by anyone
not of its time. But on “Something,” Tony turns the tables, imbuing sev-
eral familiar songs of that era with enough weight and dignity to reduce
the original versions, if not to kitsch, then to relatively callow precursors
of a deeper, more mature vision. The hit list here includes master-class
vocal renditions of Beatles tunes “Something” and “The Long And
Winding Road,” along with a beautifully understated “Make It Easy On
Yourself” and a compassionate reading of “Come Saturday Morning” that
plumbs depths of feeling previously unexplored, perhaps unimaginined.

Conversely, Bennett doesn’t fall into the trap of covering material just
because it’s supposed to be hip. He pulps tunes from films and
Broadway as well as the pop charts, revealing, for example, the sheer
melodious beauty of a song like “When I Look In Your Eyes,” which might
have eluded listeners not otherwise enchanted by the movie “Dr.
Doolittle.” More predictable but satisfying fare such as Andre Previn’s
pretty “Coco” and Jobim’s seductive “Wave” round out the program,
framed with orchestrations by Peter Matz. The late ’60s was certainly
not Tony Bennett’s idea of musical fun, but you don’t survive 50 years
in the big leagues without learning how to hit the curve ball. This album
strokes them with style.

TONY BENNETT AND BILL EVAN—THE ALBUM (1975)

In the ’70s, Bennett returned to his roots. It was a decade
of deep emotional exploration, and he allowed himself to
be influenced by the work of younger artists such as
Bill Evans. This album marked a departure from his earlier
work, which had been more focused on the classics. Here,
Bennett chose a mix of standards and newer tunes, with
the latter performed by his daughter, Sharon. The album
received mixed reviews, but it showcased Bennett’s continued
vigor and his ability to adapt to new musical trends.

BENNETT/BERLIN (COLUMBIA) 1987

Bennett has always been generous about paying
to that generation of songwriters who comprise
the “golden” age of popular song, and his largest
hit list between 1985 and 1995, the music
of Berlin, which he has always admired.
This album features his cover of “Take Five,”
the song made famous by The Dave Brubeck
Quartet. Bennett’s version is a heartfelt
tribute to the music of Berlin, who was
a close friend of his father, Frank. The
album includes other Berlin songs such as
“Take Five,” “Take the A Train,” and
“Take a Number Please.” Bennett’s
version of “Take Five” is particularly
memorable, with its haunting saxophone
melodies and Bennett’s soulful vocals.

TONY BENNETT TRIBUTE

www.americanradiohistory.com
Congratulations.
You've made us admit that our parents are right about one thing.
Dear Tony,

That you are amazing in many ways is obvious, but I would like to congratulate you on your inspirational and courageous stand against racism, as well as your generosity in lending your time to countless causes and Foundations, including mine.

Thank you for all you do,

Michael Bolton
THE RECORDING ACADEMY
&

MusiCares

Salute

TONY BENNETT

on

50 years of

GREAT MUSIC
were educated. They studied Shakespeare. They studied e.e. cummings. They studied George Bernard Shaw. They studied haiku poetry. After much hard work of just becoming tunesmiths and song pluggers or taking any job in the music business, they grew from just writing Tin Pan Alley songs to writing for Broadway, and from Broadway to the movies. They developed a style that is invincible. Articles in the music magazines or The New York Times respect the music, but it’s almost like they treat it like a museum piece. Have you had any songs written specifically for you to introduce?

Oh, yes. Many. I’ve had 35 songs that have become permanent standards now. Some of them are “I Want To Be Around” by Johnny Mercer, Sammy Cahn wrote “I’ll Only Miss Her When I Think Of Her” with Jimmy Van Heusen, “The Shadow Of Your Smile” by Johnny Mandel and Paul Fraser Webster. I recorded show songs such as “Stranger In Paradise” and “Just In Time” because labels then would bargain for the rights to original cast albums on the basis of getting singles by performers who were having big hits.

How did you discover that certain songs weren’t for you?

I could move right away because I had good teachers. I really did. I was told not to compromise. Unfortunately, they should have tipped me off that if you do that you’re going to get in a lot of trouble. What happened at Columbia—after I had “Because Of You” and “I Won’t Cry Anymore” and songs like that, early records—was that they told me not to change, make records like these. I’ve had a very good piano player for 30 years now, Ralph Sharon, and he said, “If you don’t change right now, the ax is going to drop on you. You know what you have to do.” I said, “What?” He said, “You know how to improvise. You know how to sing jazz.” He said, “You gotta do a jazz album.” Well, the war that I started at Columbia! I had guys say that they would leave Columbia; the late [orchestra leader] Percy Faith said, “I’ll leave Columbia if you agree to have this guy come in and do a jazz album.”

On the other hand, did you ever turn down a song that became a big hit by another artist?

Oh, yeah. “Somewhere Along The Way” with Nat Cole. “A Kiss To Build A Dream On” with Louis Armstrong. Oh, my god. What a loss they were! Big winners.

Do you recall an epic conflict or two with Columbia A&R people over songs they felt you should record?

Oh, many times. Many times.

Who usually won?

Actually, I came to a good agreement with Mitch Miller. He always had a tough time with me because he knew what I was up to, because composer Alec Wilder was a good friend of Mitch and Goddard Lieberson, the head of Columbia Records. They all went to college together, so Miller knew that Alec was also coaching me about never doing bad songs. Miller kind of understood it, but he was also a money man. He was the first producer that everybody knockked, and now they’re all imitating him. He was pretty sensible, though. He worked out a thing with me. He said, “I’ll choose two songs, and you choose two.”

You undoubtedly saw rock ‘n’ roll coming. How did you at first react to it?

At first I didn’t understand it. I always thought the music business was getting better and better musically. It was 10 years after the big bands. When I came back from the army, it was just economically unfeasible to keep doing it. But you still had Claude Thornhill, who started to be influenced by classical composers Debuss, Ravel and Debussy. But then it just stopped short so that when rock hit I disliked it and I’ll tell you why. Because the marketing people did a terrible thing. Greed overtook everything. What happened is that disc jockeys like Alan Freed, for example, real American DJ’s because he created a certain schizophrenia throughout the United States. He said, “This is your music, and your parents like the other kind.” That was pretty dangerous. During the Depression, I was told if you buy a record, make sure that the whole family will like it because we have to respect what we own; so I had to bring back a Caruso record, which is something I knew everybody in the house would like. I couldn’t buy a record that I liked. So rock ‘n’ roll created a disrepect. It taught the children to disrespect their parents. In the early days, I was taught by theater owners that in the morning you have the teenagers, in the afternoon you have adults. The demographics of store-changed so that the majority of people who bought records were young people. The older people who would have bought records were kicked out of record shops. To me, it was not a sensibility business. When you look at the early days like Jack Benny and George Burns, Bob Hope and Charlie Chaplin, and Gary Cooper, they thought in terms of performing to the whole family. They were very wise because if something hit, the whole family bought it. I thought, to say, “This is our music, and your parents like the other kind of music,” That’s terrible because, if a young person doesn’t respect his parents, that means you don’t respect yourself. If you don’t respect yourself, you’re not going to respect anyone else. We have to respect your parents because that’s how you become a good person. Anything else just doesn’t work. It doesn’t work.

Under what circumstances did your first career at Columbia Records end?

I was just burnt out because I was doing three albums a year for 23 years, and that was a lot of albums and a lot of deadlines. But then they started saying, “We don’t take concept albums.” I had a wonderful idea to do an album about peace, years before John Lennon did. I had this thing called “Mea For Peace” that Ace Wilder wanted me to do. I got turned down. It was a wonderful project to have young children talking about why they didn’t want their parents to go to war.

A project you can revive someday?

Yeah. Now I would just do it. I’ll get to that. But what happened at Columbia is they finally started turning down ideas. They just said, “We don’t want you to introduce any new songs,” I said, “But that’s my record. I’ve introduced 35 new songs that everybody sings. It’s good for the whole music business.” “No,” they said, “They’re not doing that anymore. We want you to just cover the top 10.” The minute they had Andy Williams, Jack Jones or Steve Lawrence cover other artists’ hits, they all sounded alike. There was no individualism. Years ago, the whole accent was that Dinah Washington sounded different than Peggy Lee. And Peggy Lee sounded different than Billie Holiday. You had to be different. Nat Cole sounded different than Sinatra. Sinatra sounded different than Johnny Mercer. That’s what made you a star.

If you had to choose one song that you wished you wrote, which one would it be?

The Things You Are” by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein. Every great musician I know loves “All The Things You Are” more than any other song.

How did the Improv label, a label you owned in the ‘70s, come about?

When I was a professional, I was very nervous. I went up to the Paramount Theater and I said to Sinatra, “I’m very nervous. I’m doing the Perry Como summer show, and I don’t know what to do.” And he said, “Don’t worry about being nervous. The people like that.” So when you’re not nervous, he said, “It’s as if you don’t care; if you don’t care, why should they care?” So he calmed me down with that. Then he said, “Don’t do any novelty songs. Just do quality songs all the time. Put your integrity first.” I never [stayed] from that lesson that he taught me. It allowed me to stay with good music. [That was the idea behind Improv, but] the company failed only because there was a moment when CBS said, “We’ll distribute you,” and

Dear Tony...

Congratulations on your first Fifty

Looking forward to your next

Love Phil Ramone, Larry Rosen, Dave Grusin
and all your friends at N2K

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Continued on page 56
THE MUSIC OF YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW.

TONY, ASCAP CONGRATULATES YOU ON OVER HALF A CENTURY OF SINGULAR SONG STYLING.

Thank you for all you've done for us, Tony. For all the extraordinary years we've shared. For all the magic. We're looking forward to so much more.

MARILYN BERGMAN, PRESIDENT & CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

e-mail address: info@ascap.com worldwide web: http://www.ascap.com
or who have the disease themselves.

The focus of the group, says executive director Joanna Bull, is to help people "learn how to live with cancer." Bull, who began the group, was Radwin's cancer psychotherapist. "Gone Wilder [Radwin's husband] and friends invited me to come to New York to start the organization. It's a meeting place for people with cancer and their friends and families." Gilda's Club has offices in New York and Hollywood, Florida. The main "clubhouse" is on West Houston Street in New York (1-888-GILDA-MU).

Bennett became involved with the club when the late Diana, Princess of Wales, visited Chicago last year. She was in town to donate her time to several charities, including Gilda's Club. "The sponsors wanted entertainment for the gala ball," recalls Bull. "Bless Tony's heart. We got the word from his office that he would do the job—on one condition: that his $25,000 fee would be turned directly over to Gilda's Club." She adds that Bennett directly requested the Princess.

Bennett recalls the evening in Chicago, and he especially remembers all the flowers the Princess received. "All the years I've been in Chicago, I never saw such an outpouring of love," he says of the reception for Diana. That wasn't the only time he sang for the Princess. He also performed at an AIDS benefit in New York at which she appeared. "Every billionaire in Palm Beach and New York City was there. They raised $10 million," he says. And he sang at a command performance for her and Prince Charles in Britain.

DESIGNS FOR THE ACS.
Bennett's visual talents also benefit another important charity, the American Cancer Society (800-ACS-2345). Karen Radwin, deputy executive VP of the organization, which has been in existence since 1913, says that he has for the past four years created the design that it uses for its holiday greeting cards.

Bennett became involved with the Cancer Society through his friends Ann and Herb Siegel, who are longtime volunteers. Ann Siegel is chairperson of the society's holiday-card program.

Each year, the ACS distributes its catalog to 37,000 companies and individuals. It raises over $100,000 a year, and a lot of that is due to Tony. His card is featured on the cover, and a letter from Tony is inside the catalog," says Radwin. This year's card is entitled "Holiday Bouquet." It's a still life of red, green and white flowers on a white background.

"We just think Tony's terrific," Radwin adds. "He's a great friend and a strong supporter. We just think he keeps getting better."

Bennett is no Johnny-come-lately to the world of giving. He recalls doing benefits on four years ago with people like Lena Horne. And, for about 10 years, he was the spokesperson for the United Way.

"When I was starting, Sinatra, who was 10 years my elder, said, 'Just make sure you do a lot of benefits,' Bennett says. "I believe that. And I've been doing them for years. I learned it from Bob Hope. He started me out, gave me a big break. He said, 'If you get lucky in show business, you make a lot of money. But you're not going to feel too good about it if you don't give as much as you take. It'll make you feel good to help somebody.'

TONY'S GREATEST HITS
Tony Bennett's top 20 singles and albums were compiled by Chart Beat columnist Fred Bronson based on peak position on Billboard's singles and album charts. Ties were broken by length of stay on a chart. What may surprise most people about Bennett's top 20 singles is that his signature song, "I Left My Heart In San Francisco," ranks No. 7 instead of No. 1. Bennett's highest-charting single was "In The Middle Of An Island," which peaked at No. 9. While "I Left..." is a better-known song, it only went as high as No. 10.

Bennett's personality profile in 1983, when he had eight separate titles enter the Hot 100, including two of his best-known tunes, "I Wanna Be Around" and "The Good Life." Bennett's top album 20 album list is most notable for including tracks from five separate decades. The crooner is one of a handful of artists who have charted albums on the Billboard charts in the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s. The only other artists to accomplish this feat with new recordings, as opposed to greatest-hits collections and reissues, are Frank Sinatra, Johnny Mathis, Johnny Cash and Nat "King" Cole.

THE TOP 20 JUNGLS OF TONY BENNETT
1. "I Left My Heart In San Francisco," 1962
2. "I Wanna Be Around," 1961
3. "Can You Find It In Your Heart," 1956
6. "I Left My Heart In San Francisco," 1962
9. "Young And Warm And Wonderful," 1958
10. "Someone To Watch Over Me," 1958
11. "You Can Turn To (When Nobody Needs Me)," 1964
12. "If I Ruled The World," 1965
13. "Happiness Street (Corner Sunshine Square)," 1956
15. "One For My Baby (And One More For The Road)," 1957
17. "Don't Wait Too Long," 1963
18. "This Is All I Ask," 1963

THE TOP 20 ALBUNLS OF TONY BENNETT
1. "I Left My Heart In San Francisco," 1962
2. "I Wanna Be Around," 1961
3. "Tony," 1957
7. "This Is All I Ask," 1963
9. "Who Can I Turn To?" 1965
10. "If I Ruled The World—Songs For The Jet Set," 1965
15. "Here's To The Ladies," 1965
19. "I've Gotta Be Me," 1969
TONY BENNETT

your incomparable grace and style

have left a mark on all of us

HALF A CENTURY

& LOOKING FORWARD

Congratulations

Sony Music Studios
I told him to change his name to Tony Bennett. But you know something? With his talent, he'd be just as popular with his real name, Antonio Benedetto.

—Bob Hope

Without a doubt, Tony Bennett is one of America's greatest performers. And he belongs to and is appreciated by all America. No generation gap with this legend... He looks great. He sounds great. He is great. A perfect poster child for Italians. Amore, Tua Paisana!—Dolores Hope

The classiest guy I know.

—Madonna

I'm concerned. If push comes to shove on that desert island, are you leaning toward the classical area? Well, of course. That's when you grow up. These are the masters, the real masters of music. You should listen to them. And when you listen to them, you should know the history of art. I'm a painter. If I don't study Michelangelo or Rembrandt or Raphael, I'm nowhere.

Could you share a wish list of ideas or concepts for new albums you hope to make in the years ahead?

Well, I don't want to give any away. What I would say is that I really wish I had two lifetimes, because I have that many ideas. It's easy for me to come up with concepts, easy. And I just love it. I laugh at the fact that at one time I was booted out of Columbia because I wanted to do concept albums, and now everybody does concept albums. Mitch Miller used to criticize me. He said, 'You're all right,' he said, 'but you're always ahead of your time. Just pull back a little and it'll be all right.' I'd rather be a little ahead of my time than to play stadiums. It's like Donald O'Connor once told me. He said, 'If you do something good, wait five years.' And it's true. It happens. You just have to be patient. Finally, the cream rises to the top. If it's really good, sooner or later someone's going to say, 'Did you hear that record that guy made?' and it works.

Can you talk about your return to Columbia Records? How did that come about?

I have to thank my son Danny for that all the way. He is so brave. In the last 17 years he's managed me, he's turned everything around. I've had a lot of different managers, and I don't know why. It just didn't work out. It started good and then it would flop. I never flopped with the audience. The audience never let me down. Whether in small houses or big houses, the audiences always encouraged me. God bless them. They reaffirm that I should just keep going. My son had to do something I practically felt was impossible. He had to overcome the fact that we had this separation between the young and their parents—the demographics question. One day, he came up to me and he said, 'Dad, there are a lot of young people my age that are starting to like your music.' I said, 'You're kidding!' I always thought I had a following around the world with just people my age or maybe 10 years younger than me. I was very comfortable just doing that, playing nice concert halls. I never wanted to play stadiums. I like nice clean halls where the family could come in—2,700-seaters like Carnegie Hall or the Academy of Music in Philadelphia or Heinz Hall in Pittsburgh, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in L.A. Beautiful places. That's the way I like to work. So he said, 'If you don't mind, I'd like to experiment a little.' I said, 'Go. Let's see what happens.' So he put me on SCTV with John Candy, and then they put me with the Simpsons, then they put me on David Letterman and Jay Leno, and then we started kidding around with MTV. Before you know it, I got involved with the MTV Awards. I started getting played on MTV.

Was your son involved with you when you returned to Columbia after a 10-year absence?

Yeah. And he changed the whole scene. I must tell you, he worked a thing out with Columbia that I think only Sinatra had. I just hand in my record. They don't say what I should sing or how I should sing. Or if you don't do this you're not going to be on the label or whatever. No threats. And every time that we've done something in the last four years, I've won Grammys.
Dear Tony,

Congratulations!

From your friend, John

and all of us at Metromedia
I never went for a hit record,” states master pop vocalist Tony Bennett. “I always wanted a hit catalog.” And though this singer’s catalog has had its fair share of singles, including a ‘60s run that saw him release such signature tunes as “I Left My Heart In San Francisco,” “I Wanna Be Around” and “The Good Life,” he has always been more of an album-oriented artist, preferring to take a theme or a mood and explore it over the course of an entire album of songs, much in the same way that Sinatra fashioned his classic output.

Now, Bennett’s catalog is getting the state-of-the-art reissue treatment before his stature as one of the greatest singers in pop history. Columbia/Legacy’s “The Tony Bennett Master Series” features albums handpicked by the singer himself—albums that “stand out in my mind as my definitive recordings”—remixed, remastered and digitally spruced up with 20-bit Super Bit Mapping technology. “I Wanna Be Around” (1965), with bonus tracks from Bennett’s 1965 album “This Is All I Ask,” “Who Can I Turn To” (1964) and “Something” (1970) inaugurated the series in late 1995, and five more titles hit the shelves in October: “The Beat Of My Heart” (1957), “Tony Bennett At Carnegie Hall—The Complete Concert” (1962), “If I Ruled The World—Songs For The Jet Set” (1965), “Tony Bennett Sings His All-Time Hall Of Fame Hits” (1970) and “All-Time Greatest Hits” (1972).

Overseeing the project, along with Bennett, his son/manager Danny, and label A&R VP Don DeVino, is veteran reissue producer Didier Deutsch. “The titles are chosen by Tony and his son Danny,” explains Deutsch. “Once the titles have been agreed on, I am left alone in the studio to remix, remaster and do everything that needs to be done. And, of course, they have final approval on everything I do. So, essentially, I am a middleman acting on their behalf in the studio.”

ART BLAKEY AND BINURAL STEREO

Of the titles released so far, the Carnegie Hall concert album and Bennett’s 1957 concept album “The Beat Of My Heart,” on which he is accompanied by a first-class array of drummers and percussionists (including Chico Hamilton and Art Blakey), benefit the most from the reissue program. “The Beat Of My Heart” was recorded in 1957 during several sessions, says Deutsch. “In June, the label was experimenting with binaural stereo; up until then, they had recorded everything in mono. So they started experimenting with binaural stereo, with the singer on one side and the orchestra on the other side. That’s the way they recorded the first several songs from that album.”

By the time that Bennett and company reconvened in the studio for the October sessions, the Columbia engineers had developed the full stereo spectrum on two channels. However, though most of the album was recorded in true stereo, it was only released in mono, since stereo was still in its infancy.

“When we went back to the tapes for the reissue, I had to sift through all of them,” says Deutsch. “We received something like a dozen boxes, and two of them were marked ‘extras’—I can’t remember the exact labeling. So we listened to them, and to our surprise, we discovered that they were the stereo tapes. That enabled us to release the product, for the first time, in stereo.”

EXPANDING CARNEGIE HALL

“The other album that’s important in the new series is the Carnegie Hall concert,” Deutsch continues. “We found the complete concert, and it contained 18 songs that had been previously released. When they released it initially, they eliminated a lot of songs because they wanted to fit it on two LPs.”

To ensure the best possible sound in the digital medium, Deutsch bypassed the original mono/mixeddown stereo tapes and remixed the albums from the original session tapes, while also including bonus tracks whenever appropriate. “For instance, on the album ‘If I Ruled The World,’ the song ‘Fallin’ In Love With Love,’ which is a great selection, was on the tapes, but it had never been released,” he explains. “And I thought it should be added. Also, on ‘The Beat Of My Heart,’ there is a killer track ‘Begin The Beguine,’ which to me is one of the best numbers he did on that album, but they decided not to use it originally.”

VAULTS IN VEGAS

Regarding what might be coming down the reissue pipeline, Deutsch says, “We want to do some early Tony Bennett. There is one particular title that I would like to do, and I think it has been requested by a lot of people. It’s a tribute to Harold Arlen, called ‘A String Of Harold Arlen.’ We also have some unreleased live albums in the vault, one recorded in Las Vegas, which we have been talking about releasing for the first time. But that will have to wait for a while. Eventually, though, we intend to reissue everything that’s in the vault.”

TONY AND COLUMBIA

Continued from page 49

ON A CLEAR DAY

As the Tony Bennett juggernaut started to pick up steam, Lennon was excited to see not only Bennett’s success, but how clear his artistic vision was. “I was very proud and happy. I was very happy that Tony had decided to stay here, and I was proud that we were able to help Tony and Danny get their vision off the ground,” he says. When asked what it is about Bennett that has connected with a new audience of listeners, Lennon replies without hesitation. “I think one very simple thing: honesty. People know when something is bogus, and they know when something is real. That’s part of the problem with the business today; there are not enough real artists, and to use an overused phrase, Tony is a real artist.”

Lennon feels that Bennett’s one of “the great B’s at Columbia Records, along with Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel and Bob, and he was one of those B’s that really was the foundation of the company.” And Lennon wants the Bennett run at Columbia to continue: “My personal feelings are that the 13 records Tony made outside of Columbia—and that’s out of a total of 79 recordings—I hope that those are the only outside Columbia recordings he ever does. For as long as he makes records, I hope Tony will remain on Columbia. We’re very proud and lucky to have him.”
The sound of shiny blue satin ribbon,

the smile of a warm and loving heart,

the eyes and hands of a painter of taste, talent and style,

the craft, pride and phrasing of a gifted musician,

the devotion to family and friends of a neighborhood guy,

and a passionate, lifelong love affair with the creators and players of great songs.

Truly a walking, swinging work-of-art-in-progress about whom one of your great predecessors would surely have said, "They ain't heard nothin' yet."

It's been an incredible journey and we're proud to have been part of it.

BELDOCK LEVINE & HOFFMAN
In 1982 or 1983, I had just done three nights with the Attractions at the Pier in New York City. I received an invitation to play on a television show with Tony and the Count Basie Orchestra. It was a dream come true, although, as a result of the three shows, I had no voice. Tony couldn’t have been nicer. He took me to one side and tried to give me valuable advice on how I should warm up. Although I may have seemed like a bit of a clown to the Basie Orchestra, Tony and Count Basie were very encouraging. I was happy to get the opportunity to work with Tony again on “MTV Unplugged.” I learned the song for “Unplugged” orally. I do write music, but I don’t sight read very well. And, inevitably you tend to absorb the shape of melodies by a composite of many different performances. Jazz musicians often have the habit of bending the melodies at their whim. The problem with that is you may be singing slightly in variance to what Cole Porter wrote down. At the ‘Unplugged’ rehearsal, Tony told me, very nicely, but very firmly. “You’re not singing the melody.” Although Tony has his own style, he’s a very good servant to the writers. He always sings the written tune and always mentions to the audience who wrote the songs. That, I believe, shows his humility.

—Elvis Costello
I’d like to extend my thanks for your generosity. Your performance on behalf of Billy Crystal and the cast of “Friends” went above and beyond the call. You are a consummate professional and humanitarian, and I am honored to have had the pleasure of working with you.

Aaron Tonken
Dear Tony,
Thank you for letting me play among the stars. It has been a wonderful adventure.
My very best wishes on 50 years of excellence.

Love,
Sylvia

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Tony Bennett
On Tour

The show goes on, more than 200 times a year, and the singer gives 110%. Lately, his
signature brand of cool has been championed by a younger generation, so it’s not
unusual to find him a star attraction at KROQ’s Acoustic Christmas show within
weeks of playing Radio City Music Hall. But no, he doesn’t require pink jellybeans.

BY RICHARD HENDERSON

The setting is perfection itself. The sounds of a full
orchestra reverberate from the stage of the
Hollywood Bowl into the boughs of the pine trees
surrounding the famed venue, and beyond into the
Hollywood Hills, as a capacity audience savors the intro-
duction to the Anthony Newley chestnut, “Who Can I
Turn To?” Within moments, beneath the starry canop of
a warm August night, Tony Bennett will once again make
this tune, along with many other classics of American
songcraft, his own.

Then, three lines into the first verse, a woman’s voice
from a box seat punctuates a quarter-note rest in the
arrangement, with the nearly anguished cry, “I love you,
Tony.” As the house dissolves in laughter and applause,
the unflappable and smiling Mr. Bennett sings the next
line, only to hear another woman at its conclusion singing,
“I love you too!” No doubt the majority of the San
Fernando Valley’s residents hear these voices and agree
with them. Tony waits a beat, then deadpans, “I thought
you guys all lived in San Francisco.”Hardly. Bennett’s
fanatical fan base has been nurtured with constant touring
throughout America. In

recent years, he has
added Asian and Euro-

pean dates to his al-
ready exhausting sched-
ule, giving new audi-
ences a taste of the
craftsmanship cultivat-
ed in a 45-year career.
His signature brand of
cool has been champi-
oned by a younger generation, and so it is not
unusual that Bennett now finds himself a star attraction at
KROQ’s Acoustic Christmas show within weeks of playing
Radio City Music Hall.

One can imagine the booking of the peripatetic
Bennett’s schedule of engagements to be a task nearly
as wearing as actually being on the road for the majority of
the year. But if it is stress involved, it cannot be detect-
ed in the voice of Rob Heller, VP of talent in the music
division of the William Morris Agency, the tone of whose
voice brightens markedly upon mention of Tony Bennett.

By way of introduction, Heller explains, ‘I’ve had the
pleasure of working for Mr. Bennett and Danny [Bennett,
the singer’s son and manager] for about eight years, initial-
ly for three years at Triad and then for the past five since
we became William Morris. I’m Tony’s responsible agent at
William Morris, which means that all of my colleagues who
come up with various offers for Tony—be they promosi-
onal dates or symphony dates or private engagements—bas-
ically are funneled through my desk. I formulate that data
to present to Danny and then to Tony, and then put a game
plan together for a touring schedule.”

How much of the year finds Tony onstage? “It seems like
every day,” says Heller. “Certainly, he does at least 200
dates a year. He stays very, very active!”

Is Heller’s a fun guy? “Oh, the funniest! We’re working
for a man who’s at the top of his game, who gives 110% at
every performance, who couldn’t be more giving to his
audiences. We’re fortunate as agents to represent talent
that’s the best at what they do, and there’s no finer exam-
ple of that than Tony Bennett.”

TONY BENNETT TRIBUTE

BILLOBOARD DECEMBER 20, 1997

www.americanradiohistory.com
"I've long been a huge fan of Tony's and heartily congratulate him on 50 years of the most wonderful entertainment. Through his generosity toward the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation (JDF) International and his establishment of the Tony Bennett Research Fund, I've come to know another aspect of Tony. As an outstanding contributor to the Foundation, his sensitivity and dedication to our goal of curing diabetes have made him my ideal."

Mary Tyler Moore
International Chairman
TONY

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Vance Anderson & Marcia Garcia

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Love,

Dan

&

Everyone at RPM Music Productions, INC.
FUTURE DISC SYSTEMS of Hollywood, Calif., hired mastering engineer Kris Solen and production engineer Pete Thomas, both of whom formerly worked at nearby facility 52nd Street Digital Mastering. Future Disc president Gary Rice says, "We have added two very talented engineers to our staff, Kris will be working in Studio 2 and has more than 10 years of mastering experience and is an accomplished Sonic Solutions editor. Peter has extensive experience in video production. In addition, he is also highly experienced in CD-R technologies." Solen's prior mastering experience includes titles like Michael Feinstein, Filter, and Shadowfax; Thomas has edited tracks for artists including Skold, Suga Free, and the Elevator Drops. Solen and Thomas join several mastering engineers at Studio 52, including engineers Steve Hall, Tom Baker, and Kevin Gray at the mastering studio, which has six rooms that offer 20- and 24-bit state-of-the-art services. Last year, Eddie Schreyer left Future Disc to open his own facility, Oasis Mastering.

VETERAN RECORDING ENGINEER Kevin Nettlingham has opened his own mastering studio, Nettlingham Audio, in Vancouver. Nettlingham most recently worked in Portland, Ore., area studios Dog Fish Sound and Muscraft Recording and Duplicating. With 16-track hard-disc recording capabilities, the new facility will specialize in mastering, editing, forensic audio, voice-overs for radio spots, videos, CDs, and books on tape.

CHICAGO-AREA SOUND REINFORCEMENT COMPANY db Sound, a relative unknown in a field dominated by longtime stalwarts, has been drawing critical raves nationwide for its work on the Rolling Stones' Bridges to Babylon tour. Critics for The Chicago Tribune, The New York Times, The Boston Globe, The Los Angeles Times, and USA Today praised the Stones' sound for its clarity and robustness.

Db Sound partner Harry Witz says, "The Stones' sound engineers flew around the world to find the best sound reinforcement—requiring each company to give live demonstrations of their wares." The company's other partner, Barry Dane, adds, "The Stones were looking for a marked improvement in every category, and they were only willing to change from their previous sound company if there were compelling reasons."

Db Sound came to the Stones' attention through the band's live sound engineer for the Babylon tour, Robbie McGrath, who had previously used db Sound systems on an EU/DC tour, according to Witz. For the Stones tour, db debuted the X-Array system, which the company co-developed with speaker and microphone manufacturer Electro-Voice. Witz says the X-Array reduces the amount of reflected sound the audience hears and is "musically richer and more dynamic, lighter and more compact, powerful, and easier to rig" than previous systems. Dane adds that the X-Array saved the Stones' two trucks, a generator, and two crew people over the band's previous tour. "This can translate into hundreds of thousands of dollars of savings over the course of a tour," says Dane.

EUPHONIX CORP. has appointed Tom Fristoe to the newly created position of VP of worldwide sales, according to Barry Margerum, CEO of the Palo Alto, Calif.-based console manufacturer. Fristoe was most recently VP of sales and marketing for Specular International, a software publisher of 3D design, automation, and Internet design tools. In a related announcement, Euphonix appointed pro audio industry veteran Chris Pelz to the new position of East Coast director for broadcast system sales. Pelz was VP of the Eastern region for Euphonix competitor AMX/Neve.

Margerum joined Euphonix in July 1997 following former chairman/CEO James Dobbie's decision to relinquish his CEO duties (he continues as chairman). Margerum was most recently president/CMO of the Computer and Mobile Systems division of Plantronics Inc. of Santa Cruz, Calif. In other Euphonix news, longtime VP of marketing John Carey has left the company.

CINRAM INTERNATIONAL INC. reported strong results for the three months ended Sept. 30. Sales increased 18% in the quarter to $193.9 million from $84.2 million in the corresponding quarter in 1996. Net earnings in the third quarter of 1997 were $12.2 million, or $0.41 per share, compared with $7.1 million, or $0.32 per share, in the third quarter of 1996. For the nine months ended Sept. 30, sales were $324.4 million, compared with $225.2 million in the comparable period in 1996. Net earnings in the nine months ended Sept. 30 were $24.4 million, or $0.87 per share, compared with $16.6 million, or $0.70 per share, in the period ended Sept. 30, 1996. A Cinram statement attributes the growth to recent acquisitions "and to generally improved demand for the company's products." Cinram also cites its DVD capacity as one of its assets, although the statement acknowledges that DVD production will not have a "material impact" on its results for another three to five years.
SAN FRANCISCO

I n early October of '97, tens of thousands of scruffy, patchouli-scented, natural-fiber-clad people of all ages descended upon the outermost edge of San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. The occasion was the 30th anniversary (actually, a couple of months late) of the Summer Of Love, that defining moment when the City By The Bay became inextricably linked with the hippie ideals of peace, love and willful eccentricity.

Promoter Cheri Helms, one of the original architects of the counterculture, believed in his anniversary event, but he wasn't convinced he'd draw a sizable crowd until he actually saw it materialize that morning. Helms' concerns were understandable, given that San Francisco's pop scene has diversified to a remarkable extent in the 30 years since the city's revolutionary youth joined hands to the acid-rock strains of "Somebody To Love."

PIONEERS' GROUND ZERO

Of course, the city remains ground zero for such High Street icons as the Grateful Dead, Santana, the Charlatans and the Jefferson Airplane, various members of each of those pioneering groups performed at the Summer Of Love celebration. But San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area have also become well-known proving grounds for dozens of never-never types—acid jazz and experimental hip-hop, punk and alternative music with an eye on the mainstream, stylish swing and colored revivals, and armchair travels from tribal cacophony to disfigured disco.

The Bay Area has always been a magnet for talented artists. Neil Young, Bonnie Raitt, John Lee Hooker and Tom Waits are just a few of the names on the list of venerable Golden Gate musical celebrities, while the last few years have seen the likes of Metallica, Primus, Green Day, rockabilly heartthrobs Chris Isaak and hip-hop aces DJ Shadow all emerge from local recording studios onto the national stage.

Among the acts whose open-mike-night dues have begun to pay off are impure popsters Third Eye Blind, Western Googie quartet Firenado and eight-string jazz guitarist Charlie Hunter. San Francisco is home to the conscious rap of Spearhead and the multi-culti turntable wizardry of the Invisible Skraich Pilk. It's also the on-again, off-again home of Mark Eitzel, the longtime leader of the close-but-no-cigar indie band American Music Club who recently recorded a well-received solo album with the help of R.E.M.'s Peter Buck.

DESTINATION SF

Touring bands from all over recognize San Francisco as an important place to break their music. "This is a key market," says Michael Cerchiai, proprietor of Bimbo's 365 Club, a plush, old-fashioned night-club that plays host to some of the city's most trend-conscious bookings. "San Francisco's appreciation for music is so great and diverse. Most tours that go out know that this market is really important."

That's been true since the heyday of the actual "Bimbo"—Cerchiai's grandfather, Agostino "Bimbo" Guuntoli. "He opened this place in 1931 as a full-on supper club, with comedians, jugglers, crooners," Cerchiai says. After Bimbo retired in 1969, the club was used mostly for private parties for 18 years, though local promotional powerhouse Bill Graham would rent it out for occasional shows. "We had Duke Ellington, Smokey Robinson, Louis Prima," Cerchiai says.

A handful of years ago, Cerchiai began to shift the club's emphasis back to concerts, with remarkable results. The burgeoning success of Bimbo's reflects the robust atmosphere of the current San Francisco music scene in general.

For some reason, though—possibly stemming from the very fact that the Bay Area is awash in an embarrassment of artistic riches—local hands have a tough uphill battle when it comes to building a healthy following.

"My impression is that it's hard to get people to come out to shows," says Sharky Lagana, founding member of the S.F. buzz band Creeper Lagoon. With so many things going on culturally, he says, "it's hard to get bands to stand out."

JAZZY DJs

DJ culture is huge in San Francisco at the moment—to the detriment of many traditional rock bands. "This month alone, I have Goldie, Spring Heel Jack and Hooverphonic all coming in," says Cerchiai. "Sometimes, I don't even use opening acts. I just go with DJs. We used to do a lot of acid-jazz type shows, and this seems to be kind of a descendancy of that."

Columbia signs the Hardkiss Brothers hail from San Francisco, and the turntable collective Funky Tekno Tribe drew a reported 12,000 to a recent Halloween rave. Local audiences are much more adventurous than many of their counterparts in other parts of the country. The dance-music underground is enormous, with gay clubs, raves and the still-developing acid-jazz scene all doing phenomenal business.

In jazz, both Blue Note and Verve Records have acknowledged the recent revitalization of the Bay Area scene, with Blue Note releasing three albums to date by the innovative guitarist Hunter and Verve affiliate Antilles putting out acclaimed discs by guitarist Will Bernard and the heavy-groove fusion band Grasy Knoll.

Continued on page 74
The Fillmore, 1805 Geary Blvd., cap. 1,250; venerable Bill Graham venue reopened in 1994 after undergoing seismic retrofitting.

Great Eastern Music Hall, 390 18th St., cap. 500; eclectic bookings run straight from avant-garde to skinhead. Prominently housed in a thoroughly restored Barbary Coast-era nightclub setting.

Justice League, 629 Divisadero St., cap. 430; Brand-news hip-hop spot on site of the old Kennel Club. Early bookings include world beat, jazz, even experimental theater.

Maritime Hall, 450 Harrison St., cap. 1,800; Converted art-deco theater run by independents in challenging Bill Graham Presents' stranglehold on the local concert scene. Lots of rock'n'roll, hop, country and psychedelia.

Purple Onion, 140 Columbus Ave., cap. 100; Legendary North Beach hole-in-the-wall is a haven for punk, ska bands and kids on scooters.

Slack-rockoctet that's often the first choice for guests on 3rd & Geary.

Sunfur, 1810 18th St., cap. 600; another party in the Balboa Triangle. Lauded for its screen as a 'jewelry box.'

The Tower, Sam Goody, Wherehouse, and Virgin Megastore chains all have locations in the city.

Bimbo's 365 Club, 1025 Columbus Ave., cap. 685; swank night-club that's often the first choice of trendy/Britpop/

Bottom Of The Hill, 1235 17th St., cap. 300; popular neighborhood space hosts local and national acts, site of early gigs by Oasis and Alanis Morissette, among others.

Elbo Room, 647 Valencia St., cap. 225; World and urban beats. DJs and live acts.
We survived more than earthquakes. Now entering our 50th year as privately held independent companies.
The Bay Area's airsines offer a smorgasbord of sound—virtually every market is served.

For rock 'n' roll, the heavy hitters are the modern-rock trendsetter Live105 (KITS FM 105.3) and the "gray ponytail" roots-and-classic-rock station KFOG (FM 104.5 and 97.7). Urban beats are dominated by two rap-and-new-jack powerhouse, KMEL (FM 106.1) and "Wild" KYLD (FM 94.9).

The venerable oldies station is KFRC (FM 99.7). Another hoary set of call letters, KSAN—once the groundbreaking home of the progressive "album-oriented-rock" format—was recently resuscitated as a straight-ahead classic-rock station at a new frequency (FM 107.7) after a short stint as a country station.

KYCY (FM 93.3)—"Young Country"—has that genre pretty much covered, while KNEW (AM 1190) provides a more tradition-based alternative.

One of the local airwaves' newest attractions is "Alice," KLAL (FM 97.3), a two-year-old station primarily targeting women, with current female artists, pop hits by tentative guys and the occasional new-wave flashback.

The Bay Area is also blessed with a wealth of non-commercial radio alternatives, chief among them are the nationally recognized college stations KUSF (FM 90.3, University of San Francisco) and KALX (FM 90.7, University of California at Berkeley). Finally, the community-oriented KPOO (FM 90.5) offers a nice mix of jazz, soul, rap and ethnic music.
Music Industries Take Issue With Government

Report Critical of Japanese Price System

BY STEVE MCCULLE

TOKYO—The Japanese record industry and the government are fighting a "war on record retail," a government report critical of the country's controversial resale price maintenance system, the system that enables record companies to set retail prices.

"We cannot see any special reason for keeping the current resale price maintenance system intact," the deregulation subcommittee of the government's administration committee said in a report released Dec. 8.

"Appropriate action should be taken swiftly after thorough discussion seeking public consensus." The report council is scheduled to present a final report to Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto Dec. 18.

"It is regrettable that the report concluded that there is not enough reason for keeping the system intact," the Recording Industry Association of Japan said in a statement, noting that the subcommittee stopped short of recommending its outright abolition.

"We are determined to make further efforts to appeal for the need to preserve the system," the RIAJ says.

The system, known as saihin in Japanese, enables Japanese labels to set the retail prices of domestically pressed product, including non-import foreign repertoire, for two years from the release date.

Officially, Japanese record companies, publishers, and retailers support the system because it nurtures music culture by making it economical for labels to release minority-artist product as well as mainstream artists.

Privately, however, many in the industry say the current trend toward deregulation means the writing is on the wall as far as saihin is concerned.

Mega Returns to Centralized Structure

Indie Closes Offices, Restrengthens Danish Office

BY KAI R. LOFTUS

OSLO—Indie-labels group Mega Scandinavia has abandoned plans to develop fully fledged record companies in the Nordic territories and could once again end up as a label within a larger group, thereby returning to the same type of arrangement it had with EMI throughout the '80s.

On Dec. 1, Mega centralized its A&R activities in its headquarters in Copenhagen and closed its A&R operations in Oslo and Stockholm, though its representative offices in those cities remain open. The restructuring has been followed by an instant resignation of the managing director at the Norwegian affiliate; a termination of the distribution deal with Warner Music in Norway, Sweden, and Finland as of Jan. 1; and continued joint-venture negotiations with the Dutch-based Arcade Music Group.

Additionally, Mega has become the licensee for Arcade repertoire in Denmark, where Arcade does not have an office. Material released under this arrangement will be distributed by Arcade.

Mega Scandinavia senior VP Cai Leitner says that a deal with Arcade could be finalized before the end of the year. Arcade would be Mega's third distributor in two years, following deals with Sony and Warner (EMI and Warner in Finland).

Leitner says that a joint-venture deal with Arcade would allow Mega to focus on its creativity: "Our intentions are to concentrate solely on A&R, while leaving music and distribution to another company." He says he cannot confirm whether promotion and marketing duties also will be handled by a joint-venture partner.

Billboard has learned through sources close to the Vicki role that the label was close to combining its operations with Virgin Records in Scandinavia last year.

Mega and Virgin executives were involved in talks for five months in 1996. The two sides were about to sign a deal that would have made Terje Engen, currently head of Mega in Norway, managing director of Virgin Records Norway, effective as of Oct. 1 last year, but the negotiations failed for undisclosed reasons.

Leitner "for the past few years, Mega has traditionally been the company that has had the greatest international success with acts such as Shaggy, Yaki-Da, Ace Of Base, and Leila K."

"International exploitation of local acts has been our core business and given us the best results, and we have chosen to concentrate further on that. We're just focusing on what we do best," adds Leitner.

He denies that there is displeasure with the artists signed outside Denmark.

Engen says he was not notified about the changes until he read a company statement Nov. 29. He announced Dec. 1 that he intends to leave the company when his contract expires Dec. 31, 1998, unless an agreement can be reached between him and Mega Scandinavia president Kjeld Wennick in regards to taking care of the current artist roster in Norway.

The managing director in Sweden (Continued on next page)

Oz Parallel-Import Relaxation Blocked

BY CHRIS ELIEZER

SYDNEY—The music industry here has stepped up its campaigning after winning a temporary reprieve from the federal government's plans to relax parallel import restrictions.

The Copyright Amendment Bill No. 2 passed through the House of Representatives Dec. 2 but failed to get Senate approval when it was presented there Dec. 4. The rebuff was a setback to Sen. Richard Alston, minister for the arts and communications, who claims widening the source of product from the multinational companies would reduce the price of CD prices here—by three Australian dollars immediately and at least six Australian dollars in the long run (Billboard, Nov. 1 and Oct. 16). The full price of a CD in Australia is $31 Australian (nearly $22).

The major opposition party, the Labour Party, has steadfastly refused to give its support, agreeing with the music industry that changing the copyright act would destroy the independent sector and make the industry vulnerable to piracy.

The industry has argued that dropping the 22% sales tax on records, which raises $120 million Australian ($79 million) annually, would have the desired effect.

The other two opposition parties, the Democrats and the Greens, have had no firm policy on the issue. But at the last minute, they both voted against the bill. The Democrats' consumer affairs spokeswoman, Sen. Natasha Stott-Despoja, says that recent devaluation of the Australian dollar against the U.S. dollar (the value of one Australian dollar fell from 75 U.S. cents to 66 cents) made imports more expensive than six months ago, making nonsense of talk about lowering prices.

The Greens' leader, Bob Brown, asked for further research on possible repercussions.

The bill has been sent for investigation to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee, under chairman Eric Abetz. The music industry gets the chance to put its case to the Senate when hearings are held in early February. The committee is planning to complete its report by March 23.

"This will be an opportunity to air our case," says Jeremy Fabinyi, CEO of the Australasian Music Publishers Assn. Ltd. "We are hopeful that we can convince those senators who hold the balance of power to back a sustain of Australian composers, publishers, artists, and record companies."

FNAC Signals Int'l Expansion Via Paris Store

BY REMI BOUTON

PARIS—The opening of a new flagship store on the Champs-Élysées here marks the kickoff of an ambitious international expansion plan for leading French retail chain FNAC, which plans to be present in Eastern Europe, Asia, and Latin America within the next 12 to 18 months.

The expansion strategy for the chain, which accounts for 25% of record sales in France, was unveiled by the chain’s chief executive, Francois-Henri Pinault, Dec. 3, the day the new Champs-Élysées store opened.

The store, which has been trading there since 1988, is the 50th in a chain that achieved a record revenue of 12 billion francs ($2.4 billion) in 1996. FNAC, owned by retail conglomerate Pinault-Printemps-La Redoute—a company controlled by Francois-Henri’s father, Francois Pinault—is the leading retailer in France of cultural goods (books, records, videos, music, newspapers, and DVD electronics, photography and stereo equipment.

Francois-Henri Pinault says the store required a 40 million franc ($5 million) investment and "allows FNAC to be at last present on the most famous street in the world."

The opening of the store "marks the kickoff of our new international development policy," adds Pinault.

So far, the chain has eight stores outside France—five in Belgium and three in Spain, accounting for 10% of revenue. Pinault says he aims to boost international operations to 25% of sales within five years, adding, "it means that, taking into account our local development, we have to multiply threefold our international business."

FNAC’s most adventurous foray outside France so far was its store in Berlin, which operated from December 1991 to the end of 1994 just off the KuFurstendamm in an area where the presence of Virgin Retail and WSM stores made for a cutthroat environment.

One senior observer of the global retailing sector says that such competition might be the stumbling block to FNAC’s new round of expansion. "FNAC have done well in France because, apart from Virgin, who have given them a good run for their money, they haven’t really had (Continued on page 77)"
LONDON—U.K. authors’ body the Performing Right Society (PRS) has secured a fivefold increase in its royalty payments from TV channel British Sky Broadcasting (BSkyB) despite failing to convince a Copy-right Tribunal of its arguments.

The tribunal ruling, delivered Dec. 10, said that PRS payments should rise to 8 million pounds ($4.8 million) for 1997. However, chairman Christopher Floyd rejected PRS’ case that all payments should be based on a percentage of BSkyB’s revenue. PRS had claimed that, on a scale of European comparisions, a 3% rate had been just; this would have resulted in a tenfold increase in current royalty payments to approximately 6 million pounds ($9.6 million) a year.

Asked whether the fivefold increase means PRS has won, chief executive John Hutchinson comments, “I'm not sure that the tribunal is set to so anybody can say they won. It is rare that the tribunal will come out totally on the side of what anyone asked for.”

He adds, though, “It is satisfacto-

ry in that we have got a significantly increased payout. But, in terms of

what we can get for our members, we are never satisfied. We always want more.”

The dispute between PRS and the satellite-and-cable broad-
caster is rooted in BSkyB’s near collapse five years ago. At that time, mindful of the station’s precarious financial position, PRS implemented an emergency tariff of around 400,000 pounds ($600,000) per year.

BSkyB has remained on that scale ever since despite its increasing financial health and huge increase in channels.

Floyd wanted to move from this to a percentage of revenue; BSkyB argued for a lower range of payments based on viewing figures. The two sides presented their case to the tribunal during a 12-day hearing in November (Billboard, Dec. 6).

Floyd has now ruled that the new system for payments will have two elements:

- a fee of 1.5 million pounds ($2.4 million) for 1998, adjustable in future years based on inflation and increase in viewing figures; and
- a fee of 1.25 million pounds ($2 million) to be adjusted by 10,000 pounds ($16,000) per channel that BSkyB introduces or closes, and rising on the account of inflation.

The fees Floyd quotes are rele-

vant to 1995 and have been raised to a total of 3 million pounds ($4.8 mil-

lion) for 1997.

Floyd’s ruling is an interim one and leaves PRS and BSkyB to agree on terminology and methods of calcu-

lation. Floyd will monitor their

progress in this area and will impose a ruling if the two sides cannot agree.

In making his decision on the new payment method, Floyd declined to take into account PRS’ argument that BSkyB’s share of revenue would have been fair in terms of a com-

parison with elsewhere in Europe. He went further in saying that his ruling on BSkyB would not be

regarded as relevant in PRS’ nego-

tations with the main terrestrial broadcasters, the BBC and Inde-

pendent Television.
Net Ordering System Unveiled

BMG Asia Seeks Link With Retailers

By GEOFF BURPREE

HONG KONG—BMG Music Asia demonstrated on Dec. 14 a new Internet-based sales-order-processing system that the company hopes will ultimately streamline distribution of its products to music retailers in the Hong Kong market.

The inauguration of the system occurred when the record company received its first electronic order from HMV. The chain has committed to placing all its orders electronically from now onward. BMG hopes that talks with other major retailers in the market, specifically Tower Records and KFS Stores Ltd., will soon yield similar agreements in an effort to create an ordering system exclusive to each retailer.

“We’ve put ourselves in the position of the buyer,” says BMG director of operations Sue Wong. “In Hong Kong, we hope Tower and KFS will use the system. HMV are quite committed.”

At the moment, Wong’s says, the system will allow retailers to pre-order new-release products, which previously they could not do. There is also a status function, to determine a product’s immediate availability.

While retailers acknowledged the fledgling system as a step in the right direction, the operation will require fine-tuning before it becomes a comprehensive solution for ordering BMG product. “At this point, we deliberately took the view that we want an order-processing function,” says Wong. “Six months down the road, we can get feedback (from retailers) and ask what to improve on and then develop a second generation.”

Such improvements could include catalog material (including CD covers scanned in) and music genres properly classified for easy accessibility.

While both Tower and KFS say they have been following the development of the system, HMV, the major retailer in the territory without its own internal computer ordering system, is the most logical target among international brands.

Bob Kaufman, Tower’s GM for Asia, development, says he welcomes BMG’s effort. While the system is currently incompatible with Tower’s regional in-store computer system, Kaufman says Tower is working “on a long time to work it out so we can send files directly,” he says.

Tom Hudak, group CFO at KFS Stores, says that BMG has been talking with his staff and that he will be receiving an internal presentation on the system shortly. Of the system’s impact on his company’s relationship with BMG, Hudak says, “It would be difficult to scramble in sourcing product, certainly.”

The system was developed by BMG at a cost of $30,000, in conjunction with AT&T’s Internet service provider (which also hosts the system) in Hong Kong. BMG says that orders for locally available product received by noon will be delivered the same day, and that all orders through BMG’s international ordering system (the Hong Kong project is linked to BMG’s main warehouse in Gelsenkirchen, Germany) will be filled in seven to 10 days.

The company aims to implement the system in five other markets within two months, including Singapore launch during December. There will be rollouts in Malaysia and Taiwan in January and the four Thai and Korea a month later.

The company hopes the system will alleviate the unavailability of product that retailers have forced them to acquire BMG products from foreign markets—a practice blamed in Hong Kong in June in a form of a new copyright law that carries stiff fines for parallel importation without consent of the copyright owner. Making this available is one side of the equation, says Wong. Building an extensive profile of the individual retailer requirements and marketing potential is another.

“There’s a lot of catalog which is not properly catalogued; if an import takes off, we’ll look at the system as a safety net. We will try to aim for tailor-made catalog.”

Sample the many first-rate music industry products brought to you by: www.americanradiohistory.com
**HITS OF THE WORLD**

**JAPAN**

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<td>Enya</td>
<td>Paint The Sky With Stars</td>
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**NEW**

- New Entry: RE = Re-Entry
- New Entry: EO = Entry Only
HITS OF THE WORLD CONTINUED

EUROCHART 12/29/97 MUSIC & MEDIA SPAIN (APVEFILM MEJ 12/29/97)

SINGLES
1. CANCIL EN EL VIENTO 1997 (ELTON JOHN)
2. COME ON COME ON COME ON COME ON (POLISH)
3. TE LL ME (BARRY WHITE)
4. DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD (ZEKKA)
5. I CAN'T HELP MYSELF (FOUR-derived)
6. PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR LOVE (HOLLYWOOD)
7. YOU DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES (98 DEGREES)
8. AS LONG AS YOU LOVE ME (BACKSTREET BOYS)
9. NEW TUNES FOR DIFFERENT ARTISTS (DIFFERENT)
10. NO NEW ALBUMS

NEW ARTISTS
1. TIES (NEW ARTISTS)
2. BLUE BELLS (NEW ARTISTS)
3. SUGAR (NEW ARTISTS)
4. SONGS FOR THE NEW GEN 1 (NEW ARTISTS)
5. BACKSTREET BOYS (BACKSTREET BOYS)
6. CHERRY (NEW ARTISTS)
7. SPICE GIRLS (SPICE GIRLS)
8. METALLICA (METALLICA)
9. AQUA (AQUA)
10. NEW ALBUMS

NEW SINGLES
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3. TE LL ME (BARRY WHITE)
4. DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD (ZEKKA)
5. I CAN'T HELP MYSELF (FOUR-derived)
6. PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR LOVE (HOLLYWOOD)
7. YOU DON'T HAVE WHAT IT TAKES (98 DEGREES)
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Spain's inaugural Premios Amigo honors attracted the cream of Spanish talent to the awards ceremony in Madrid (Billboard, Dec. 6). Pictured above is Alejandro Sanz, who received the award for best male, and below is Rosana, who won best female and best album with her debut for Universal Music Spain, "Lunas Rotas" (Broken Moons). The awards are organized by Spanish labels' body AFYVE.

Spain's annual Eurovision contest is a major event in the Spanish music industry. Rosana's award-winning album "Lunas Rotas" has received critical acclaim and has been well-received by fans. The recognition of Alejandro Sanz as the best male artist further highlights the diversity and talent within the Spanish music scene.
Cups To Perk Up Its Cafe Program

Coffeehouse Tour; Label Sampler Planned

BY STEVE TRAIAN

NEW YORK—Cups, the Cafe Culture Magazine, is embarking on two programs to revitalize its In-Cafe Play concept, which has given record labels with eclectic artists a chance to expose their music to an alternative audience of coffeehouse patrons.

The Dayna Manning/Nettwerk Records/Cups tour kicked off Dec. 4 at New York’s Sidewalk Cafe, the first of 11 coffeehouse dates in seven cities for the Lilith Fair tour performer. In the spring, working with Peter Gordon, president of Thirsty Ear Records—and Torani Syrups—provider of flavored coffee syrups—Cups will put together a sampler CD of the label’s artists for a six-week test in 18-12 locations in New York and San Francisco.

Pamela and Tim Cody are pictured in their 6-year-old Pyramid Music store, located on Santa Monica, Calif.’s Promenade pedestrian mall. The store has a depth of 150 feet. The couple estimates that 60-70% of their business is at night, “when the theaters empty out.” (Photo: Earl Paige)

Pyramid Music Puts Premium On Location

Santa Monica Store Benefits From Tourist Trade

BY EARL PAIGE

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—When Tim and Pamela Cody opened their record store, Pyramid Music, here six years ago on the city’s Promenade, a pedestrian mall lined with retailers, they thought their location would cater to local clientele—but they soon found out otherwise.

Pamela is the “most famous beach city in the U.S.,” attracting tourists from around the world, says Tim. Pamela adds, “It came as a total surprise” that the store would be so dependent on tourists.

As a result of the tourist-oriented traffic and trade from neighboring movie theaters, 60-70% of the store’s volume is generated at night. Consequently, store hours have been gradually extended; the Codys used to keep the shop open until 1 a.m. on Friday and Saturday but more recently have expanded business hours on those days to 2 a.m.

“With the store in Santa Monica, Westwood is probably our toughest competition, and it is coming back from a period when they joked about ‘Westwood,’” says Pamela of a shopping district surrounding the UCLA campus. She says the steady buildup of the Santa Monica Pier has added immeasurably to the success that Pyramid Music is experiencing.

Pyramid Music, which measures 2,200 square feet, prides itself on selection, with “everything from jazz and classical to blues and world; we carry it all,” says Pamela. “We specialize in obscure titles, we have lots of hard-to-get items, and we think that in new music our everyday $12.99 helps us against the chains, which run $11.99 on just a few items to draw in traffic and

then charge as much as $16.98 for a CD.”

Still, the Codys concede that 1996 was not a strong year for Pyramid. The Olympics, which were held in Los Angeles in 1996, “hit us hard last summer. It drew away a lot of the tourist business, and we missed that extra lift we get in the three months of summer,” says Tim. “Just like most record stores depend on the Christmas quarter, we depend on the summer tourist months. It rounds out the year and helps us over the slow times.”

In an attempt to further enhance traffic to the store and better utilize space, the Codys recently carved up their oversized office behind the store, freeing most of that space for retail usage. But instead of adding to the store’s inventory, they instead chose to lease the space to two other merchants, one selling jewelry and the other ice cream.

Nonetheless, the Codys are looking to expand their music business. “We’re designing a [World Wide] Web page, and we hope to be offering music by E-mail,” says Pamela. The hallmark of Pyramid is its used CD and cassette business, which makes up 50% of the music volume at the store. “Tourists don’t bring us any used product, so that is entirely dependent on what has developed into a very loyal local clientele,” Tim explains. “We have 15 tables of CDs alone. Of the total used volume, cassettes represent only 10%. The couple estimates that the other half of the store’s total volume is divided, with new music accounting for 25% and a mix of electronics, gifts, and magazines accounting for 15%.

While once upon a time independent had used business all to themselves, huge local chain Where... (Continued on next page)
good investment for our artists with smaller promotion budgets. It's a good way to get a sampler distributed to an appropriate market like coffeehouses." This past spring, she used the program for the "Sekou Sundiata/The Last Poet" compilation on the Mouth Almighty spoken-word label. Coming up, she hopes to utilize it again for "Edgar Allen Poe," an album featuring various artists reading the writer's works, and for Bosnia, an Asian spoken-word hip-hop artist.

Lisa Latendresse, national audio sales manager at Seattle-based Mira- mar Records, is a new program supporter. Her boss, audio division sales and marketing director Tom Mehran, liked the magazine and suggested that it was appropriate (for them). Tangerine Dream album, "Oasis," which ships in February. "Being that we're in Seattle, the land of coffee, [coffeehouses] seemed like the obvious place to go," she says. "A lot of our audience are there for an extended period of time, and it's a great place to let people know about our records. We'll probably include a bounce-back card with the sampler to encourage the cafes to continue getting our music."

"Since midyear, the In-Cafe Marketing program has shown strong," Linda Manning said. "We've been on informal distribution to get CDs for a limited number of label clients to above 350 cafes and coffeehouses. We're very excited about our new concepts, which should help redefine and relaunch the entire program this coming quarter."

The Network tour for Dayna Manning was the idea of Ilene Breg, the label's national music manager. We had been working with Cups as an advertiser, she says, "and thought that a coffeehouse tour for Dayna would be ideal to keep her momentum going after the successful Lilith tour."

Each of the 11 coffeehouses it got 250 cassette samplers and counter posters, window cards, and a full-page color ad in the December issue of Cups. Following a pre-tour showcase at Moos Mix in New York, Dayna Manning played the Sidewalk Cafe in New York, then headed west. There were three dates in Los Angeles, at Books of Books (Club Promenade), Little Frieda's, and the Bourgeois Pig; three in San Francis- co, at the Polk Street Blues, Brainwash Cafe, and Chat House; Koa- li's in Portland, Ore.; Bauhaus in Seattle; Steamboat Springs, Colo.; and Delta Cafe in Denver.

The retail sampler test for this coming spring grew out of Gordon's frustration with getting traditional retail channels to move more of his Thirsty Ear titles. "We play to the urban market," Gordon says. "Many of our potential customers don't frequent record stores but have a keen interest in our music."

Gordon had been aware of Cups and its value in providing a nontradi- tional channel to move music to coffeehouses. With the Cups management team, he shares a broader vision of the "cafe culture" as a marketing opportunity to sell music in a closed, nondistracting, comfortable environment. "With Toran Numyas and Cups, we said, 'Let's make it a selling environment,'" Gordon explains, "and provide some selling-effective tools." These will include in-cafe posters to promote the sampler CD; counter-top displays for [point-of-purchase] retail, and window cards for [point-of SALE] stores; and a full-page color ad and a supportive advertising and editorial program in Cups to tie the program together.

The initial sampler will include artists on Thirsty Ear and its associated labels, including the U.K.'s All Saints, one of whose artists is Brian Eno. (Diana Ross is set to tour March-April at about a dozen locations in San Francisco and New York,) Gordon says. "And we'll promote the sampler CD to get a sale or so to get a fair response on the concept. If it's as successful as we think it will be, we'll roll out more product to additional locations, but that's up to Cups' marketing manager."

"It's a way for the label to test whether the idea is viable in the marketplace before putting a lot into it," Gordon adds. "It's a terrific opportunity to expose the music to a new format, and see which markets are ripe for it."

A wide array of product draws visitors into the back of the 2,200-square-foot Pyramid Music store. (Photo: Earl Paige)
Canada's Judy & David On The Verge Of Breakthrough With 'Shoe'

by Moira McCormick

DOUBLE THE FUN: Six months after husband-and-wife children's act Judy & David released their first concert album in February 1993, the Toronto-based duo had five albums to its credit. Four of those five, packaged as a set in a wooden box under the title “My Little Yellow Bus,” went on collectively to sell more than 5 million copies worldwide. Judy & David's latest album, “Livin' In A Shoe,” released last month on Tanglewood Audio/Universal Music Canada, is being lauded as one of the freshest, most inventive kids’ albums out there. Add to this the pair’s numerous TV appearances—and the likely prospect of their landing a regular gig — the kids’ business, serving as director of business development for a small children's entertainment company, the Children’s Hour, before quickly realizing that “I really wanted to be in front of the microphone.” He quit his job and with Judy launched their production company, All Together New Entertainment.

“We didn’t want to be preachy,” says Judy. “It bothers me that kids’ music itself seems to be undervalued, that it’s not enough on its own without mes-

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Top Kid Audio

DECEMBER 20, 1997

Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports compiled, collected, and provided by SoundScan

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Children's recording: original motion picture soundtracks excluded. Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for sales of 500,000 units. * ARIA certification for sales of 1 million units, with multiplication series included by a number following the symbol. For based sets, and double albums with a running time that exceeds two hours, the RIAA multiplies shipments by the number of discs within each. There is no certification for any other sales.

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www.americanradiohistory.com
Merchants & Marketing

Blockbuster May Put Its Music Arm Up For Sale

ON THE BLOCK: Blockbuster Entertainment has assigned Wasserstein & Perella the job of shopping its Blockbuster Music operation, according to sources.

These sources suggest that the New York-based investment bank is in the process of preparing a "book" containing the financials of the Blockbuster Music operation and that the chain will be put up on the block come January.

But other sources suggest that a sale of the chain may not be the final result of that process. Over the last few months, Blockbuster is said to have been engaged in informal discussions with an investment firm, the name of which Retail Track has been unable to determine, about pooling resources in a vehicle that would buy other music chains. In those talks, the key strategy would have been first to buy a chain with the capabilities of assimilating Blockbuster Music, as well as other subsequent acquisitions.

The Wasserstein & Perella gambit is one aspect of a two-pronged strategy that Blockbuster Entertainment appears to be pursuing for the music chain. It also has hired a headhunter to search for a president to head up Blockbuster Music (Billboard, Dec. 13). Presumably, Blockbuster Entertainment wants to be prepared for all contingencies concerning Blockbuster Music. A Blockbuster spokesman didn't return calls seeking comment.

TOWER POWER: In the U.S., Tower Records/Video has spent the last few years minicing Muhammad Ali's famed rope-a-dope tactic. In other words, during the price war, Tower president Russ Solomon very shrewdly pulled back and protected his existing operation. Expansion was mainly limited to relocating existing stores and opening a couple of WOW! stores. And for the first time in a long while, the chain began closing weak stores.

During that time, the Sacramento, Calif.-based Tower Records/Video turned overseas for expansion opportunities.

Now, Solomon says, Tower is ready to resume expansion in the U.S. market and is looking for locations in Florida and other states that don't have a Tower presence.

Solomon says the chain will open in '98 three more WOW! stores in conjunction with the Good Guys consumer electronics chain. They will be in California's El Toro, Glennfield, and San Mateo. And Tower will finally renovate what has been its No. 1 store in the U.S. since it opened, the downtown Manhattan store on Broadway. He says the renovation is in the blueprint stage, but revamping that store will be a "very high priority" for the chain next year.

Virgin plans to open a superstore next year in Union Square, which will be approximately 10 blocks from Tower's downtown outlet. Apparently in a move to protect its turf, Tower management feels now is the time to renovate the downtown outlet. Last year, the company pulled off a superb rehabilitation of its downtown outlet, and the company apparently hopes to duplicate that effort downtown.

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Velvel May End Distrib. Deal With Navarre
BMG Could Be New Home For Walter Yetnikoff's Label

WALTER HITS THE DOOR: Late in the week of Dec. 1, sources indicated that Walter Yetnikoff's Velvel Records and its original distribution; New Hope, Minn.-based Navarre Corp., would soon announce the formal dissolution of their relationship.

Some of these same sources said that Velvel would be exiting the independent sector for a new distribution pact with BMG. The first title to be issued under the deal will be "Struttin' Our Stuff," a Feb. 21 release by ex-Rolling Stones bassist Bill Wyman & the Rhythm Kings, featuring guest shots by Eric Clapton, Albert Lee, Paul Carrack, and Peter Frampton.

Spokespersons for BMG and Velvel failed to return calls seeking comment. A spokeswoman for Navarre says that the company has no comments.

Although Velvel will be leaving the Navarre fold, the distributor will still have a stake in the label's destiny: Navarre will retain the 14.2% stake in Velvel it purchased for $5 million when its arrangement with Yetnikoff's company commenced upon its founding in September 1996. However, Navarre had failed to pay a new $3 million note for an additional 14.2% of the label, and that note has been defaulted, according to an informed source.

The parting of the ways between Velvel and Navarre comes as no surprise. As we reported here in November, Yetnikoff's operation was scouting new distribution opportunities with BMG and at least one other major (Declarations of Independents, Billboard, Nov. 15). The company had already shifted the Wyman title, a label priority orly slated for release this fall, to an early '98 schedule, leading many observers to surmise that a distribution shift was in the offing.

Though Velvel has released some solid albums, including sets by Flag Wavers Five-Eight and Pat DiNizio, in its first year, it never delivered a major hit for Navarre. However, the label still has considerable name-value cachet because of Yetnikoff's involvement, and the company's desertion can only be viewed as another unsettling chapter for Navarre, which has undergone two overhauls of its music sales force and witnessed the departure of Thump Lee cords for Universal this year.

Navarre is also seeing some of its senior sales staffers heading for other pastures—specifically, for the sales departments of its own distributed labels.

In February, Mark Heyert, the firm's New York-based account executive and former Eastern regional sales manager, will segue to Hennovia/Belchon, Calif.-based Oglio Records as director of sales and marketing.

Heyert's regional job was eliminated in Navarre's September reorganization (Billboard, Sept. 20). Former Western regional sales manager Lan Dealbow returned to field sales at the same time. On Nov. 1, Dealbow joined Richard Humpty Vision's L.A.-based V-Wax Records, another Navarre-distributed imprint, as VP of sales and marketing.

Finally, L.A. sales rep Steve Stanley, one of Navarre's top three salesmen for '96-'97, is signing to L.A.-based Def-Fi Records, another Navarre label, to head up sales there.

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Carl Lackey Slip Disc
**MERCHANTS & MARKETING**

**CHILD'S PLAY**

(Continued from page 88)

“Luvin' In A Shoe” is dedicated to Jared and, in proud parental tradition, even features the baby on guest vocals.

The release of “Luvin' In A Shoe” was marked by a 2 year-old sold-out concert at a 500-seat Toronto venue, City Playhouse, according to Tanglewood's director of concert operations Eileen Melnick. “The album was just named one of the top 10 of 1997 in Chill magazine,” she adds. “Luvin' In A Shoe” is available domestically and

BBVD makes its Coosavel/EMI-Capitol debut in '98 after knocking out critics and fans with their scene-stealing appearance in the hit film Swingin' and two produced CDs.

Didn't catch Voodoomania during BBVD's 18-month sold-out residency at Hollywood's famed Derby, or at one of 230 road shows last year? Save the date for a larger-than-life five performance that's not to be missed.

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**DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENTS**

(Continued from preceding page)

Olympia Theatre.

For those who dig their Orison with a twist, the label's subsidiary Orby Records has already issued “Celtic Passion: The Songs Of Roy Orison,” a package of instrumental versions of the Big O's hits done Irish-style. You haven't lived until you've heard “Oh, Pretty Woman” arranged for accordion, banjo, fiddle, and bodhran.

FLAG WAVING: “Tis the season, and we've seen many of you enjoying some sedate holiday get-togethers. However, if you throw the kind of Yuletide shindig where the guests imbibe heartily on TV through the picture window, and pass out on the lawn, you might want to consider throwing “You Should Be Smittin'” by the Dirtys on the box in addition. This relentless, rampaging album of self-described “raucous and raucous rock'n'roll,” out on the punk-walloping Hamburg/L.A. label Crox Records, is the work of four longtime friends from the Detroit area—guitarist Marc Watt, guitar-vocalist Joe Burdick, bassist-vocalist Screamin' Joe Burdick, and drummer Nick Lloyd. “We grew up listening to records together, learning to play guitars together, learning to skateboard together,” Watt says.

Watt's experience is typical of many musicians playing in the left-wing roots punk vein: “I started out listening to nothing but blues music. Those guys got me into punk rock. After hearing the Gories and then other bands, hands started to put punk rock with blues, and we started getting turned on to that. We ratcheted it up a little bit.”

The group, whose sound favors the melodic rockcut stroked by such punk units as Suicidal Tendencies and Columbus, Ohio's New Bob Turks, mated blues punk singer Nick Collins of Detroit's Gories with producer Timmey Dem no. “We were Gories and Blacktop and King Sound Quartet fans,” says Watt, referring to Collins' former bands. “I never even met the guy until the record.”

The Dirtys were signed by Crypt Records' Tim Warren. From Hamburg to catch a hometown show, and Collins left his supper production sound to “You Should Be Smittin.'” The record displays a slow, real and entertaining attitude, and screaming tracks like “Mintte Nill Noon,” “Born To Lose, Lose To Win,” and “I Ain't Cheatin'” will satisfy the most diligent listeners.

Not surprisingly, the Dirtys draw a pretty substantial crowd at their live appearances, and have been encouraged to set a new standard. “I'm a big fan of the Doors, and I like that change. It does get a little out of control... We get a few beer bottles thrown at us, but we just throw 'em back.”

Before they do any rocking around the Christmas tree, The Dirtys will be completing a U.S. tour that will take them through the Southwest, South-East, and up the East Coast through Dec. 21.
Demand Down For Country Videos
Once-Popular Format Struggles At Retail

By PATRICIA BATES

NASHVILLE—Country music fans have "must-see TV," but they don't necessarily "gotta have" the home video.

The total audience demand for all longform music videos—from rock to Christian to rap—increased 34% last year, says the Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA). Yet in 1997, among country artists only Shania Twain's "The Complete Woman In Me," from PolyGram, and Reba McEntire's "Fame, Fortune & Love," from MCA, reached the RIAA's gold standard of at least 50,000 units sold.

In the early '90s, a dozen longform country video titles a year entered the competition for a top rank of 100,000 or more units. A few, like "Garth Brooks" and "Billy Ray Cyrus," both released in 1992, delivered several hundred thousand copies. Since then, the growth curve has gone into reverse.

Ironically, country video appears to be losing its high visibility. With exposure on the 24-hour Country Music Television (CMT) network widened by 5.9 million households this year, one reason may be the decline of country CDs, which have dropped an estimated 12% in recorded-music market share and are now 14% of the total, according to RIAA data.

But there are optimists who believe the genre is viable. They've often talked next year to the CMAs;

"We think there will be more opportunities," says Cursor Schreiber, senior VP of promotion and distribution for Disney's recently formed Lyric Street label in Nashville. "We see quite a future for video" in the form of "Fever," "Christmas," "Ice," and other projects, he adds. "We can't afford not to look at it. I feel we haven't used video enough in this industry as a marketing tool."

The question is how to revive the format for video sales and as a core-on-consumer line. Could the "Fever" VHS releases be a prelude to the economy's 3-4 million copies? But the skill isn't readily transferrable to full-length cassettes. The dysfunction was noticeable during the Country Music Assn. (CMA) Awards this fall. Many CDs are re-

leased each October for Country Music Month, just before or after they debut on the CMA Awards. But there were almost no country music home videos this fall.

"One was a retreat," "George Strait Live!,” from MCA, contained 10-year-old footage from New Year's Eve 1986-87, plus an added clip bonus, "One, Yes Or No," which won CMA's 1996 single of the year. The original video went gold in 1988 and platinum in 1989, according to the RIAA.

Garth Brooks, CMAs entertainer of the Series "Fairy Tales" hits The Ice Aided By Kerrigan's Star Power

By TERRI HORAK

NEW YORK—After a few false starts in its quest for distribution, the "Fairy Tales On Ice" series entered the arena Nov 25 on PolyGram Video. The fate of the series—produced for the home video market last year by ABC Video and On Ice Inc., as well as DS, StarGames, the venture run by Olympic Silver Medalist Nancy Kerrigan's manager and husband, Jerry Solomon—was reported on this issue. "The part of the series done that Dickie Dissey would go ahead once the studio completed its purchase of Capital Cities/ABC. However, "Fairy Tales" had a happy ending, finding a good home at PolyGram, which acquired its distribution. DS, StarGames, Video, "We had a relationship with Nancy and Jerry through her appearance on the show," says DS head John Scamardo. "We've been in contact with Nancy and Jerry through her appearance on the show," says DS head John Scamardo. "We've been in contact with Nancy and Jerry through her appearance on the show." Kerrigan is drawing on her star power to market "Alice Through The Looking Glass." She will appear on this month on the "Today" show, "Live With Regis & Kathie Lee," and CBS. Kerrigan will be doing promotional appearances, Scamardo points out that in addition to appealing to children, there are opportunities to promote the program with tie-ins to the working-mother theme, as Kerrigan had a baby last year.

She will star in several live skating shows from December through March that were organized by On Ice, Scamardo ads. To create continuity and promote the video, Kerrigan is performing in costume to the music featured in the video.

For the convenience of retailers, the title is available in both channel and traditional cardboard sleeve.
BMG MAKES DISCOVERY. BMG Video is adding special-interest titles to its mix of fitness, kids', and theatrical product. In a multi-year agreement, BMG will begin distributing and marketing titles from the Discovery Channel and its branded lines TLC, Animal Planet, and the recently acquired Travel Channel.

Discovery had distributed its 200-title catalog since 1993 but wanted to hook up with a major to increase sales. "This deal will give a more focused effort to drive unit volume," says Discovery senior VP of business development GM of home video Ray Cooper. "It will give us more exposure of our four branded lines at retail."

This adds that Discovery choose not to sign a studio because it didn't want to get lost among a sea of theatrical releases. Discovery has a 12-person sales and marketing team which also handles multimedia titles, but Cooper says no layoffs are expected as a result of the BMG deal.

Discovery will continue to handle direct-response sales, Cooper says.

According to BMG senior VP of marketing Mindy Pickard, the main objective will be to broaden distribution and create Discovery Channel sections in stores. "We want to make this product more of a mass-market item and increase shelf space at places like Tower, Musicland, and Borders," she says.

BMG will also try to model A&E Video's success with the History Channel videos, which have their own section in Borders and RadioShack. BMG will also add Music locations and "Biography" sections at Barnes & Noble. "They've done a very good job at that," Pickard notes.

One of the major challenges facing BMG will be the video launch of titles from Discovery's newly created Animal Planet. Cooper describes it as a "family-oriented" channel that includes programs about wild animals as well as domesticated pets. "Animal Planet" cassettes should be in stores late next year.

The BMG label will begin showing up at other Discovery Channel titles during the second quarter of 1998. BMG will release 12-18 titles a year, down from 24 in 1997. "It's a decrease, but we're more focused, and we think we can easily double our sales volume on each new title," Cooper says.

In addition, at least eight catalog titles will be reissued next year through BMG.

ONLINE HOLIDAY. Based on some fast-paced activity from online retail store Reel.com, consumers may be avoiding the mall crowds and turning to their computers for their holiday shopping needs.

According to Reel.com founder/CEO Stuart Skorman, the World Wide Web site experienced a 30% increase in sales over the Thanksgiving Day weekend. "We saw a lot of ordering over the holiday, which indicates that consumers are willing to spend time on their computers despite all of the distractions, such as family gatherings," he says.

On average, Reel.com has experienced weekly sales increases of 10% since it launched in August. Most orders consisted of one or two tapes not readily available in stores.

"Our customers look to us for rare or hard-to-find videos," says Skorman. The site offers 60,000 titles for sale and 35,000 titles for rent. Reel.com also offers DVD titles, which have seen a 10% increase in sales. "It's started to go down a little because [competitor format] DivX has scared off some people," he says.

Although DivX won't be available until next year, Skorman thinks viewers who know about it are holding off on buying hardware and software. But he's not complaining.

"More and more consumers are doing online shopping as a hobby, and it's a fundamental sign that E-commerce has become an integral part of our culture," he says.

In order to make shopping easier, the site has added a "holiday helper," which groups movies according to unusual categories. A "wacky gifts" section suggests giving a copy of "Old Yeller" to a kid who wants a puppy for Christmas.

BONDING AGAIN. "Never Say Never Again," the lone James Bond movie not under the MGM Home Entertainment banner, will soon carry the studio's logo on the lion logo.

The studio, through its subsidiary United Artists, has acquired rights to the 1965 movie from producer Talliaferro. It was distributed by Warner Bros. Under the new agreement, MGM will take over marketing duties for the video. Its sales agent Warner Home Video will continue to distribute the cassette.

"Never Say Never Again," which is a remake of "Thunderball," was made outside of United Artists when producer Kevin McCloy secured rights to "Thunderball" projects from late Bond creator Ian Fleming. McCloy, however, does not hold any long-term rights to the features.

McCloy and Sony Pictures Entertainment, which released the 1967 Bond spoof "Casino Royale," recently announced their intention to make additional Bond movies, prompting MGM to file a copyright infringement lawsuit. Danjaq LLC, which owns the Bond franchise, is a co-plaintiff.

The move is meant to solidify MGM's bond to Bond. The series now includes 18 features, as well as "Tomorrow Never Dies," which opens theatrically Friday (19).
LOS ANGELES—Adult trade show producer Fay Sharp couldn’t get arrested when the gig got arrested.

An Indiana businesswoman, Sharp suffered three agonizing and anonymous years trying to log onto Comdex. It took her a real police action, on the Nov. 18-21 event in Las Vegas to gain some attention for exhibitors of X-rated material. She was showing X-rated AVS, Video CD, DVD, and interactive formats.

“It was giving us the kind of publicity we could never buy. It’s showing adult consumers very much in the mainstream,” Sharp says of a raid halfway through Comdex, a trade show that drew upward of 250,000 attendees. Fewer than 10% of the business-suited crowd followed her way from Comdex to AdultDex, Sharp’s event held at the Imperial Palace, far from the Convention Center.

Las Vegas vice officers issued nine citations. Seven were for “lewd and disorderly conduct.” As the Las Vegas Review-Journal put it, “exposing breasts, and two for ‘performing a live sex act,’ i.e., performers touching each other’s masts.”

“The police apologized; they’ve retracted statements,” says Sharp, who told the entire flap was igniting “when some of the media saw the topless performers in the exhibition.” Later, authorities realized the Imperial Palace, like all casinos, is licensed for topless performers. “So they’re backingpedaling, trying to say this was only ‘over-the-counter’ entrance requirements, under-age,” Sharp adds.

Material from the show got the coverage promoters crave. “We were on CNN, the local TV, we have even had an editorial in the newspaper that was favorable,” says Sharp, who founded AdultDex after Comdex decided not to feature the category.

She also was thwarted trying to get AdultDex into E3 when the interactive media exhibition was held in Los Angeles for the second year. X-rated programs had been allowed the first year.

An added irony, Sharp points out, is that all citations involved local firms: two performers from Déjà Vu Showgirls, two from Cyxem, another two from Visual Select, and a Henderson, Nev., World Wide Web site company headed by Mimi Miyagi. Most of the estimated 20,000 attendees of AdultDex, who toured the 60 exhibitors, either were unaware of the fracas or were delighted by it.

William Margold, representing the lobby group Free Speech Coalition, says, “This is the tiniest little secret that won’t go away from Comdex—that adults are in the mainstream, the Comdex crowd is America, these are real people. The lifeblood. They wear suits, they’re straight, they’re sincere.”

All the same, Sharp wasn’t happy about the exhibitors. “I have to see an attitude change, otherwise this will be my last AdultDex.” She says vendors “kept me waiting for commitments right up until the last days before the show. I had to take how they would booths because the exhibitors were not that confident. I don’t need all this hassle.”

The adult genre is still dominated by the VHS community, which has yet to see how the hot product is in the interactive arena. “Let’s face it, (they) run things. In the VHS, most adult labels have not recognized how hot the product is in interactive media,” she adds.

Sharp thinks activity in the industry is the “continuing theme that I want to put on the Internet. Now Internet broadcasts and Web site activity dominated AdultDex, where one booth CD-ROMs were being sold for $10.

Others, however, see optical discs as the coming thing. First-time Comdex exhibitor Jerry Sanders of VIDEODJ Productions wasn’t at AdultDex, but president Harvey Tattersall is overjoyed he will be right outside the adult stands at the International Consumer Electronics Show, to be held Jan. 8-11 in Las Vegas.

Busy reading 45 movies for both DVD and Video CD, Tattersall says he’s spent $20,000 on the Comdex exhibit. “We wanted to include both DVD and video in our identity,” he says. “We’re not going to try to sell the PC when we come out of the den office or the kid’s room into the living room, but the TV set will become part of the total digital and interactive scene.”

DEMAND DOWN FOR COUNTRY VIDS (Continued from page 87)

the year, still has his first three videos in distribution, including “This Is Garth Brooks,” which went multi-platinum five years ago, according to the RIAA. Trisha Yearwood enjoyed a 10% sales spike after she was named CMA female vocalist in September. So does her last concert tape arrived in 1994.

Significantly, recent releases have fallen by the wayside. As the Vince Gill “Souvenir: Live At The Ryman” (MCA Video Music) came out in October 1996. It was not re-marketed this fall. At the height of demand, the CMA didn’t send out copies of a promotional tape, “Music Videos Of The Year.” It had been a regular feature of the association’s PR effort since 1985.

Country music videos have become something of a will-o’the-wisp. “They can be extremely difficult to project and to forecast,” says Bill Kennedy, senior director of national sales for EMI Music Catalog. Yet he still thinks they have a tangible effect on viewers. “The average consumer wants more than what they see on TV,” he suggests—essentially what they would get in person.

Live performances provide much of the rallies and rodes. For videos. “We do special events such as ‘Reba Celebrating 20 Years,’ with Reba McEntire on June 1 at the Forum in Los Angeles, ‘Concert,’ a best seller in 1992. So, retailers ask, will Garth Brooks in New York’s Central Park will be available for video.”

“Perhaps—but no decision has been made on it,” says Kennedy. “After all, we still have three Garth titles in existence.”

Brooks isn’t a laggard: EMI Music Catalog hasn’t announced the release of any country videos. But Kennedy says there’s interest in Renaissance man Chris DeLoux. “He’s a sculptor, writer, into the kids, so they would see more of his life,” he says. “We also have plenty of footage on him, since he’s been on Capitol Records for seven years.”

Another candidate is Tanya Tucker, who wrote a popular autobiography. It was she who gave DeLoux and the “A&E-like chronology of her concert,” Kennedy says.

EMI has placed country videos in Wal-Mart and KMart, among the mass merchants, and in specialty chains like Media Play and Blockbuster. Long-released form concerts are regularly priced at $9.98–$24.98, competitive in self-service through this period.

Sources indicate the programs are too expensive to generate an adequate return on investment. “Country video sales in general have decreased,” says Benson Curb, director of national sales for Curb Records in Nashville. “We just haven’t released any one in a while, because they may do 20,000–25,000 units,” although “An Hour With Tim McGraw” is nearing 50,000 units.

We have the schedule now—Sawyer Brown, the Four Seasons, and Lyte Lokett—but we don’t know what will be released, if they’ll be out in 1998,” Curb notes.

When, or if, the format revives, CMT could be a major source of material. The cable channel has the world’s largest country music archive, with more than 4,000 clips, filmed everywhere from Egypt to Guatemala. Record labels spend $15,000–$150,000 to produce each one—and they pay off in CD sales.

Over the year, there have probably been only five or so consistently selling singles on [Billboard’s Top Country Singles Sales chart] this year,” said Chris Parr, director of CMT programming.

“CMT Sneak Peak” has the “exclusive world premiere of video clips,” says Parr. “We run five to eight a week, including once during the CMT Top 12 Countdown.”

Another candidate is Tanya Tucker, who wrote a popular autobiography. “She could be a ‘Golden Globe’ for video,” says Parr. “The CMT Delivery Room” presents the most recent video clip.

But the network’s growth has also had a negative impact. Over the years, TNN has seen a “gradual reduction of music video production by design, because of the emphasis on CMT,” says TNN spokesperson Jerry Bailey.
'FAIRY TALES' SERIES HITS THE ICE AIDED BY KERRIGAN'S STAR POWER

(Continued from page 87)

In addition, a direct-response print campaign in skating magazines is being developed, and there are plans for alternative areas of distribution, including ice arenas and catalogs.

While there is no shortage of figure-skating titles available on video (Billboard, April 22, 1999), many of them are competition highlights. Pointing to the success of NBC Video's "Natterer On Ice" starring Olympic Gold Medalists Oksana Baiul and Victor Petrenko, Scamar do says there is room for family-oriented evergreen titles that appeal to audiences beyond the skating purists.

Pol yGram is hoping to capitalize on the increased attention the sport will undoubtedly receive with the upcoming Winter Olympics this February.

"We've learned that there's really a very big audience for skating, even more so now than there was a few years ago," Scamar do says. "These programs work for the holidays, and they also have a long shelf life and broad appeal."

PolyGram Video introduced "Fairy Tales On Ice," with Olympian Nancy Kerrigan, last month. Two more titles in the series will be released next year.

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Another tight-cage package, it carries a suggested retail price of $19.95 and runs 50 minutes, including a behind-the-scenes segment on the making of the video.

To reach retailers, Kerrigan appeared at the East Coast Video Show, and she will probably do select in-store appearances in New York, Boston, and a few of the tour markets.

Scamar do says, "She's always a big draw—we've got lots of requests for in-stores and a lot of fans will show up—but right now we're concentrating on the direct-mail campaign. There will be radio contests with ticket giveaways in the markets in which Kerrigan appears with the Ice live shows.

Direct-marketing opportunities will also be a key avenue for exposure for the title. A direct-response TV campaign is being prepared for the entire series. The 90- and 100-second spots will be placed on a variety of national and cable television outlets next year.

Pol yGram Video introduced "Fairy Tales On Ice," with Olympian Nancy Kerrigan, last month. Two more titles in the series will be released next year.

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Additional information on the direct-response campaign can be obtained from PolyGram Video, 1050 Third Avenue, New York, 10022.

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PARALLEL IMPORTS (Continued from page 6)

While the case deals only with the relatively small amount of products manufactured in the U.S. and exported at a discount, and then imported back into the country, in an adverse ruling in the case has international implications.

"It would send the wrong signal to other countries," says Eric Smith, president of the Washington, D.C.-based International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA), which counts among its members U.S. record companies, music publishers, and film studios. "They might misread it and decide to lower their parallel-import barries."

Smith said that would "result in a severe erosion of the rights of U.S. creators, publishers, and producers by our trading partners, hurting U.S. trade and jobs without any concomitant benefit to the U.S. or the economies of other countries."

A decision against copyright owners would also affect Clinton administration trade agreements. Section 602(a) of the Copyright Act protects copyright owners from unauthorized importation of copyright material acquired abroad.

However, Section 109(a), the so-called "First Sale Doctrine," states that the owner of a lawfully made copy produced domestically is entitled to sell or otherwise dispose of the possession of that copy without the authority of a copyright owner. The case asks the court to decide which takes precedence.

Manufacturer L'anza had sold the goods to a U.K. distributor with the proviso that they would be sold only overseas. However, Quality King bought the goods third-hand from a Maltese distributor and sold the merchandise back in the U.S.

The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the initial federal court ruling favoring Quality King and sided instead with L'anza, which argued against unauthorized imports. Quality King appealed.

The Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) and other members of the IIPA, along with the U.S. Copyright Office, have filed amicus briefs with the Supreme Court in support of L'anza's position.

The court has already held in a related case that trademark parallel imports may be imported into the U.S. without authorization of the trademark owner. This case asks if the same applies to copyright-goods.

A decision could cause potential havoc in the retail marketplace and embarrass the administration, which has five pending international agreements calling for rules against unauthorized importation. It would also have major implications in other areas of the business.

"We wanted the Supreme Court to know what very real implications could be with real copyright-goods beyond the narrow confines of shampoo labels," says Gary Sherman, senior executive V-Pigenal counsel of the RIAA. "It could be a mess, just a mess, from release dates and publicity coordination to the way copyright owners have marketed their products for decades. Also, other countries might not understand and lower their barriers."

Amicus briefs such as the one from the RIAA, explaining the larger world trade implications of such a narrowly defined legal position on the industries that would be affected by a reversal, may be very important in this case, say court insiders.

While the decision will not come down until the spring, there are reasons to believe the justices may decide to overturn the appeals court's ruling in favor of L'anza. Observers note the court's pro-consumer stance in recent cases and its track record with dealing with the challenges to the rulings by the 9th Circuit Court. The Supreme Court has overturned 27 of its last 29 rulings.

The issue of parallel imports looms large in other countries as well. On Dec. 9, Australia's Senate rejected government copyright reforms that would relax existing parallel-import restrictions meant to foster lower consumer prices (see story, page 76).

Copyright owner opponents say there is that the devalued Australian currency against the U.S. dollar makes such imports more attractive. They also claim that a flood of cheaper imports would lower the incentive for labels to produce and distribute home-grown artists.

Shepparding A Deal

Principals of Sheppard Lane Productions met with Gefen Records brass to sign a production agreement between Sheppard Lane and John Dough/Geffen. Their first project together will be California rap artist Mausberg, produced by DJ Quick for release in 1998. Shown standing, from left, are DJ Quick, John Dough, and William Lee; seated, from left, are John Dough, Charlie and Deanna Herring, both of John Dough; Marvin Mack, urban promotion, Gefen; and Robert Smith, head of marketing at Gefen. Shown seated, from left, are Ed Rosenblatt, chairman, Gefen; DJ Quick; and Bill Bennett, president, Gefen.

GOOD WORKS

THE MUSIC OF A TRAGEDY:

Aaron Zigman, the pop producer, composer, and arranger, says he was inspired to put to music a portrait of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister who was assassinated two years ago, within hours after the tragedy. The 35-minute, five-movement work is to receive its first public performance Dec. 25 at the Westside Pavilion in Los Angeles as rendered by the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony, conducted by Noreen Green. The performance coincides with the fourth TikTok L.A. Community Volunteering effort, sponsored by the Jewish Federation. There has been no deal for a commercial release of Zigman’s work, although the press has received a promotional CD. Publisher is zigTown Music (ASCAP). Contact: Sharon Weisz at 213-852-1048.
Web Site Lends Aid To Stations’ Online Presence

BY DOUG REECE

CountryNow.com, a new World Wide Web site developed by New York-based Media Interactive, is hoping to offer a hassle-free solution to country programmers looking to dust the cobwebs off their station’s Web sites.

Though most radio outlets have risen to the task of establishing an online presence, maintaining those sites and providing punchy, current content can often become a burden. It’s a disinterested, apathetic listener who logs onto a station’s site that is still running a Tim McGraw promotion circa “All I Want.”

With this dilemma in mind, CountryNow.com—following on the heels of the successful launch of MJ’s RockNews.com site in 1996 and RockDaily.com in January of this year—hoped to offer daily news features, artist profiles, concert news, CD Reviews and links to highlighted fan sites, among other items.

“What we are presenting to these stations,” says MJ Interactive VP of corporate development Margaret Shiverick, “is a turnkey, very relevant option for enhancing their sites in a manner so that they are the dominant brand.”

Because partnering stations are linked to CountryNow.com through their existing radio site, according to Shiverick, advertisers retain their autonomy and are bolstered by the sort of content that would account for immeasurable man hours if it were culled by a station’s webmaster.

The deal is the initial stage of Arbitron’s plan to expand outside of North America—particularly in European broadcasting markets.

Utilizing Continental’s knowledge and experience in the U.K. radio market, Arbitron is preparing a bid for the official U.K. ratings contract, RAJAR, which will be put out to tender over the next few months. It will be Arbitron’s second attempt to secure the RAJAR ratings contract. The current RAJAR contract, held by RSL, will expire late next year.

“This acquisition provides us with a firm and respected base from which to launch our RAJAR bid,” says Jay Guyther, VP/GM of Arbitron International. “It also gives Arbitron access to U.K. marketing expertise and enables us to tailor a range of services to the ever-growing media and marketing research needs of U.K. and European broadcasters and advertisers and agencies.”

Over the past year, Arbitron has conducted a series of pilot radio ratings agreements in several large U.K. markets. Those exercises received some financial backing from the RAJAR committee, a body consisting of senior executives from commercial and BBC Radio. Guyther, who is planning to relocate to London from the U.S., has been meeting with British broadcasters over the past several months to discuss Arbitron’s plans and services.

Continental chief executive John Clemons says, “We are extremely pleased to become part of Arbitron to gain access to its significant market research experience and financial resources, which will benefit existing and future clients.”

Continental’s stable of clients includes such major U.K. broadcasters as Classic FM and Capital Radio, as well as CNN International and BSkyB TV.

Through its radio division in North America, Arbitron provides research services for 2,300 radio stations and 3,500 advertisers in 269 markets. Arbitron’s revenue for 1996 was $153.1 million.

Chrysler Leads List Of Radio Advertisers In ’97

NEW YORK—Chrysler Corp., General Motors Corp., and Sears Roebuck top the list of radio’s advertisers for 1997. Chrysler led the list with $20.2 million in spending, followed by General Motors at $18.8 million and Sears at $16.2 million. The total spending for radio’s top 25 advertisers in 1997 was $392.4 million, representing a 10.6% increase over 1996.

With the launch of its new model year, Chrysler increased its spending on radio by 21.9% from $16.6 million in 1996 to $20.2 million in 1997. The increase was the largest among the top radio advertisers. Chrysler’s increased spending was due to a new ad campaign featuring its new Chrysler Sebring Convertible.

General Motors also increased its spending on radio, up 14.8% from $16.1 million in 1996 to $18.8 million in 1997. The increase was due to a new ad campaign featuring its new Saturn Vue SUV.

Sears Roebuck increased its spending on radio by 18.7% from $13.9 million in 1996 to $16.2 million in 1997. The increase was due to a new ad campaign featuring its new Sears Credit Card.

Other top radio advertisers in 1997 include Procter & Gamble, AT&T, PepsiCo, Clear Channel, and Time Warner. The total spending for radio’s top 25 advertisers in 1997 was $392.4 million, representing a 10.6% increase over 1996.

Radio spending for Chrysler, General Motors, and Sears was up from $28.2 million in 1996 to $39.2 million in 1997. The increase was due to new ad campaigns and increased spending on radio.

In 1997, radio spending for the top 25 advertisers increased from $264.2 million in 1996 to $392.4 million in 1997. The increase was due to increased spending on radio by the top 25 advertisers.

Radio spending for the top 25 advertisers in 1997 was $392.4 million, representing a 10.6% increase over 1996. The increase was due to increased spending on radio by the top 25 advertisers.
Consolidation in Europe Gets Thumbs Up
Broadcasting Trends Assessed at Monac Conference

This story was prepared by Mike McGeever, programming editor for Music & Media.

MONTÉ CARLO, Monaco—Consolidation is good for you. Or at least that's what some 200 delegates from throughout Europe were told at the fifth National Assn. of Broadcasters European Radio Operations Conference.

Current shifts in the U.S. radio industry—such as consolidation and deregulation—are being increasingly reflected in European markets as well. At the conference, held in November here, two broadcasting heavy-hitters, one from each side of the Atlantic, compared and contrasted the U.S. and European industries.

Lowry Mays, CEO of the U.S.-based media group Clear Channel Communications, and David Mansfield, chief executive of U.K.-based entertainment group Capital Radio, both delivered addresses to the nearly 300 delegates asserting that everyone is win-win.

"Consolidation creates more diversity," Mays said. "The reason [why] that works is, if you had the most popular format, where most of that market's audience would go, the other stations in that market would try to get a piece of that revenue, because they have competitors with generally the same type of format. When you have more stations owned by fewer people, then you can have all sorts of format derivatives.

"However, Mays warned, the elements of programming and business must blend together if broadcasters are going to deliver their advertisers’ messages effectively. "The meaning of programming and business has to be a very tight fit," he told the conference.

"Outside the U.S., we have observed that the programming staff is [only] concentrated on programming and the management staff on management and sales. The two don't have real interaction. That's very sad. The two have to be a combined unit to move the customer's product, or it's not going to be successful. The programmer, the seller, has to be as much of a salesman as the person on the street trying to create revenue," he explained.

Mays, whose company has broadcasting interests in Europe, also contended that a single broadcasting regulator across Europe would solve overall growth of the industry. "If you are going to have one single regulator, isn't that a single regulator?" he asked.

Mansfield, making Capital's case for the proposed takeover of Virgin Radio, which is currently being considered by the U.K.'s Mergers and Monopolies Commission, agreed with Mays on consolidation. He contended that in the case of the London radio market, it would be of benefit to the audience.

"The conclusion of Virgin Radio is in the public interest," claimed Mansfield, "because at the moment Virgin simulcasts pretty much the same output on its national AM service and its London FM station. Also, they have had a problem in getting their programming right. It's not a lot of money they're losing. They've had four program directors in four years.

"Capital's solution would be to create two stations, and they said, 'There will be one stand-alone FM station. The other will be a separate AM national service pitched at [a] younger demographic and [be] WiFi.'

"So, with our programming skills," he concluded, "the consumer wins twice: better programming and two stations rather than one."

WEB SITE SENDS AID TO STATIONS’ ONLINE PRESENCE

(Continued from preceding page)

WYDY Lynchburg, Va., PD Ken Shelley, who runs the station that began using CountryNow.com in mid-November, speculates that more radio Web sites will go the way of clubs—inside assistance in the future.

"So few stations are owned by people with one or two stations," he says. "It's more like one or two thousand. So it makes sense for owners to have a more Internet-friendly company to handle updating their sites. During the day-to-day course of business, if I have to decide which is more important—cutting a spot or updating our Web site—you can guess which is going to win.

"This has answered that eternal question, "What do customers want?" How do we simplify all the components to get more people to update the Web site every day?"

Shelton adds. "It's excellent for that, and it's so current we've even started using it as a show prep."

Incidentally, he says, Capstar's Atlantic Star group—a 60-station pod of which WYDY is a part—has recently hired Electric Village to produce sites for each group station, further consolidating its online operations.

While WYDY's site (www.wydy.com) gives listeners pertinent info on station promotions and personalities, as well as content to artists, station, Shelley says, CountryNow.com is a better resource for current news and higher-profile events.

"Although the WYDY site is artist-driven, a "living" page aggregates content from various Web sites on a daily basis. This helps the site by related to topics ranging from outdoor activities to geneology.

"But really to use that space almost as a blank slate that we can have some fun with," says CountryNow.com editor Sue Cummings. "And all these stories come from understanding the interests of our audience."

Among the items located in this section at press time was a college football feature providing links to both conventional and ESPN as well as a link to a complete listing of bowl games.

"Once you learn what kind of information is out there to harness and what the best ways of doing it are, the wealth of material available is just staggering," says Cummings. "If I could put it in a nutshell, I'd say we're bringing the best of the Web to radio.

"Still, the relationship between CountryNow.com and its station members isn't necessarily a one-way street."

During a recent Garth Brooks "Seven" contest, MJJ enlisted the help of subscriber stations for on-air promotions that referred listeners back to an area of the CountryNow.com site where they could enter to win a signed guitar from the artist. From a former perspective, Cummings says that country audiences are one of the most fertile online audiences.

"The whole perception of country fans as being a footloose-and-curious is misconceived," she says. "In fact, this format's artists take great pride in being available to fans more so than in rock or pop, and the Internet is another way to do that."

One feature on the site that exemplifies Cummings' goal is a link that allows John Barry fans to e-mail the artist, who was recording from vocal-cord surgery.

CountryNow.com features 31 stations on its jump page, even though Shiverick hopes that approximately 100 stations will have come on board by the end of 1998.

Meanwhile, Shiverick says, the site, which is bartered to stations for an undisclosed number of spots, could be configured as a substitute Web site so that stations would not have to bother creating an individual site.

Banks To Move To A.M.

ABC Radio Networks has announced that syndicated afternoon radio personality Doug Banks will launch morning programming beginning in March.

Staged to an 18- to 34 R&R audience, Banks will now go up against Tom Joyner on ABC Radio. Joyner, however, traditionally Sirius is a younger audience.

The decision to convert "The Doug Banks Show" to mornings was “based on the demand for a strong, mainstream urban morning show,” says Darryl Brown, executive VP of affiliate sales and programming for ABC Radio Networks. “The strength of our urban product is unprecedented.”

The former four-hour show, which originated in Dallas, will include humor amid a mix of current R&B music, entertainment features, and celebrity interviews. According to ABC, listeners will have the opportunity to interact via contests, contests, and Internet.

Banks is syndicated in 29 markets and has been nominated as Billboard’s best syndicated personality for the past two years.
In Midst Of Career Renaissance, Donny Osmond Has Learned Image Vs. Talent

NINE LIVES: Among the first questions sprung upon Donny Osmond when he recently appeared on "The Howard Stern Show" was "Ever seen your sister naked?"

The "Dancing Machine" singer went on to bring up oral sex, virginity, religion, therapy, and Marie Osmond’s body, and, oh yeah, the entertainer’s 35-year career.

"People have told me throughout the years, don’t ever do Howard Stern," notes an excerpting Osmond over lunch the day before his guest shot. "I know he’s going to try and embarrass me, and that’s his whole mystique and image. I can’t imagine him saying ‘he’s going to say it’s going to be fun.’"

And despite the expected personal intrusions, Osmond indeed saw the show as a potential to puctify the savage beast. He gives into Stern’s persistent inquiries and admits some pretty private stuff but never crosses the line to what would be perceived as an intrusive demand. During discussion, Stern, in turn, is won over, closing the interview with, “It’s a pleasure having you. You’ve made my day. You’re terrific.”

Osmond’s willingness to be hoisted on a spit and potentially roasted by the unpredictable Stern is only the latest in a series of carefully plotted moves within a career that has weathered a remarkable nine lives as a chart-topping group, duo, and solo singer; film and TV actor; star of the legendary 1976 TV show "The Osmonds"; "LIVE!" weekly record label executive; upcoming author; and dedicated family man.

"Along the way, people have told me I shouldn’t break away from Marie. Before that, don’t even break away from Andy Williams," says Osmond, who turned 40 Sept. 9. "At one point, I was even advised by Michael Jackson and Quincy Jones to change my name, maybe jump a band or become ‘the unknown singer’ with a bag over my head. People wanted me to stay in my comfort zone.”

Granted, that zone contained some pretty remarkable statistics—16 top 40 solo hits on the Hot 100, including the No. 1 “I Go A-Littl’ Girl” in 1971; 10 top 40 hits with the Osmonds, such as the chart-topping “One Bad Apple” in ’71; and his partnership in Donny & Marie, which garnered six hits, the biggest the No. 1 “Puppy Love” in 1978 and 1979, in which he scored his first gold album in 1974, which also topped the AC chart.

And then there’s his remarkable second act, which saw Osmond make the transition from a television personality in the mid-60s to the hard-won success in the mid-80s, which he says has left him with a new perspective on the business.

"I’m not the same person. Everyone changes, and I think I’ve changed and I intend to distribute the album to retail outlets nationwide, while now he’s just looking to make some noise” with "Four. “It’s just to say, Hey, I’m still

by Chuck Taylor

he says. “I learned a great lesson about image over talent.”

Osmond, meanwhile, spent 23 weeks at No. 1 on the LP chart.

That success represented quite a triumph for the singer, who had spent the decade trying to evolve past his child- star image as a "walking discharge point, with the guidance of Peter Gabriel. "The perception of what everybody thought, and the reality of what I was a little different,"

here,” he says. At some point next year, Osmond plans to release his first full-length album in fact, feeling what looks to be a Donny blitz in 1998. She’s there, the high-quality anticipated hits such as Salt Lake City, the singer set goal that (or something close to it) several years after viewing "Dancing Machine"’s performance called "Positioning Your Radio Station.”

After 18 months programming WZYP Huntsville, Ala., Summers will stick to his worst shot and moved to Salt Lake City in August.

In less than five months, Summers and staff have managed not only to reinvent their market’s top-40 station image with a rhythmic image to mainstream, but also to adjust audience consumption and programming to the most recent trends that bear that out, showing a remarkable climb from 93.7 in November to 5.13, plus up to No. 2 in a market where top 40 hasn’t been a major player for many years.

Anyone who lands in Salt Lake City quickly discovers a market summation of sorts, says that “leaves heavy” Mormon. Here, “it’s normal to see a 20- or 30-year-old married without two or more kids, driving a minivan.”

Salt Lake City has traditionally been home to a higher-than-average number of AC outlets. KUTF (Q96), after a flirtation with modern, flipped to rock last year, leaving the rhythmic-leaning KZHT as the sole top 40.

Jacob’s edict was to finish mainstreaming the station, a process that had been started by corporate top 40 chief Harris Williams and relaunched the old Hot 94.9 as 94-9 ZHT.

The fact that autumn-leaning modern rival KENZ (the End) was No. 1 1984-85, at least well-wishers were not lost on the Jacob brain trust. “It had been since while there was a true top 40 in this market that played the true hits,” Summers says, although what those hits were for Salt Lake City was still being determined at that time. He threw a bunch of musical styles, currents and gold, into call-out. “I ended up flashing 90% of the gold library,” he says. “I heard that the more mass-appeal, alternative product tested the best, along with some mass-appeal R&B music as well.”

His upcoming show should help satisfy that goal, but there remain still several pressing hobbies.

For 20 years Dr. Debbie Osmond, the father of four boys, the oldest 18. His fifth son is due in March.

Perhaps most disturbing is an awfully full life for the one-time teen idol, who has endured frustrations and failures but ultimately has meticulously engineered a consistent pop and television presence. "Yeah, I’m a former teenage-bopper idol. I used to be perceived as a greek. A god. And I’m sweating out what you’ve got, and it eventually becomes a strength. Otherwise, you can end up just moping around for the rest of your life. I’m very happy with where I am.”

that product was testing when I got here, because our core at the time wanted it. But we adjusted our research screen, tweaked the criteria to the desired path and started sending samples in, and they started responding. What they tapped into, he says, was a large, disenchanted demographic. "Soldier Of Love"'s

SUMMERS SENDS KZHT BACK TO TOP 40'S CENTER

“EVEN IF I HAD TO SLEEP WITH Randy Michaels, damnit, I wanted to work for this company,” says Marc Summers, PD of Jacor’s top 40 station, KZHT Salt Lake City. Summers set that goal (or something close to it) several years after viewing "Dancing Machine”’s performance called "Positioning Your Radio Station.”

"Positioning Your Radio Station”

By Kevin Carter

Billboard.

BROADCASTER OF THE WEEK

MARCO SUMMERS

Program Director

KZHT Salt Lake City

“Hey, the staff didn’t nickname me ‘the Alexa Man’ for no reason,” adds Summers, who is currently working with Marcie Wiser from KISN, while still doing promotions with Dr. Doug Davis and TV drive; the night show is currently open.

Last month, Summ- ers hired WZYP’s Hull as pro- motion director.

Dodd’s broke some new ground recently by offering away $1,000, the sta- tion’s first cash giveaway. “We’ve never had a lot of resources until recently, and the response has been huge,” Summers says of the song-of-the-day promo. “These songs are selected to help highlight the musical changes we’ve made. KZHT was a mess for seven years—you don’t wish that away overnight.”

Here’s a recent 3 p.m. hour on KZHT,” Chumus says.

By April, Summers, GM Tom Sly, and staff will move into a new, 6,000-square-foot facility that will house KZHT, country KKAT, rock KURR (the former K99), N/T KALL, and soon-to-be-acquired KISN-AM. “It’s also going to have a coffee shop, a coffee shop overlooking the Q99), while

In Billboard.

"How Do I Live”; Gin Blooms, "Hey Jealousy”; Backstreet Boys, “As Long As You Love Me”/Guinness House Bar & For You”; Jewel, “Foolish Games”;

George Michael, "Freedom ‘90”/ "I’ll be There”; Settra Girls, "You’re Out Tonight”/ "Show Me Love” and Celine Dion, “Because You Loved Me”/brought in

BILBOARO DECEMBER 20, 1997

www.americanradiohistory.com
For more than two years, Creed front man Scott Stapp listened to nothing but "The Joshua Tree," the 1987 megahit album by U2 and the culmination of the Irish band's early epic, super-slick rock. Nothing has been able to turn him like that record, says the guitarist, who was young and very religious. Stapp says, "The 'Joshua Tree' is still the yardstick, Stapp says. "Every song on that record spoke to me. When we write, that's what we shoot for: for the feeling in everything." In the spirit of early U2, Stapp says, the band prides itself on something to believe in. "But I want to live in the opposite way from how I grew up — I want to question things, rather than accept them on faith. We're young and we still haven't found what we're looking for."
Industry Caught On Film At The Billboard Music Video Awards

The music video industry came out in force for Billboard's 19th annual Music Video Conference and Awards, held Nov. 20-22 at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif. Highlights included panel discussions from top industry professionals on a variety of topics, as well as parties sponsored by Vidnet, Sony, the Box, College Television Network, and Def Jam. The conference culminated with the Billboard Music Video Awards, held at Billboard Live in West Hollywood, Calif. The awards show, hosted by VH1 VJ A.J. Hammer, was netcast for the first time on the Internet by JAMtv and Billboard Online. (Photos: Mark Savage)

Guest speakers on "The Big Picture Panel" discuss the state of the music video industry. Pictured, from left, are College Television Network's Peter Kaufman, MTV's Patti Galluzzi, the Box's Eric Martinez, panel moderator Brett Atwood of RealNetworks, CMT's Chris Galluzzi, the Box's Eric Martinez, panel moderator Brett Atwood of RealNetworks, CMT's Chris Newman, VH1's Wayne Isaak, and Streamland's Nicholas Butternworth.

Billboard's Ken Schlager, left, and the Box's Alan McGlade, who gave a keynote speech at the conference.

Rap group Funkdoobiest performs at Billboard Live.

Billboard's Susan Nunziata, left, congratulates Universal's Danny Wright on winning the best R&B new artist clip award for Erykah Badu's "Next Lifetime."

Billboard's Carla Hay, left, congratulates Forefront's Gael Van Sant on winning awards for best contemporary Christian clip (dc Talk's "Colored People") and best contemporary Christian new artist clip (Smalltown Poets' "Prophet, Priest & King").

Aristomedia's Jon Howard, left, and Arista/Nashville's Scott Rattray accepted the clip awards in the country music category on behalf of the Tim McGraw/ Faith Hill Curb Records release "It's Your Love," which won for best country clip, and BHS-49's Arista release "Even If It's Wrong," which won for best new country artist clip.

Def Jam's Christina Avellano, left, and Tommy Boy's Rodd Houston lead the urban issues forum.

MuchMusic's Denise Donlon makes a point while moderating the video production/video programming panel.

Jon Forte, a member of the Refugee Allstars, makes one of several trips up to the podium during the awards show. Not only was Forte a presenter, but he also accepted the best dance clip award on behalf of Wyclef Jean and the Refugee Allstars for "We Tryin' To Stay Alive."

Vera and Michael E. Kelly of "The Breeze" pose for the camera after winning the award for best jazz/AC show.

Aristomedia's Jon Howard, left, and Arista/Nashville's Scott Rattray accepted the clip awards in the country music category on behalf of the Tim McGraw/Faith Hill Curb Records release "It's Your Love," which won for best country clip, and BHS-49's Arista release "Even If It's Wrong," which won for best new country artist clip.

Participants on the artist panel get together for a lively discussion. Pictured, from left, are R&B singer Rome, panel moderator Melinda Newman of Billboard, country singer Miki Mason, pop singer Carrie Wilson, Jim Haha of Jimmie's Chicken Shack, and modern rock artist Poe.

Wall of fame winner Maxwerks poses with the award for winning the best rap clip with "My Nigga." 

RealNetworks' Rob Glaser elaborates on a topic during his keynote speech.

Billboard's Ken Schlager, left, congratulates Andy Kawanami of "Country Music Channel" for winning the award for best country show.
Arista's Andrew Berkowitz, left, celebrates with Columbia's Lisa Rowe and Michelle Fuentes-Welch on winning the best R&B/urban clip award. The award was given in a tie to the Notorious B.I.G.'s "Mo Money Mo Problems" and Will Smith's "Men In Black."

Top music video directors gather for the directors' panel. Pictured, from left, are D.N.A.'s Liz Friedlander, H.S.I.'s Paul Hunter, Squeak Pictures' Nigel Dick, moderator Bill Poveda of Oil Factory, and SilverCo.'s Kevin Kerslake.

The work Group's Johnna Lister, left, celebrates with Propaganda Films' Craig DeLeon for Jamiroquai's "Virtual Insanity," which won the Maximum Vision Award. DeLeon accepted the best director award on behalf of "Virtual Insanity" director Jonathan Glazer.

Actor Dennis Hopper, left, who made a surprise appearance at the awards ceremony, is pictured onstage with VH1's A.J. Hammer, who hosted the show. Hopper presented the Maximum Vision Award, which went to Jamiroquai's "Virtual Insanity."

Interscope Records picked up several awards during the ceremonies, including best pop/rock clip (No Doubt's "Don't Speak"). Pictured, from left, are Interscope's Jill Rose, David Saslow, and Kathy Angstadt.

Interscope Records picked up several awards during the ceremonies, including best pop/rock clip (No Doubt's "Don't Speak"). Pictured, from left, are Interscope's Jill Rose, David Saslow, and Kathy Angstadt.

The crew from "Urban X-Pressions" celebrates after winning the award for best R&B/urban show. Pictured, from left, are Monica Gadney, Shelley Wiliams, Ed Brunson (back row), and Howard Gilliam Jr.

Local and regional programs were honored at the awards show. Pictured, from left, are Kevin Ferd of "Power Play" (best pop/rock show) and Andre Robbins of "Video Underground" (best rap show).

Tommy Boy artist Jocelyn Snizez, left, presents the award for best hard rock show to "Punk TV's" Stefan Godby.

H.O.L.A. recording artist Veronica and her dancers perform onstage at the awards show.

Representatives from Atlantic Records pick up the award for Jewel's "Foolish Games" (best new jazz/AC artist clip). Pictured, from left, are Rob Cavenagh, Marybeth Kammerer, and Doug Cohn.

Reel Big Fish bring their brand of ska-rock to the awards show crowd at Billboard Live.

Performing at the Box/Sony party at Billboard Live, clockwise from top left, are Kimberly Scott, No Authority, Diana King, and Destiny's Child.
For More Information, Call The BVN Hotline At 1-800-BVN-1000.
WESTERN MUSIC THRIVES AS NICHE GENRE
(Continued from page 1)

paced company founded in 1988 whose catalog offers everything from saddles and chaps to bovine -shaped CDs and Don Edwards CDs, thinks that visibility will translate to new fans. "It's good music, and it's worthwhile," Murphy says. "People were supposed to be exposed to it, because I do think they will find a lot of value in it."

A WIDE-RANGING MUSIC
Definitions for western music are as varied as the artists who make it. Though it might seem easy to define western as strictly cowboy music, some purists tend to view it solely in that light—today's western music fans are finding a sound beyond that to choose from that all fall under the western umbrella.

There are the cowboys like Murphy, Ed Reddy, Steagall, "It takes Of The San Joaquin. Then there are also quarter notes with ties to the western community, such as Capitol Nashville, which has issued more than 20 independent albums with songs that were largely influenced by his days as a rodeo champion. The music is "the music of the people of the land in the West," says Murphy. "It's a very different animal than country music. Country is based upon the Acadian culture, but we are based on the Mexican, black, and Scotch Irish. There is also a heavy jazz influence on western music, because when the big singing cowboy stars were popular in the '30s and '40s, that was also the jazz era... The subject matter also tends to be more about nature and human beings' interaction with nature, not as much about dysfunctional relationships."

Steagall agrees. "Western music is an expression for an affinity for the western half of the United States and western Canada," he says. "It talks about the landscape. It talks about the people—the hardships and the joys. It talks about horses. We like to say a cowboy writes songs about a lost love, a lost horse, or a stampe, and not necessarily in that order."

SINGING COWBOY' ROOTS
Western music is currently enjoying a resurgence, and many of today's artists are quick to link western music's eternal appeal to the artistry of singing cowboys like Gene Autry, Roy Rogers, and Rex Allen.

This year, Autry was saluted by Riders In The Sky on their Rounder album "Public Cowboy #1: The Music Of Gene Autry." Riders In The Sky released "Singing Cowboy Sing: The Gene Autry Collection," and the Variete Vintage label issued "Gene Autry: The Last Of The Original Cowboys (Ever Been One?)" and "Gene Autry With The Legendary Singing Groups Of The West" as the inaugural releases in its new series, "The Silver Screen Collection."

Autry turned 96 years old Sept. 29. A veteran of 91 films, he is credited with initiating the format of the "musical western" with the 1935 film classic "Tumbling Tumbleweeds." "I always sing my songs straight, with no tricks or fancy arrangements," Autry says. "I felt that singing the songs in a simple style that listeners could also see the way was the key that there is a demand," Autry adds. When it comes to the current resurgence in western music, he's widely considered the good guy who rode in to prove there was still demand for the genre. After '70s pop music had made "more people like "Canyon In The Pines," and '80s country radio hits like "Still Having Changes," "What's Forever Fair," and "Long Line Of Love," Murphy turned to his first love. "I view myself first and foremost as a poet of the West," he says. "I've always been into western music, but it's not the only thing I've done or I'll ever do. I like all kinds of music, and I will try to create things in all forms of music. I live here in the West—Taos, N.M. It's my lifestyle, and, of course, that's what I'm going to write about." 1979. The biggest hit Warner Bros. with the idea of recording an album of western music. Though initially hesitant, the label gave Mur- phy the go-ahead, and "Cowboy Songs" became a critical and commercial success, prompting Warner/Reprise Nashville president Jim Ed Norman to launch in 1982 Warner western, a label devoted exclusively to releasing western music.

"Western music is an art form which has the potential to perpetuate the art form—the spirit and music of the West," says Norman. Warner Bros. forged an agreement with Real West Productions to handle marketing, public relations, and A&R responsibilities for the label. "When the label got started, the first acts we signed were Don [Edwards] and Wad- die [Mitchell] and the Sons Of The San Joaquin—and, of course, Murphy being sort of the godfather," says Warner Western GM Jeff Skilkin. "With those first signings, our attempt was to establish a distinct niche side of western music, to say, 'This is the cowboy side.' I think we did a little better [and became] a narrowly focused label," he adds. "That's all we were. Granted, that aspect of western music is critical to western music. However, we think of western music as expansive." This year, Skilkin broadened Warn- er Western's creative output with the "Pilafos" project, a new album by Tim Ryan and the husband/wife duo Bill and Bonnie Hearn, Austin, Texas, native who lives in Santa Fe, N.M. "Their music draws upon western themes, and they sing about characters that live in the West," says Skilkin of the Hears, who are not cowboys, and they didn't grow up on a ranch, but that's only one aspect of it." Skilkin is among those who consider American Indian artists “western acts,” and Warner Western has Taos singer/songwriter/producer Robert Miranda on the label. Bill Miller started on (Continued on next page)

Roping In Western Music Consumers

Non-Music Stores, Shows, Even Radio Gets Them Buying

■ BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—Western music’s profile is on the rise among consumers. buoyed by a role in a big-budget film, a kick of retrospectives timed until the 90th birthday of legendary cow- boy singer Gene Autry, and heightened interest in the genre among major labels and radio editors alike (see story, page 1).

But translating building interest into sales can be a challenge for any music type, especially one that is still a niche interest. It is a challenge purveyors of this music have learned to face via various use of alternative marketing avenues and non-music retail outlets, as well as a strong emphasis on live performances and the cultivation of a small but growing radio base. "It's a lot like marketing bluegrass music, where you know the fans are out there, it's just a matter of finding them," says Warner Western GM Jeff Skilkin. "Marketing studies have shown that many people are into it. We got consumers out there that buy as far as Maine and as far as Hawaii. We've got retailers that are just as diversified, we've got consumers' orders that come in from all around the world. It's not like country music, where you've got a whole series to where you've got thousands of radio stations that will hook on to a single and just play it."

One way to hit western music consumers is to put the music in the retail outlets that cater to people who participate in the western lifestyle, such as western clothing stores, tack shops, feed stores, and alternative retail outlets.

"More and more people are seeking our product and finding it at music retailers," says Skilkin, "but I really think that growth is just now starting to hit. I think the area you have a lot more control over and see a lot more growth in is the alternative retail. We're bringing in more and more accounts every day. We've got great friends out in retail, and they support everything we put out." Pat Gorman, merchandise manager at Ridg-Town Studios, an Arizona tourist attraction where numerous western films ("Rio Bravo," "McKin- tooch," etc.) were filmed, says music is carried in three of its seven gift shops. "Michael Martin Murphy is our best-selling artist," says Gorman, "and so is the music of Sons Of The Pioneers... and the older music of Gene Autry and Roy Rogers that people still like... Patux Montana tapes also sell, and she was the first popular western female artist." A hit order is another way that consumers purchase western product. Vickie Mullens, owner of Hitching Post Supply, a Shoshinah, Wash.-based country store, says music in Edwards, Wadie Mitchell, and Red Steagall are among her best-selling music styles.

"Music is a really important part of what I do," she says. "It makes you feel good to listen to. It feels com- fortable, puts you to sleep. It puts you out in the open air. It gives you sky and light. So if you're in a con- crete jungle, you can be transported." Riders In The Sky's Ranger Doug agrees. "It just takes you away from your mortgage and your nasty boss and your surly teenagers," he says, "and takes you and everyone out to a high mountain spot somewhere where you're free, wild, and lonely. I guess that's been the appeal of the West since the Buffalo Bill Wild West Shows and nickelodeon movies."

While everyone agrees western music is growing in popularity, as evi- denced by increased bookings and visibility, specific sales figures are hard to gauge because so much product is sold through other outlets or through direct-mail vehicles that don't register with SoundScan. Scott O'Malley, co-owner of the Colorado Springs, Colo.-based west- ern Jewelry Recording Co., says he hesitates to cite sales figures because his company is less than a year old and hasn't even received its first accounting from Shanachie, which handles distribution.

According to SoundScan, Murphey's first western album, "Cowboy Songs," has sold 260,000 units. However, Skilkin says that album has sold nearly a million copies to being certified gold. "SoundScan doesn't take into account gift stores and west- ern lifestyle stores, and it does club sales into account, either," he says. "When you evaluate sales in this market, SoundScan is just a tiny por- tion of the universe." Skilkin says that, on the low end, a western album may sell about 20,000 units, and on the high end an album by an established artist like Murphy can sell about 500,000.

Skilkin also notes that the shelf life of cow boy music is long. "A main- stream country record may have an 18-month shelf life, if that long," he says. "Then it sits on store shelves for a long, long time. People eat it out of their catalog, but we've got records that are 4 years old that continue to sell and sell because people are still getting turned on to them. So it's really hard to say [when it comes to sales figures] because a lot of those records are still adding up." WRANGLING RADIO

As with many niche genres, getting radio support is tough. However, there are some outlets that do support western music. Riders In The Sky had a successful run on public radio with "Riders Radio Theater." They also had a tv series, "Tumbleweed Thea- ter," on TNN and a Saturday-morn-}

In addition to public radio, some mainstream country stations do play western music. KVOO Tulsa, Okla., is an enthusiastic supporter, program- ming both the cowboy and western swing varieties.

"KVOO is where Bob Willi started in the '90s," says KVOO general manager Andy Oatman. "He would play at Cain's Ballroom, and it would be broadcast on KVOO. This was the kind of place that popularized Bob Willi and western swing. So we have some very strong roots in western swing. So on AM and FM, west- ern swing makes up 25%-30% of what we play."

Oatman says the station plays clas- sic western swing as well as new swing music by current artists like Garth Brooks, George Strait, and Tracy Byrd. It also plays some on western swing shows on Wednesdays. Cowboy music is also part of the mix at KVOO. The station's audience response is great, Oatman says. "People love it because they can't get it anywhere else," he says. "We get calls from other states saying, 'We can't find a radio station that will play Bob Willi or Alesep At The Wheel or cowboy poetry. People eat it up, because most stations are afraid of it."

Scattered radio interest aside, live performance has provided a good base for exposing western music to a wider fan base.

(Continued on next page)
The original document contains multiple articles, including a news article and a story about Western music. Here's a breakdown of the content:

### EU Copyright Directive’s Wording Opposed by IFPI 

(Continued from page 6)

Council of Ministers for consideration.

A draft leaked in November was broadly acceptable to labels, as it implemented the provisions of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) conference. Held at the end of last year (Billionaire, Dec. 22, 1996), the conference agreed to a treaty stating that labels should have the right to prevent or allow use of their copyrights over electronic networks. It also called for the outlawing of equipment that circumvents technologies protections of copyrighted material.

The agreement, which is intended to provide a legal framework for the EU Directive is to implement the WIPO treaty. However, instead of stating that equipment that is not intended to be used to circumvent is illegal, the document says the equipment is illegal only if its primary purpose is to beat the protections.

"If the machine’s main purpose is making coffee or turning the lights on and off in the office, then an ancillary function that would allow copying is OK, according to the directive," says Olivia Regnier, legal adviser at the Brussels office of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). Frances Moore, IFPI’s head of European affairs, says that loophole is a function of “a drafting error.”

### Western Music Thrives as niche genre

(Continued from preceding page)

Warner Western and is now a Reprise sublabel.

“We think of the people that live there [in the West], and you can’t discount the Native Americans,” says Skip Edwards, who runs the label’s budget line on MTV’s "120 Minutes," Tex-Mex, and the Hispanic influence. We’ve always thought of it as a big, and until this point, underserved market. The labels of our genre is to define people who are what is western music.

If you talk to somebody in the ear of the film or television, “It’s a market,” says Brian. If you say western music, people usually say, “oh, that’s Rex Allen or that’s Riders Of The Sky, or that’s Michael Mar- tin Murphy...” Western music, inter- estingly enough, had to grow a new branch in just the last 10-15 years after Nashville had to drop ‘western’ off country & western. [Billboard’s country singles chart was known as Hot C&W Sides until 1962]. It sorta had to regroup. But as a result, you have a lot of people that have no idea of what it is.

So we went to get the educa- tional and as well entertain- them, and a lot of people like western music that don’t know like it.”

Skip Edwards also sees western music as encompassing broad territory. “Music of the West doesn’t have to be just about cowboys and Indians. West can be a lot of things. They can be miners, railroad people. It’s about the land, the lifestyle itself.”

Western music is a great act, Edwards left the label along with Wad- die Mitchell and Sons Of The San Joaquin last year to sign with Western Jubilee, owned and operated by their manager/booking agent Scott O’Malley and his partner Dane Scott. The label’s first release was this past May’s Sons Of The San Joaquin project “Gospel Trails,” which features releases by Don Edwards and Rich O’Brien. The label is distributed to music retailers by Newton, N.J.-based Shanachie Entertainment Group.

“Anything that’s not a record store is our territory,” O’Malley says of Wes- tern music. Western music is distributed through two parallel outlets. “So we’ve set up a network of people to market to [outlet] that are not music stores.

Western music is the same way as going with the flogging label. Western music is so much better than what you would ever dream, he says. "Things have fallen in our lap that I would have never dreamed of chasing. For example, the FBI called and wanted Waddy to do their big conven- tion. Don just played the Philadelphia Folk Festival and knocked them on their ear. There’s such universal appeal to that.

Likewise, Warner/Reprise Nash- ville’s Norman is pleased with the way Warner Western has developed. "We have such big dreams we still wish to achieve," he says. "I think the process we have for getting to the marketplace and the projects we have coming give us this greatest opportunity we’ve had for success.

In addition to artists performing at clubs, fairs, private events, and corpo- rate shows, western music fanatics gatherings across North America that cater specifically to the western crowd, and the Western music thing from cowboy Celtic to American Indian fiddles to cowboy singers and poets.

There are more than 200 western gatherings each year. Among the top such events are the Western Music Assn. Festival in Tucson, Ariz.; the Quarter Horse Congress in Ohio; Red Stagg’s Cowboy Gathering and Western Swing Festival in Fort Worth, Texas; and Cowboy Songs Western Music Festival in Cody, Wyo. Elk, Nev., plays host to the 14th annual Cowboy Poetry Gathering Jan. 24-25.

In June, the Cowboy Music Gathering will also be held in Elk. As one of the regular popular events is Murphy’s West Fest, which he launched in 1986 in Copper Mountain, Colo., and has held there every Labor Day weekend since. His Festival, which attracts more than 35,000 visitors each year. Western music fans make it a celebration of American music, fine art, crafts, clothing, horsemanship demonstrations, an American Indian village, and a moun- tain man camp. Over the last decade, he has also held West Fest in Red River, N.M.; Indianapolis; Park City, Utah; Amarillo; Texas; and at Mammoth Mountain Ski Resort in California, among other locations.

Sons Of The San Joaquin are gear- ing up for a "Fandango" to be held

Walmart-Mac Prodigy Set from Shelves; More Chains May Follow

(Continued from page 6)

In the U.K., the band’s homeland, no retailers are reported to have removed these titles, but one source said the label, XL Recordings, for the release caused repercussions in Parma- do." The consumer title led one Labour Member of Parlia- ment to propose a motion expressing the House of Commons’ “disgust and outrage” at the label’s actions and urging the label to withdraw it. But by the time the motion was tabled, the two-week marketing effort had ended. It is believed that the final album's hardcover content have once again clashed with the notion of artistic expression. Meanwhile, problems for the industry appeared when Walmart -demanded that a track on Sheryl Crow’s new album be modified because of a lyric that referred to the shooting of young people at a firearm purchased at that retail chain. Crow's label, A&M Records, refused, and the album was taken out of Walmart's stores.

On the offending track from the Prodigy album, the lyrics consist only of the initial letter "P," which is the word "Pimp" as Smack my butt up! The song was released July 1 in the U.S. at No. 1 on The Billboard 200, and has sold 2.5 million copies in the U.S. according to SoundScan. Distributing label Warner Bros. Records says the album has been certified double-plat- inum.

The video for the track has also caused a stir. An edited version debuted on MTV's "120 Minutes" on Sept. 28, and since then has been aired on the channel from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. with a dis-claimer. Before it is shown, MTV airs a news segment that explains the con- troversy. The video is rated MADSIV, which stands for "mature dialogue, sex, violence, drugs." It follows an unseen character throughout an evening—snorting drugs, fighting in a club, and manhandling strippers. The character is taken from one of Crow's strips at home and, as of the video revealed to be a woman. "It's a piece of social commentary that is full-frontal nudity, which is the first time that has been shown on the cable channel, according to MTV communica- tions for Women's "Watchdog." "We felt the video was ground-breaking," she says, and "we wanted to give mature audi- ences the chance to see it."

Bob Merlis, a spokesman for Warn- er Bros. Records, says: "We have every- thing over the lyrics was "instigated" by an article in the Los Angeles Times. He points out that the album was in stores for several months, and there was no adverse reaction." The newspaper reporter called the National Organiza- tion of Police Community Relations, and others, and the group condemned the album. Reaction from the retailers fol- lowed.

Dennis Wigent, director of internal communications for Kmart, says that its rack-jobber, Handleman, informed the retailer months ago that the album might be unacceptable to Kmart. He says: "They made us look at the impression that Maverick would send edited copies of the album. What the label shipped, though, were albums containing alternative cover art. On the back cover, where the titles are listed, the word "bitch" was covered by a pic- ture of an album of the label's.

"Handleman didn’t follow through to make sure that what was delivered was what was agreed on," says Wigent, adding that Kmart has now removed all copies of the album from the chain’s 2,150 stores.

Walmart says in a statement that it "will no longer carry [the album] until such a time as Maverick clearly would offend our customers." The retailer operates 2,300 stores.

The band’s publicist did not return calls for comment. In late September, Prodigy member L. Howlett says of the track, "We don’t want to cause any trouble, it’s just a song, because it’s obviously not about that. It’s more to fit the music. It’s almost too in-your-face to be offensive."

Assistance in preparing this report was provided by Dominic Pride in London.
Our business plan shows a commitment to reorganizing around the music business, talent, and special products businesses," Weisman says.

Now, with the business plan complete, the company will move onto "determining fill-in product lines," which would lead to emerging from Chapter 11 by mid-year of 1998. "That is our intention," he says.

He adds that the company's exclusivity period for filing a reorganization plan—the time during which no other businesses can file a reorganization plan—will last through February and that the company plans to then ask for an extension, which "will allow management to reorganize the company and reorganize the process through the entire confirmation process.

Previously, when management had asked for an extension of the exclusivity period, the creditors' committee urged the court to truncate the requested time, saying that management's plan hadn't shown enough initiative in curbing expenses, particularly in the area of management compensation.

Privately, the creditors' committee focused on Teller's argument that his compensation was in excess of what everyone else was making.

Teller initially was making $1.8 million per year at Alliance, but after the July 14 Chapter 11 filing that was cut in half. Says one executive familiar with the creditors' thinking, "At Teller is a guy who has done a tremendous job for the music industry, but if you look at where Alliance is headed, its core business will be distribution, and its compensation packages aren't going to be paid in that business. Teller is the right captain to pilot this kind of ship. Alliance needs a management team with distribution experience and low overhead."

In addition to Teller, founder Joe Beausoleil and fusion's Thorpe initially left the company because of salary concerns.

Teller was unavailable for comment on whether there are any interested parties engaging in talks with Alliance, but sources suggest that Apollo Advisors and堡垒 Capital Management are interested as well.

"That's The Way Love Goes," which topped the Hot 100 for eight weeks, scanned 128,000 in its best week.

New Alliance CEO Stresses a Return to Core Business

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## Billboard 200 Chart for December 19, 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chart Position</th>
<th>Album Title</th>
<th>Artist(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>All That I Am</td>
<td>John Michael Montgomery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Live In Japan - World Tour</td>
<td>T'Pau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3             | Cool!
| 4             | American Pie                       | Chris Knight                          |
| 5             | The Very Best Of AC/DC           | AC/DC                                 |
| 6             | Yankee Doodle Dixie               | Lead Belly                            |
| 7             | The Very Best Of Bob Dylan        | Bob Dylan                             |
| 8             | The Very Best Of The Doors        | The Doors                             |
| 9             | The Very Best Of Hank Williams    | Hank Williams                         |
| 10            | The Very Best Of Ray Charles      | Ray Charles                           |

**Artists:**
- John Michael Montgomery
- T'Pau
- Chris Knight
- AC/DC
- Lead Belly
- Bob Dylan
- The Doors
- Hank Williams
- Ray Charles

**Additional Notes:**
- The chart includes various genres and artists, showcasing a wide range of music from rock to country and beyond.
- The chart emphasizes the popularity of live albums and reissues from iconic artists.

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**Allure 159**
- AC/DC
- 311 136
- Garth Brooks
- Toni Braxton
- Robert Palmer
- Basin

**Clint Black**
- Babyface
- John Michael Montgomery
- Ray Charles
- Hank Williams

**Babyface**
- Garth Brooks
- Toni Braxton
- Robert Palmer
- Basin

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**New/New**
- Soundtrack
- " فيه" 33
- Only One
- " Butterfly Kishes of Shade of Grace" 33
- " One with You"
- " The Very Best Of Abba"
- " Take Me Home, Country Roads"
- " The Very Best Of AC/DC"
- " The Very Best Of Bob Dylan"
- " The Very Best Of Garth Brooks"
- " The Very Best Of Hank Williams"
- " The Very Best Of Ray Charles"
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- " The Very Best Of Ray Charles"
groundwork to become a household name in the Latino music world and promotes her image.

The emotive singer already has taken salsa music to hitherto unseen critical and commercial heights. By blending traditional salsa with contemporary arrangements, Anthony has managed to win the respect of critics who have been heralded by young fans from his native New York to Puerto Rico to the Southwestern and Western regions of America.

Anthony's fervent salsa following has been backed up its packed-house visits to his shows with vigorous pur- pura, a term for a flower that has been warmly embraced by young fans from his native New York to Puerto Rico to the Southwestern and Western regions of America.

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IMMORTAL/EPIC, NEW LINE TEAM FOR ‘SPAWN’ PROMO

Scan, more than 552,000 copies had been sold as of Dec. 1, with about 850,000 shipped to retailers. Featuring the work of renowned comic book artists as Filter and Crystal Method, Metallica and DJ Spooky, and Henry Rollins and Goldie, among others, the album also has done well overseas. In Canada, it hit gold (50,000) two weeks after release and earned platinum status (100,000) on Sept. 8. It also has sold more than 5 million worldwide through November, according to Mascoe.

With the opening-weekend gross, “Spawn” was New Line Cinema’s fifth-biggest opener, taking in more than $55 million on the big screen and 250,000 copies of the HBO Line Home Video senior marketing manager. A companion project recently launched, the animated “Collectible Spawn” HBO Video project, has been on the top 20 video sales chart ever since. Six episodes aired this past spring on MTV. Another project, “Spawn The Immortal,” on the Sony PlayStation game platform, launched Dec. 9. It features original music by Todd Rundgren and Lari Faye, involved in all aspects of his creation’s multimedia lives, who suggested as much synergy as possible to help all versions “sell like hell,” as he puts it. McFarlane, who was the highest-paid comic illustrator in the world, has also been executive producer of Image Comics, created his dark, demonic defender of justice five years ago.

The first issue sold 1.7 million copies, still an industry record, and more than 100 million have been sold worldwide, in 120 countries in 15 languages.

For the new CD cover, McFarlane produced Spawn in a Santa’s cap and $50 bag of gifts, for an adverti-
sed release of about 50,000 copies. The “collectible” tack had also been used with the initial album launch, but McFarlane said the new CD was featuring a different piece of artwork.

“After the success of the alterna-
tive versions, we were in great in getting this new art-
to work,” says Mascoe. “We’ve added a bonus track, ‘This Is Not a Dream’ by Smokey Manis and Mystrophile, and are getting a teaser ad for the soundtrack on both video versions.”

At New Line Home Video, Lobis is quick to point out that this is a merchandising project. “We’ve got the music video of ‘(Can’t You) Trip Like I Do,’ by Filter and Crystal Method on both the VHS PG-13 ver-

ASCAP ALTERS ITS INTERNET LICENSING SYSTEM

(Continued from page 6)

As expected to face more issues sur-
rounding online licensing and royalty payments, the Internet continues to grow.

FLOW problems. We now have the solid base to build new acts and sign new artists, and we also will be looking for fresh acquisitions.”

The label hopes to announce several major signings in the course of 1998, expanding with non-Japanese acts as well as building on its now unrivaled stable of Irish artists.

Both Ritz and Grapevine will remain as label imprints, and both sides are confident that the label’s credibility that Grapevine has established should not be damaged by associa-
tion with the more adults oriented catalog.

The two labels will retain separate A&R and marketing staffs. “It is important to remember that Grapevine was not just an acquisition,” says Prendergast. “You might be surprised by some of the directions we might go in.”

Grapevine Distribution, the retail and marketing arm, also comes as part of the deal. Ritz product will continue to be serviced by Pinnacle Distribution in the U.K.

“One of the benefits for Grapevine is access to Ritz’s mid-and upper-end market division, as well as the Ritz label itself, and we are looking at developing the Grapevine/ Ritz Gande music distribution arm as a separate company,” says Prendergast.

Prendergast floated on the London Stock Exchange last year and was under pressure from financial institutions to expand into new markets.

The first new releases from the merged group in the near future will include a Bobby Whitlock album and a set from a new Irish band called the Wild Swans, originally a Rita signing but likely to be released on Grapevine.

There are also high hopes for the final few of the album by the young Irish singer Sinead Lohan. Her first album was a homespun folk affair, but the new effort was recorded in New Orleans with a big production sound.

“It is going to be a major release for us. We have the feeling that Sinéad could be very, very big indeed,” says Prendergast. “Grapevine on its own might have struggled to put out another

RITZ, GRAPEVINE DEAL

(Continued from page 6)

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AXEV LABEL

(Continued from page 1)

department, which will be headed by Haji Taniguchi, who will act as AxeV’s point of contact for all overseas-related ac-
tivities. Taniguchi was previously as-
sistant to Yoda in the latter’s capacity as GM of the Japan department.

“This will let Haji make quick deci-
sions and streamline our personal-
structure,” Yoda says.

According to the distribution division has been merged into AxeV Distribution Inc., a new company set up Oct. 1 to take over distribution of the label’s products from the Nippon Crown label starting in April.

In another change, AxeV has brought all its artist management, tour, public relations, acting activities together into another new company, AveX Inc., formed by merging the artist development section of the two Prime Direction/Prime Imprints sections of AxeV’s White Atlas subsidiary. AxeV will be headed by Yasuo Shibata, previously managing director of White Atlas, Prime Direction will concentrate on overall music production.

AxeV acts that will be managed by AxeV will include female vocalists such as Song-Omori and Keiko and pop groups TRF, Favorite Blue, and Every Little Thing. AxeV will also manage Formula 1 race driver Miki Yoshihara.

AxeV is also upgrading its multi-
dia development operation from a sec-
ior executive’s office into a sepa-
rate department.

Yoda says the current round of restructuring will not involve any personnel cuts.

Meanwhile, in a revealing interview in monthly magazine Nikkei Entertainment, the chief executive officer Tetayo Komuro, whose amazing track record has been in large part responsible for AxeV’s rapid growth, implies that he might consider selling the dance/rock trio genre, of which he is a member, and instead concentrate on finding and developing new artists in China. In an interview with Linen on June 9th that set on AxeV is Japan’s all-time top-sell-
ing album, at more than 4 million units, according to the label. Komuro is also quoted as saying he will hand over pro-
duction duties on hitoniu’s future

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REGGAE REPORT

(Continued from page 9)

“We could easily quadruple our dis-
stribution and subscriber base. We
have a yearly reggae calendar and a four-leaf clover-styled clothing. Over 15 years, we’ve collected thousands of photograph.

We would like to do a Reggae Report coffee-table book focusing reggae from the 80s and ’90s with these great pho-

tographs. It would be a historical document.

“We would like to put up a [World Wide] Web page to post information and articles,” Quarte continues. “We are looking into putting the magazine on CD-ROM and licensing publishing in foreign languages in other coun-
tries. Someone sees that this magazine has great potential and wants to become part of it. I love what I’m doing and would like to con-
tinue, but it’s time to grow now.

It’s been 15 years, and we need to
bust out and reach our maximum po-

tential. Everyone sees that this maga-

azine that everyone said would be there one day is here now. Reggae is an established form. We want to con-
tinue putting out this great maga-

azine, but we want to give all the peo-
ple want they,”
Musician Mag To Move From NYC To Nashville

Musician magazine picks up stakes next month and moves from New York to Nashville. The magazine, which covers "The Art, Business, and Technology of Making Music," has long been a must-read for professionals and amateurs involved in the writing, performing, recording, production and teaching of music. Each month it covers the latest equipment and technology news, offers tips on building and sustaining careers and keeps readers up-to-date on music industry developments.

Musician now becomes part of the Billboard Music Group's growing presence on Nashville's Music Row. The move is being overseen by Billboard Group vice president Bill Oetleg, who heads up the group's operations in Nashville. Oetleg has been group publisher of Musician for two years and has engineered the magazine's growing emphasis on "need-to-know" stories for the working musician.

"By moving Musician to Nashville," says Oetleg, "we will realize efficiencies in the operation and, most importantly, the magazine will be located where I can work with the staff on a day-to-day basis. Musician has made great strides in the past couple of years, now with Musician moving to our Nashville operation, we have the opportunity to guide Musician to its fullest potential. The magazine's best days are yet to come."

The Nashville community already is rolling out the welcome mat. "Due to our close community of musicians and our huge publishing industry it's natural for Musician to choose Nashville as its new home," says Will Beasley, director of Music Business Development for the Nashville Chamber of Commerce.

Musician will continue to produce the bi-annual Musician's Guide to Touring & Promotion as well as its popular CD sampler program and the much-imitated Best Unsigned Band contest.

Carla Hay has been named music video editor of Billboard. Hay will be responsible for "The Eye" and all music video-related stories. In her capacity as assistant editor for Billboard, Hay will take on reporting, editing and production responsibilities.

Hay joins Billboard after a three-year stint at Music Connection, where she was most recently editor of the Songworks music publishing column. Prior to her work at Music Connection, Hay was host and producer of the San Francisco-based C3 Video show. She has also worked as a columnist for The San Jose, California-based BAM magazine.

Hay received her bachelor's degree from Stanford University in communications and political science and an MBA from the University of Southern California.

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Sumner In The City (And Country)

HE'S URBAN, he's country, he's all formats. Sting may be the only artist to appear on Hot Rap Singles and Hot Country Singles & Tracks at the same time. On the rap chart, "Roxyanne '97—Puff Daddy Remix" by Sting & the Police (A&M) debuts at No. 20. The latter title is also on the Hot 100, where it falls from No. 15. The Billboard "The Very Best Of Sting & The Police" jumps 25 places to No. 10. The man born Gordon Sumner in Wallsend, England, is probably dreaming up a way to get a dance remix on a new age blues song even as you read this.

No longer 'breathing': As expected, Jewel sets a new mark as her two-sided single "Footloose Games/You Were Meant For Me" (Atlantic) remains on the Hot 100 for the 56th chart week. That's the longest consecutive run in the history of this chart. There was no suspense about whether Jewel would break the 55-week record set by Everything But the Girl's "Missing," as her single is still in the top 20 (falling 14-18 this issue). The only mystery was whether Jewel would have a partner in breaking the longevity record. Sadly, Duncan Sheik's "Generally Breathing" (Atlantic) succumbed, falling off the chart after completing a 55-week run.

There's also no question that Jewel will break the all-time record of 60 weeks, set by Los Del Rio's "Macarena" (Bayside Boys Mix) in two separate chart runs. With the single sitting in the No. 18 slot, it's a lock that this record will still be on the Hot 100 five weeks from now.

Jewel's achievement makes this single one of Atlantic's most successful chart entries in the label's 50-year history. If you're curious about how it compares with Atlantic's other greatest hits, look for the imprint's top 100 titles in a special tribute to label founder Ahmet Ertegun to be published in the Jan. 17 issue.

More than physical: Another longevity record is set at the top of the Hot 100. Elton John's "Something About The Way You Look Tonight," from "Candle In The Wind 1997" (Rocket) is No. 1 for the 110th week. That's longest a U.K. artist has ever been on top of the pop singles chart, beating the 100-week record set by Olivia Newton-John's "Physical" in 1981. In third place in the Beatles' "Hey Jude," which had a nine-week run in 1968.

Elton's single is the third to hit the 11-week mark in this calendar year, after Toni Braxton's "Un-Break My Heart" and Puff Daddy & Faith Evans' "I'll Be Missing You." And while it may seem that every single is having a long run at the top, that just isn't so. "Something," "Candle" is one of only 10 singles to be No. 1 for 11 weeks or longer in the rock era. And if it is still No. 1 next issue, it will be only one of six chart-toppers to reign for 12 weeks or more.

Come together?: Janet Jackson collects her third consecutive top 10 debut, as "Together Again" (Virgin) enters the Hot 100 at No. 9. In 1995, "Scream" (with Michael Jackson) debuted at No. 5 and "Who Will Be Next" opened at No. 6. Every one of Janet's singles in the '90s has been a top 10 hit, looking at the bigger picture, every one of Janet's singles in the last 10 years has been a top 10 hit. In fact, she has only missed the top 10 once since she broke through with "What Have You Done For Me Lately" in 1986. "The Pleasure Principle" peaked at No. 14 in 1987. "Together Again," the first single from "The Velvet Rope," may be just the thing to revive Janet's album (which falls 25-31 on The Billboard 200). There was apparently no benefit from leading with an airplay-only track, "Got 'Til It's Gone," instead of a commercially available single.

Sumner in the City (And Country)

E-Business: Business Week

Personnel Directions
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