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THE INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITY ON MUSIC, VIDEO & DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT • 110TH YEAR • JANUARY 15, 2005

HOT SPOTS



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Billboard remembers the late bandleader and clarinetist in a personal tribute by Tamara Conniff.



13 He's Game

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8 Merged Managements

Irving Azoff's Azoff Music Management and Howard Kaufman's H.K. Management merge to re-form FrontLine.

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Kenny Chesney's Choice

Country Star Gets Personal At Caribbean Retreat

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

NASHVILLE—After more than a decade of hit records and relentless touring, Kenny Chesney ascended to the top of the country format last November when he claimed the entertainer of the year prize at the Country Music Assn. Awards. Now he's exercising his hard-won creative clout to take something of a musical left turn.

On Jan. 25, BNA Records will release "Be As You Are: Songs From an Old Blue Chair," a singer/songwriter album that contains tunes Chesney wrote or co-wrote mostly at his Caribbean home. For him, this album is as personal as it is unintentional.

(Continued on page 27)



Photo: Kevin Mazar/WireImage.com

A Global Response

Events, Recordings Aim To Raise Millions For Tsunami Victims

A Billboard and Billboard Radio Monitor staff report.

As the world continues to respond to the devastation in Southeast Asia following the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami, the global music community is coming together in an unprecedented outpouring of support for relief efforts.

(Continued on page 60)



LINKIN PARK: GRATITUDE, RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION

Latin Biz Awaits Download Boom

BY LEILA COBO

Latin music fans who visit legal music download stores may experience a sense of déjà vu.

In these virtual music racks, Spanish-language tracks are almost an afterthought—scarce and often lumped under the world music category—as was the case with most major retailers as recently as 15 years ago.

(Continued on page 61)

ben harper and the blind boys of alabama . there will be a light

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JAZZ	
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JAZZ/CONTEMPORARY	
KENNY G	At Last... The Duets Album
KID AUDIO	
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GOLDIE LOOKIN' CHAIN

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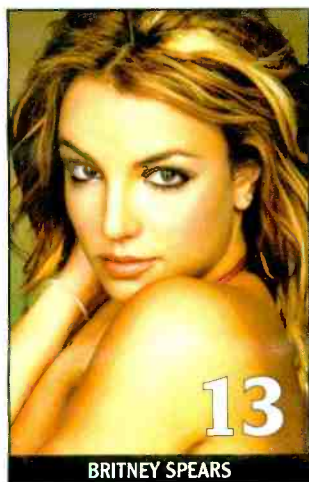
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BRITNEY SPEARS

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

When I hear songs in commercials, I always get a dirty feeling.

JEFF WAYE, NINJA TUNE NORTH AMERICA HEAD, ON LICENSING MUSIC
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OBIE BERMUDEZ

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The Next Big Idea: The Future of Branded Entertainment—West
Jan. 20 at the Regent Beverly Wilshire
Beverly Hills, Calif.
Information: 646-654-5169

Billboard Music & Money Symposium
March 3 at the
St. Regis Hotel, New York
Information: 646-654-4660

Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards
April 25-28 at the
Hotel InterContinental, Miami
Information: 646-654-4660

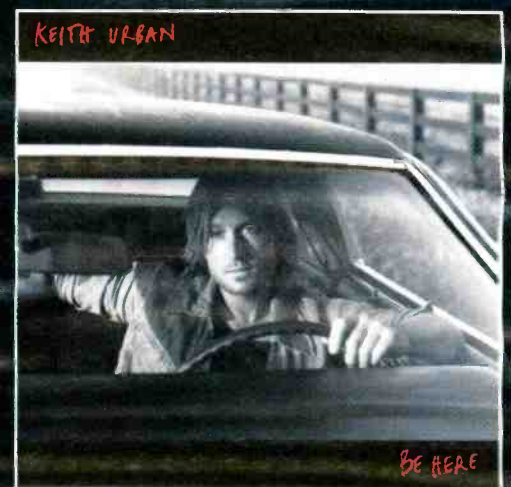
Billboard/American Urban Radio Networks R&B/Hip-Hop Conference & Awards
August
Information: 646-654-4660

Billboard Dance Music Summit
Sept. 19-21 at the
Union Square Ballroom, New York
Information: 646-654-4660

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KEITH URBAN

- CMA MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR - 2004
- MULTIPLE GRAMMY NOMINEE - 2005
 - BEST COUNTRY ALBUM - *BE HERE*
 - BEST COUNTRY VOCAL PERFORMANCE, MALE - "YOU'LL THINK OF ME"
 - BEST SOUTHERN, COUNTRY OR BLUEGRASS GOSPEL ALBUM - *AMAZING GRACE 3* (Various Artists)
- #1 *BILLBOARD* TOP COUNTRY ALBUM - *BE HERE*
- #1 *BILLBOARD* HOT COUNTRY SINGLES & TRACKS - "DAYS GO BY" (debut single from *BE HERE*)
- HEADLINE TOUR - FALL 2004
- PLATINUM® CERTIFICATION IN JUST 6 WEEKS - *BE HERE*



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www.keithurban.net

Ciara's '1, 2 Step' benefits from a post-holiday surge in download sales



Upfront

TOP OF THE NEWS

Producer Frank Filipetti discusses the debut of audio trade group META



A CANDLELIGHT VIGIL NEAR BUENOS AIRES NIGHTCLUB REPÚBLICA CROMAGNON, WHERE A DEC. 30 FIRE LEFT 187 PEOPLE DEAD

Acts, Fans Demand Safety After Fatal Fire

BY MARCELO FERNANDEZ BITAR and LEILA COBO

BUENOS AIRES—Even as Argentina continues to mourn the 187 who died here in one of the deadliest nightclub fires in recent memory, local officials have snapped into action to establish new security measures and tighten law enforcement.

Immediately following the Dec. 30 fire at club República Cromagnon, Buenos Aires Mayor Anibal Ibarra closed all similar clubs and dancehalls in the city for 15 days. He also announced that, for the foreseeable future, no live performances will be permitted in dancehalls.

The first government casualty in the fire's aftermath was local Secretary of Justice and Security Juan Carlos Lopez, who resigned two days after the fire. His replacement, Juan José Alvarez, was slated to present the mayor with a new security plan by Jan. 7. To that effect, government officials have been meeting with members of the Buenos Aires Chamber of Dancehall & Entertainment Entrepreneurs.

"This is a 9-11 situation for show business in Argentina," concert promoter Daniel Grinbank says. "We must act fast and swiftly, with true responsibility. There is no economic consideration possible, and we should not even evaluate possible losses or greater costs. This has to be solved by everybody involved in the business."

The República Cromagnon fire was sparked by flares thrown by fans—allegedly including a 10-year-old boy—during a concert by rock band Los Callejeros. The flares ignited the club's ceiling and filled the crowded hall with smoke. In the pandemonium that followed, fans rushed for the doors and reportedly found the emergency exits blocked. Many of the victims were trampled to death or died as a result of smoke inhalation.

Club owner Omar Chabán has been jailed and charged with homicide.

According to reports, Chabán's situation is aggravated by the one emergency exit having been locked

(Continued on page 48)

Numbers Look Up For U.S. Biz

Album Sales Reverse Skid In '04

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—U.S. album sales in 2004 were up for the first time in four years, in a 52-week comparison with 2003, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

What's more, total sales, including digital tracks, soared 19.5% to 817 million units during the same period.

The album market totaled 666.7 million units, up 1.6% in the 52-week comparison.

But in an anomaly of the calendar, 2004 was a 53-week year. If the 53rd week is counted, album sales reach 681.4 million, a 3.8% increase from the 2003 total. Overall sales for the 53-week year totaled 831.4 million units, versus 687 million units in 2003.

Universal Music & Video Distribution remains the industry leader in total album market share with 29.6%, followed by Sony BMG Music Entertainment Sales with 28.5%. The independent sector collectively placed third with 17.4%, followed by WEA with 14.7%, and EMM with 9.9%.

Looking at current album market share for the 52-week year, UMVD

scored 32.2%, followed by Sony BMG with 29.8%, the indies with 15.8%, WEA with 13%, and EMM with 9.3%.

Usher's "Confessions" was the best-selling album of the year, scanning nearly 8 million units, followed



USHER: HIS ALBUM WAS 2004'S TOP SELLER

by Norah Jones' "Feels Like Home," which sold 3.8 million, and Eminem's "Encore," which scanned 3.5 million.

After 2000, when album sales were up 4% compared with the previous year, the U.S. industry went into a

(Continued on page 59)

Media Industry Shares Gain On Wall Street

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—The music business regained modest ground on Wall Street in 2004, but still has not returned to the valuations of the late-'90s stock market bubble.

Battered stocks of media conglomerates connected to major-label groups posted double-digit percentage gains in 2004—thanks in part to ongoing cost cutting and restructuring in their music divisions.

Improved CD sales and diversification in product mix fueled a comeback in the embattled music retail sector during the last 12 months (see story, page 35).

Meanwhile, companies with ties to downloading and satellite radio emerged as last year's hot music-related investments, as digital music struck a chord with a growing number of consumers.

Apple Computer and the Howard Stern/Mel Karmazin-fronted Sirius Satellite Radio were the year's big winners. Both companies saw their stock prices more than double in the last 12 months.

Still, in the eyes of many growth-hungry investors, the overall industry continues to live in the shadow of millennium-era highs.

(Continued on page 48)

Faxon Named Bandier Heir

EMI Group CFO Swings Back To Publishing Unit In Multi-Year Succession Plan

BY SUSAN BUTLER
and EMMANUEL LEGRAND

EMI Music Publishing will begin a three-year transition Feb. 1 as it grooms its next chairman/CEO.

London-based Roger Faxon, EMI Group's CFO, will return to the publishing unit in New York—where he spent three years as CFO—to become its worldwide president/COO and eventual successor to Martin Bandier.

Bandier will remain the company's chairman/CEO until April 1, 2006, when the two will share the CEO title. Faxon will become sole CEO April 1, 2007, while Bandier will remain as full-time chairman until March 31, 2008.

After exiting the company, Bandier will remain under a consulting contract for an additional three years.

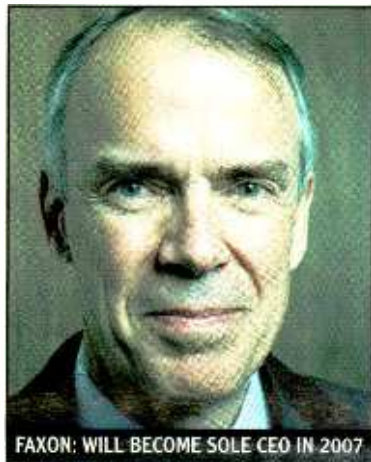
During his more than 30 years in music publishing, Bandier has earned the respect of the industry as a creative contributor to the art of music.



BANDIER: EVOLVING ROLE

Although Faxon's title implies he's a "numbers guy," Bandier tells *Billboard*, "He's more than that and has proven that in the past. He's managed creative businesses and dealt with creative people and [loves music]. He has a sensitivity to the creative process and to the creators."

Bandier says the two will share ideas and responsibilities, reflecting



FAXON: WILL BECOME SOLE CEO IN 2007

his long-standing business philosophy within the company. "Roger and I have always talked about major decisions, what the strategy for the future is and what the planning is. I can't imagine that changing."

Given the challenges that digital music, new technology and copyright licensing and protection present the industry during the next few years, Faxon says they will be looking for new ways to optimize the business to "perform for our writers."

Bandier notes that as music publishers—who are not reliant upon manufacturing or distribution plants to sell music—they can be flexible in changing the direction of their business based on where

opportunities lie.

"Roger and I agree that the opportunities lie everywhere," Bandier says. "At the end of the day, music is an integral part of everything that the world does, whether it's digital or it's hard copies. Our strategies will be the same: to exploit and grow our business, utilize our music as best as possible and maximize the money for our shareholders and our songwriters."

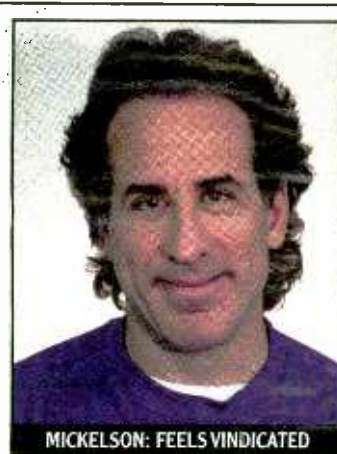
While the overall company strategy will remain the same, Faxon adds, the tactics—the specific ways one makes things happen, which are based on what is going on in the marketplace at any given moment—will be adjusted as necessary.

"Marty has always had an eye for the long-term future growth of the business," Faxon says. "You can see the proof of his ability to do that in the results in the company, which have been spectacular."

An EMI spokeswoman says that the latest figures from 2004 indicate that the publishing unit had a 25.6% operating profit, the highest of any music publisher.

EMI Group chairman Eric Nicoli says the "smooth" succession plan "comes at the right time and is the right thing to do."

"Most companies deal with suc-
(Continued on page 59)



MICKELSON: FEELS VINDICATED

Promoter Suit: No Bias Seen

BY RAY WADDELL

A U.S. District Court judge in New York ruled against four African-American concert promoters who had claimed they were discriminated against in the concert business.

The Jan. 4 summary judgment could bring to an end a six-year legal tangle that saw several agent and promoter defendants opt to settle out of court. Even so, a representative for the plaintiffs tells *Billboard* that an appeal
(Continued on page 48)



CIARA: 1, 2 STEPS TO THE TOP OF THE DIGITAL DOWNLOAD CHART

Download Blitz

Holiday Gifts Drive Record Sales

BY BRIAN GARRITY

NEW YORK—Digital music sales notch a third straight record-breaking week this issue, thanks to the ripple effect from a Christmas-inspired sales surge of MP3 players and download gift cards.

Digital track volume spiked another 1.6 million transactions for the week ending Jan. 2, making a seven-day total of 6.7 million downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The jump marks an all-time high for download sales in a single week, breaking the benchmark set seven days earlier, when 5.04 million tracks were sold for the

week ending Dec. 26.

This marks the first time in the history of the *Billboard* Hot Digital Tracks chart that download sales have posted volume increases of more than 1 million transactions in successive weeks.

As previously reported, week-over-week track sales rose by 1.1 million transactions to surpass the 5 million mark the week ending Dec. 26 (*Billboard*, Jan. 8).

The impact of gift card sales on the holiday growth spurt is particularly notable, label distribution executives say.

"A hot Christmas gift-giving item was the ability to give digital
(Continued on page 48)

Audience Impressions Now Drive Hot Country Singles & Tracks Chart

Effective with this issue of *Billboard*, the Hot Country Singles & Tracks chart will be based on audience impressions as tracked by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems.

Previously, the rankings were based on airplay detections, also provided by Nielsen BDS.

The change, which was announced in November, returns the country chart to the audience-based ranking system that was used from January 1990, when *Billboard* began using BDS information in its airplay charts, to December 1992, when the switch was made to total detections.

Other key radio charts, including Hot 100 Airplay, Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Airplay and *Billboard's* four Latin radio charts, already are based on audience impressions.

"An audience-based chart represents a more precise reading of both programmers' decisions and the number of people who actually hear a song," says Geoff Mayfield, director of charts for *Billboard*.

Wade Jessen, country charts manager for *Billboard*, adds, "Historically, audience-based charts behave slightly different than charts ranked by detections. We will work in tandem with our partners at Nielsen BDS to properly illuminate the progression of tracks in this new environment to promotion executives, radio programmers and our readers at large."

Under the new methodology, total audience impressions are determined by cross-referencing exact times

of airplay with Arbitron listener data for those times, based on Arbitron's metro 12-plus average quarter hour total persons for the specific station.

Most other chart elements and rules remain unchanged. Airpower honors go to songs appearing in the top 20 on both the BDS airplay and audience charts for the first time with increases in both detections and audience.

Bullet policy is modified to give consideration to titles that increase in detections but decline in audience. Such titles will receive bullets only in cases where the audience erosion does not exceed 3% from the prior period.

The return to normal, post-holiday programming, coupled with the conversion from detections to audience impressions, causes some minor chart anomalies and an abundance of bullets this week, though such a situation is not unusual for the first week of January. While some odd chart moves (songs slipping a few spots while maintaining bullets) are caused by the post-holiday airplay surge for current hits, other drops in rank are a result of last week's detections-based chart positions.

Also, the "weeks-on" chart column reflects weeks accumulated from *Billboard's* detection-based chart. Some songs that previously charted on the audience list show up as debuts this week. (Details, see page 56.)



Slipknot

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management: Cory Brennan

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Artie Shaw, Swing Royalty And Hitmaker, Dead At 94

BY BILL HOLLAND

Artie Shaw, the adventurous, swing-era clarinetist/bandleader, died Dec. 30 at his home in Thousand Oaks, Calif. He was 94.

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, Shaw's popularity rivaled and sometimes surpassed that of such other swing-era giants as Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey. (For an appreciation of Shaw, see page 10.)

But Shaw's lifelong conviction that art should trump commercial popularity led him to walk away from his career in several instances. In 1954, he put down the clarinet for good, although he later returned to the music scene as a bandleader.

"I was a compulsive perfectionist," he once explained to a reporter, "and in the world we live in, compulsive perfectionists finish last."

By some accounts, Shaw sold more than 100 million records during his multifaceted career as performer, composer and arranger.

Born Arthur Jacob Arshawsky, Shaw began performing professionally at 15. He had his first 1 million seller in 1938 at the age of 28 with a bouncy, swing makeover of Cole Porter's usually languid



Photo: Courtesy of RCA Victor

ARTIE SHAW

"Begin the Beguine."

Shaw's theme song, the minor-mode, noir wail "Nightmare," also sold 1 million copies, as did five other hits. His cool, breezy arrangement of "Moonglow" helped make that tune a standard.

He bristled at the notion that jazz should be just dance fodder and referred to dance-crazed jitterbuggers as "morons." Even an early 1935 success, "Interlude in B-Flat," matched his hot clarinet with a string quartet. Later, he incorporat-

ed modernist classical and Latin influences into his work.

Shaw fought against racial discrimination and was the first white bandleader to feature a black vocalist, the young Billie Holiday.

At the height of his career, fans and musicians debated who was the "King of Swing"—Shaw or fellow clarinetist/bandleader Goodman. Shaw's Hollywood-handsome looks certainly didn't hurt, and his eight marriages (to Lana Turner, Rita Hayworth and Ava Gardner, among others) kept the Tinseltown gossip columnists busy for decades.

During his various absences from the music scene, Shaw farmed and wrote a number of well-received books.

In the early 1950s, Shaw reformed his popular small group, the Gramercy Five, and launched several progressive units.

In the early '80s, he occasionally conducted a reconstituted band, but true to his word, Shaw never played his clarinet onstage again.

Throughout the '30s and '40s, Shaw recorded for Bluebird and Victor, early RCA imprints that are now BMG heritage labels. He later recorded for Decca, Clef and Verve, now all in the Universal Music Group vault.

Audio Trade Group Debuts

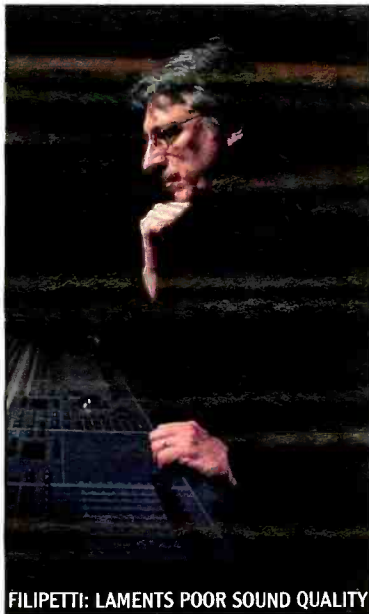
META Will Announce Formation At CES; Quality A Concern

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

Several of the professional recording industry's top engineers and producers have teamed to create the Music Engineering & Technology Alliance. The group will announce its formation Jan. 8 at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

META comprises engineer/producers Al Schmitt, Phil Ramone, George Massenburg, Elliot Scheiner, Chuck Ainlay, Ed Cherney and Frank Filipetti, along with Rory Kaplan, formerly of Digital Theater Systems, who serves as president, and acting CEO Bill Neighbors, who has held positions at such companies as DTS and WorldJam.

META's mission is multifaceted. The group aims to evaluate and certify professional and consumer audio technologies, as well as recording and playback equipment. Its members speak of a desire to collectively perform research and development, make technical recommendations, educate and mentor aspiring recordists and encourage compatibility and communication



FILIPETTI: LAMENTS POOR SOUND QUALITY

among competing manufacturers.

Members have met informally for years at such trade events as the Audio Engineering Society Convention. Several were members of the Music Producer's Guild of the

Americas. Established in 1997 to address multiple issues, the MPGA later became the Producers and Engineers Wing of the Recording Academy, as it is known today.

META, Filipetti says, "is about a lot of things, but it's an organization we've been kicking around for several years. Every once in a while a bunch of us would get together and talk about the state of the music industry and lament the fact that everybody's downloading MP3s. We spend all our time in the studio trying to get things to sound right, and it comes to an MP3 that's being played on an iPod or on computer speakers."

Engineers are concerned about the lack of standardization of software systems and in the archiving of master recordings, Filipetti adds. They also note the ongoing development of ever-cheaper digital recording equipment, which has blurred the distinction between professional and "prosumer" gear and, they say, resulted in inferior products and recordings.

Further, the diversity of playback
(Continued on page 59)

NEWSLINE

THE WEEK IN BRIEF

Following a multimillion dollar investment by Thomas H. Lee Partners, artist managers Irving Azoff and Howard Kaufman have merged their companies, Azoffmusic Management and H.K. Management, to re-form FrontLine, the management company the two ran from 1974 to 1983. FrontLine intends to purchase other management and entertainment service companies, according to sources, with funding provided by T. H. Lee Partners. Among Azoff and Kaufman's clients are Christina Aguilera, the Eagles, Seal, Lenny Kravitz, Alan Jackson and Jimmy Buffett. Azoff and Kaufman declined to comment. Officials at T. H. Lee Partners could not be reached by press time.



AZOFF

MELINDA NEWMAN

Danny Sugerman, long-time manager of the Doors, died Jan. 5 in Los Angeles after a long battle with cancer. He was 50. Sugerman, a legendary figure in Los Angeles rock circles, began his association with the Doors while barely in his teens, skipping school to hang out in their offices as their aide. He officially became their manager in the early '80s, and at the time of his death, still managed the band with Jeff Jampol and the Firm. He also had a long association with Iggy Pop. Sugerman chronicled his time with the Doors in his book, "Wonderland Avenue: Tales of Glamour and Excess," and wrote the Jim Morrison bio "No One Here Gets Out Alive" with Jerry Hopkins. He is survived by his wife, Fawn Hall Sugerman, and two siblings. Donations can be sent in Sugerman's name to the MusiCares/MAP fund.

MELINDA NEWMAN

Warner Music Group has named Michael D. Fleisher executive VP/CFO. Based in New York, he reports to chairman/CEO Edgar Bronfman Jr. Fleisher has been chairman/CEO of technology research company Gartner Inc. for five years. In his new role, he will oversee finance, information technology and investor relations for WMG.

Michael Ward, who has been serving as WMG's interim CFO, will return to his full-time position of managing director of Bain Capital. Bain is part of the consortium that acquired the major in 2004. Fleisher worked at Bain from 1990-1993.

CAROLYN HORWITZ

After 30 years with one of the top music industry law firms, Paul Schindler announced Jan. 4 that he is resigning from Grubman, Indursky & Schindler in New York. The firm's clients include some of the top artists, songwriters and executives in the entertainment industry, including Madonna, Alicia Keys, Jessica Simpson and Kiss. The parties say their parting is amicable. Schindler says he will remain at the firm's New York offices until he decides on "the right situation."

SUSAN BUTLER

House Telecom Subcommittee chairman Fred Upton, R-Mich., is set to re-introduce his Indecency Bill early in this session. The bill could bypass subcommittee and committee hearings. An Upton spokesman says, "There's no question the bill would be expedited," since the legislation was passed by the full House last Congress.

BILL HOLLAND and TONY SANDERS

In yet another blow to the now struggling independent promotion business, Nashville-based RCA Label Group has severed its ties with indies. Its roster includes such country stars as Kenny Chesney, Alan Jackson, Brooks & Dunn, Martina McBride, Clay Walker, Sara Evans and Lonestar.

PHYLLIS STARK

Word Label Group president Barry Landis and other key executives lost their jobs Jan. 4 at the Nashville-based Christian company. Exiting staffers include senior VP of marketing and artist development Mark Lusk, senior director of product marketing Andy Peterson, director of marketing for urban/gospel Roderick Jemison, director of sales Jay Schield and marketing coordinator Monique Valdez.

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Quantegy, the last manufacturer of analog audio tape in the United States, shuttered operations New Year's Eve. Quantegy president Dick Lindenmuth says the once profitable company—successor to the famous Ampex brand—closed its doors because of precipitously falling revenue as the industry moved to digital recording.

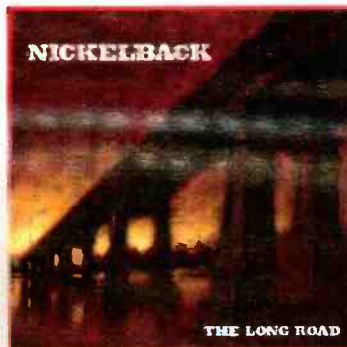
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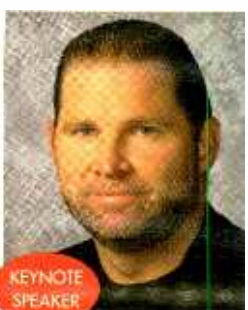


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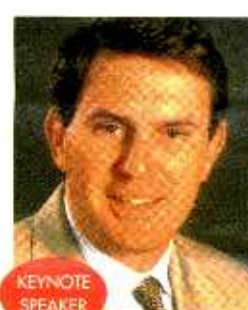
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SPEARS: SAYS A NEW ALBUM IS COMING THIS SUMMER

Spears Gives KIIS 'Mona Lisa' Smile

Britney Spears surprised fans when she showed up at KIIS Los Angeles Dec. 30 to play a new song, "Mona Lisa." She also told the top 40 station's listeners that she will have a new album out this summer.

This marks quite a switch from the November 2004 letter on her Web site in which she extolled the virtues of domesticity and her desire to take time off to spend with new hubby Kevin Federline.

According to a Jive representative, "No album is scheduled at the moment," but she added that "Britney is in the studio working

Carter Family's original members, Morton Gould, Janis Joplin, Led Zeppelin, Jerry Lee Lewis, Jelly Roll Morton, Pinetop Perkins and the Staple Singers.

Academy Trustees Awards will go to Hoagy Carmichael, Don Cornelius, Alfred Lion and Dr. Billy Taylor. Awards recognizing technical achievement will go to Phil Ramone and JBL Professional.

All presentations will be made at a Feb. 12 ceremony and will also be acknowledged during the Feb. 13 Grammy Awards show.

UPDATE: Following his departure from Mosaic Media Group, Scott Welch has set up his own firm, Scott Welch Management.

The Nashville-based manager represents LeAnn Rimes, Collective Soul and Billy Talent. He parted with client Alanis Morissette earlier this year.



The
Beat

By Melinda Newman
mnewman@billboard.com

on some material." There are no plans to service "Mona Lisa" to radio.

Spears has been without a manager since parting ways with Larry Rudolph this past fall. Despite published reports, she has not hired Dan Dymtrow as her new manager, according to the representative. He has been part of her "team," says the spokeswoman, and continues in the same capacity for Spears that he had before Rudolph's departure.

HONOR ROLL: The Recording Academy will bestow this year's Lifetime Achievement Awards to Eddy Arnold, Art Blakey, the

COMING HOME: Country artist Keith Urban will return to his native Australia this February for a tour.

"We haven't gone back and toured a lot; I've put all of my time and effort into the States," he says. "Our music has a more across-the-board appeal over there, but we've got to really tour to get that out to people. Most people know who we are, but they don't really know the music yet."

Urban's "across-the-board" appeal is rapidly expanding stateside: He has his first adult contemporary hit with "You'll Think of Me."

While he loves the idea of his music
(Continued on page 15)

The Game Looks Like Latest G-Unit Winner

BY GAIL MITCHELL

He started rapping less than four years ago, but the Game is already positioned to become one of 2005's early breakout acts.

The 25-year-old's status can be attributed to the year-long buzz surrounding his forthcoming Aftermath/G-Unit/Interscope album debut, "The Documentary." Created under the enviable stewardship of rap pioneer Dr. Dre, it comes out Jan. 18.

The album boasts the chart-climbing single "How We Do," featuring 50 Cent. The track stands at No. 6 on the Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Singles & Tracks chart and at No. 11 on The Billboard Hot 100. Adding to the buzz is the Game's pre-Aftermath album,

"Untold Story," on Get Low, which sits at No. 23 on Top Independent Albums. There's also his profile-raising appearance on the recent TV campaign for Boost Mobile, "The Anthem," co-starring two hip-hop heavyweights: Kanye West and Ludacris.

"The Game has a good buzz going. His two street singles, 'Westside Story' and 'How We Do,' have set him up to have a successful first week," Saeed Crumpler says. The urban buyer for music store Rasputin's in the Bay Area, projects that "The Documentary" will log somewhere between 200,000-300,000 units its first week.

"People are going to be shocked," Crumpler adds. "We haven't seen a new West Coast artist do the type of numbers I think Game will do in a long time."

No one is more shocked at his prospects for success than the Game himself. Three years after signing with Dr. Dre's Aftermath, the Compton, Calif., native (aka Jayceon Taylor) says he still has to "ground himself" when he gets in the studio with the legend he calls his mentor, teacher and boss.

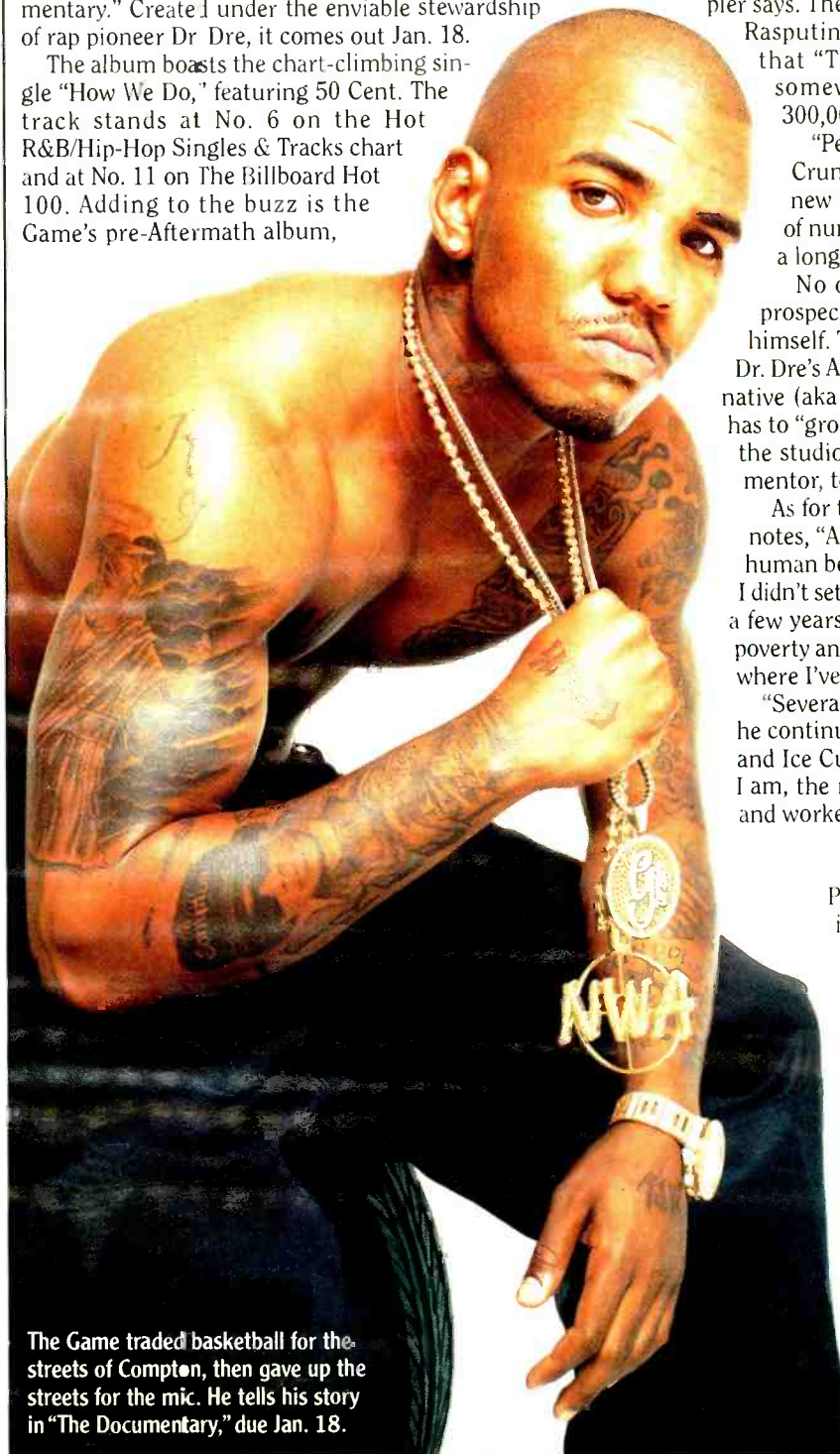
As for the attendant buzz, the Game notes, "At the end of the day, I'm just a human being, living up to expectations I didn't set myself. I've only been rapping a few years. That's not a long way from poverty and struggle; I haven't forgotten where I've been to get to this interview."

"Several times I saw myself quitting," he continues. "I saw legends like Rakim and Ice Cube fall off the label, and here I am, the new kid. But I stayed humble and worked it out."

HARD-KNOCK LIFE

Perhaps it's fate that the Game is partnered with one of his major musical influences. The neophyte rapper's hard-knock life mirrors that of two other successful Dr. Dre protégés: Eminem and 50 Cent.

Nicknamed by his late grandmother because he was game for anything, the rapper spent third through ninth grade in a foster home. Once he was living with his mother again, Game began running with his older, gang-member brother. A college basketball scholarship based on the 6'4" artist's prowess
(Continued on page 46)



The Game traded basketball for the streets of Compton, then gave up the streets for the mic. He tells his story in "The Documentary," due Jan. 18.

62nd Golden Globes Recognize Musicals

It's the season for major awards shows, and this year's Golden Globe Awards (presented by the **Hollywood Foreign Press Assn.**) have taken significant notice of music-oriented films.

The **Warner Bros. Pictures** musical "The Phantom of the Opera" landed three nominations: best motion picture (musical or comedy), best original song for "Learn to Be Lonely" and best actress in a motion picture (musical or comedy) for **Emmy Rossum**.

The category of best actor in a motion picture (musical or comedy) is dominated this year by actors in musical biopics. **Kevin Spacey** was

nominated for his starring role in **Lions Gate Films'** **Bobby Darin** film, "Beyond the Sea." **Kevin Kline** earned a nod for his portrayal of **Cole Porter** in "De-Lovely," **MGM's** musical biography of the legendary songwriter; **Ashley Judd** is up for best actress for her performance as Porter's wife, **Linda**. And **Jamie Foxx** is nominated for his leading role in **Universal Pictures'** homage to **Ray Charles**, "Ray." The movie is also up for best motion picture (musical or comedy).

The following are the Golden Globe nominations in the music categories:

Best original score, motion picture: **Clint Eastwood**, "Million Dollar Baby"; **Jan A.P. Kaczmarek**, "Finding Neverland"; **Rolfe Kent**, "Sideways"; **Howard Shore**, "The Aviator"; and **Hans Zimmer**, "Spanglish."

Best original song, motion picture: "Accidentally in Love" from "Shrek 2," music and lyrics by **Adam Duritz**, **Dan Vickery**, **David Immergluck**, **Matthew Malley** and **David Bryson**; "Believe" from "The Polar Express," music and lyrics by **Glen Ballard** and **Alan Silvestri**; "Learn to Be Lonely" from "The Phantom of the Opera," music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber** and lyrics by **Charles Hart**; "Million Voices" from "Hotel Rwanda," music by **Wyclef Jean**, **Jerry**

"Wonder" **Duplessis** and **Andrea Guerra**, and lyrics by **Jean**; and "Old Habits Die Hard" from "Alfie," music and lyrics by **Mick Jagger** and **Dave Stewart**.

The 62nd annual ceremony will be held Jan. 16 at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif., televised by NBC. A complete list of nominees can be found at hfpa.org.

SOUNDTRACK

ROUNDUP: On Jan. 11, **Capitol Records** releases the "Coach Carter" soundtrack. The 14 new songs, include the first single, "Hope," from **Twista Featuring Faith Evans**, and second single, "All Night Long" from **Red Café**. **Kanye West**, **Malik Uesef** and **Common** teamed for "Wouldn't You Like to Ride." **Ciara**, **Fabulous** and **Chingy** also appear.

MTV Films/Paramount Pictures releases the high-school basketball drama "Coach Carter" Jan. 14. The movie stars **Samuel L. Jackson** and features **Ashanti** making her big-screen acting debut.

The 15-song soundtrack to

"Elektra," due Jan. 11 on **Wind-up Records**, features several new tracks, including **Evanescence's** "Breathe No More," **Jet's** "Hey Kids," **Taking Back Sunday's**

Movies & Music

By **Carla Hay**
chay@billboard.com



MUSIC AT SUNDANCE: The Sundance Film Festival usually has a number of music-oriented events, and this year is no exception. The 2005 festival takes place Jan. 20-30 in Park City, Utah.

On Jan. 26 at the Kimball Art Center's Sundance House, **BMI** will host a director/composer roundtable titled "Music & Film: The Creative Process." The panelists are composers **Alexandre Desplat**, **George Clinton**, Golden Globe-nominated **Rolfe Kent**, **Michael Bacon**, **Aaron Zigman**, **Ed Shearmur**, **Peter Golub**, **Walter Werzowa** and **BT**, and directors **Kevin Bacon**, **Melissa Painter**, **Richard Shepard**, **Jeff Frenze** and **Rodrigo Garcia**.

Music documentaries will include "New York Doll," about the late **Arthur Kane**, and "The Devil and Daniel Johnston." There will also be a slew of artists performing at showcases and parties. For Web information: festival.sundance.org/2005.

IN BRIEF: **MTV Films/Paramount Pictures** has inked a development deal with **Mötley Crüe** to do a biopic based on the band's 2002 autobiography "The Dirt" . . . **20th Century Fox** has signed **Snoop Dogg** to be the star and executive producer of a feature film with the working title "Coach Snoop," based on his real-life experiences coaching his son's football team.



Photo: Nicolas Goode

FOXX: GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINEE

Soweto Choir Brings S. African Gospel To U.S.

Gospel music has always been fueled by great choirs, and though names like **Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir** and **Mississippi Mass Choir** are legendary, the United States is not the only country to produce such great musical traditions. Stateside audiences will soon become familiar with the considerable talents of the **Soweto Gospel Choir**.

This month the South African group embarks on a 35-city North American tour supporting its American debut, "Voices From Heaven," on **Shanachie Entertainment**. The tour kicks off Jan. 28 in Gainesville, Fla., and concludes March 26 in Vancouver.

The Soweto Gospel Choir was formed in 2002 by its musical director, **David Mulovhedzi**. "We ended up with 34 very good members with very good voices," he says. "The first tour was Australia and New Zealand in April 2003. The venue that stands out most in my mind is the Sydney Opera House. It was just wonderful."

The choir's profile in its native land increased in November 2003 when **Nelson Mandela** launched a worldwide campaign to raise awareness of the impact of AIDS in Africa and invited the group to perform along with **Bono**, **Queen**, **Peter Gabriel**,

Jimmy Cliff and **Eurythmics**.

Mulovhedzi says the choir recorded its first album to have something to sell during the Aus-

tralia/New Zealand tour. "We perform most of the songs from the very same CD, and it's selling well and it already has made its mark," he says of "Voices From Heaven," which originally came out in South Africa and Australia in 2003.

In The Spirit
 By **Deborah Evans Price**
dprice@billboard.com



tralia/New Zealand tour. "We perform most of the songs from the very same CD, and it's selling well and it already has made its mark," he says of "Voices From Heaven," which originally came out in South Africa and Australia in 2003.

"Blessed" followed in 2004. "Our goal in recording is to reach out to the outside world," Mulovhedzi says.

The choir has also performed in Germany, Singapore and the United Kingdom. Mulovhedzi says touring North America has always been a goal.

"The whole choir is excited about

performing in the States, because we are bringing our traditional gospel," he says. "We as Africans are here to thank God for all the wonderful things he does for us. We have got different ways of doing that, because we sing and we beat drums, and [there is] dancing. When people come watch our music, they'll enjoy it, because there's a lot of action within the music itself."

Mulovhedzi says South Africa's **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** has helped pave the way for his choir. "We respect them and love them a lot," he says. "They have opened doors for most of the choral groups throughout the world."

The Soweto Gospel Choir is using those open doors to help others. It recently launched its own charity in association with **Nkosi's Haven**, an AIDS care project named for **Nkosi Johnson**, an 11-year-old AIDS victim who addressed the United Nations international AIDS conference.

When someone passed the choir's

music to **Shanachie GM Randall Grass**, he was immediately impressed. "I listened and obviously heard the quality of the music. Then I saw that they had a 35-city tour outlined for the U.S.," Grass says of the **IMG Artists**-booked outing. "Not only were the number of cities impressive, but so were the kind of places that they were playing for an artist who hadn't had an album out here yet."

Shanachie already had experience with South African music, as the label has released many recordings, including those by **Ladysmith Black Mambazo**, in the United States. "I feel some of the same excitement that I did when we first released

Ladysmith," Grass says.

The plan is to release "Voices From Heaven" first (on Jan. 25), then issue "Blessed" next year.

"We're not reinventing the wheel here in the beginning because, happily enough, there's a lot to work with," Grass says. The label will target world music and eclectic noncommercial stations. A three-song sampler will be sent to gospel radio.

Grass sees a broad audience for the Soweto Gospel Choir. "The shows have great costumes and dance. A lot of people don't realize dance is a part of church services in many parts of Africa. Some people in America might see that and say, 'It's show business,' but no, it's their worship. There are many dimensions. It's not just people standing there singing. It's the whole pagentry of it and all the emotion and energy."



MULOVHEDZI: SOUTH AFRICAN SPIRIT

ON THE ROAD: In celebration of Black History Month, **Yolanda Adams**, **Martha Munizzi**, **Juanita Bynum**, **Kelly Price**, **Rizen** and **Sheila E.** hit the road Feb. 1 on the **Sisters in the Spirit** tour. The 21-city concert series kicks off in Columbus, Ohio. The tour is being promoted by **Al Wash**, who presented the Hopeville tour.

Yundi Li's Fortunes Rise With Hometown Boom

Yundi Li is a pianist whose star is definitely on the rise.

His eloquent playing has won accolades around the world, including first prize at 2000's International Chopin Competition—the first time in 15 years that judges deemed any player worthy of a first prize.

People outside the world of classical music are also beginning to take note. Along with such athletic superheroes as Lance Armstrong and Serena Williams, the 22-year-old Li was featured in Nike's "You're Faster Than You

"Ever since my family and I moved there in 1995, the city and the school at which I studied gave

Classical Score™

By Anastasia Tsioulcas
atsioulcas@billboard.com



me a lot of support and space to let my talent and art grow," he says. "I won the Chopin competition because of them."

Li's success and the region's growing wealth have spurred the city to fashion itself as a cultural destination. "Because of the city's economic achievements, many families now have money to buy pianos and afford lessons for their children, and parents encourage their children to be like me," he observes. "Shenzhen itself now wants to be known as 'Piano City.'"

To that end, Li says, "the city recently built a new concert hall, and they are making plans to begin hosting their own international piano competition."

Like Lang Lang—the other major young male Chinese pianist on today's touring circuit—Li is signed to Deutsche Grammophon, which is releasing his recording of Chopin scherzos and impromptus Jan. 11. While Li is particularly well-known for his affinity for Chopin and Liszt, his recording schedule is seeing him branch out from the Romantics.

"I'm spending more time now with Beethoven and Mozart as well as Prokofiev and Ravel," Li says, noting that his next DG project will include Mozart's Piano Sonata in C Major, K. 330 and the Mozart Piano Sonata in B-Flat

Major, K. 570, recorded live at the Musikverein in Vienna.

Li says that sitting at the piano is only one part of his approach to shaping his artistic ideas. "I try to keep half the year for public performances and recording, and the other half for study," Li says.

That study, he says, can take him far away from the written score.

"For Chopin, for instance," the pianist explains, "Life and music are about so many interesting things: his passion for his culture and his native country, and his love affair with George Sand, for example. So I read about that, and I read history books and biographies too. I also enjoy reading Shakespeare and psychology: It keeps one's mind developed and also contributes to better music-making."

BERLIN COMES TO NEWYORK: Conductor Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic's inventive outreach programs in Berlin are coming to the United States via 57th Street in New York. Carnegie Hall will host the ensemble in its new Orchestra Residency Project, slated to begin in November 2007. The program will include concerts at Carnegie, community concerts, school programs and teaching/coaching sessions throughout New York's five boroughs.

There will also be a NYC residency by the Venezuelan Youth Orchestra (a group mentored by the Berlin Philharmonic) and a dance project for local students, in which young people from underserved communities with little to no dance experience will create and perform an original production of Stravinsky's ballet "Rite of Spring."

NEW PARTNERSHIP: The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and conductor Robert Spano recently announced a two-year collaboration with Massachusetts-based Argentine composer Osvaldo Golijov. The partnership includes two recordings for Deutsche Grammophon.

The first album, recorded in November 2004, offers two of Golijov's works: "Oceana," a cantata based on a poem by Pablo Neruda featuring Brazilian vocalist Luciana Souza, and "Last Round," an homage to fellow Argentine Astor Piazzolla.

The second recording, to be made this coming November, will be of Golijov's one-act opera "Ainadamar," a depiction of the final days in the life of poet/playwright Federico Garcia Lorca featuring soprano Dawn Upshaw, and Golijov's "Three Songs," also with Upshaw. The two recordings are tentatively scheduled for release in 2006.



LI: HOMETOWN WANTS TO BE 'PIANO CITY'

Think" ad campaign, which aired internationally during the 2004 Summer Olympics.

Unlike many other artists of his generation whose passions lie far outside mainstream culture, Li's popularity in his native China rivals that of any rock star, particularly in his hometown, the boomtown city of Shenzhen.

"Shenzhen is young," notes Li, who says that his hometown has grown from nothing into a major industrial port with a population of more than 7 million during the course of only a few years.

The Beat

Continued from page 13

reaching more people, Urban says, "I'm not very open to changing my music to fit other formats. I like doing what I do, and it fits best in country radio. If mainstream radio allowed me to leave my thing with banjos and mandolins on it, then that would be good. 'You'll Think of Me' didn't have those instruments on it anyway, so we didn't have to change anything."

GOING TO THE DOGS: Expect Gloria Estefan's debut as a children's book author to come in November. HarperCollins has commissioned her to write a story based on her bulldog, Noelle.

But Estefan isn't stepping away from music: The children's book will include an accompanying song.

Estefan is already thinking about her next album, the last under her current Epic contract. "I already have in mind what I want to do," she says, "but I usually wait at least a couple of years between albums." Her last studio album was 2003's "Unwrapped."

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Prelude To Chaos Is Well-Organized

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Though the new outing that Vans Warped tour founder Kevin Lyman is launching this February is called Taste of Chaos, the event is moving forward like a well-oiled machine.

"To get a second year on this project, we have to have at least 3,000 people per market," Lyman says. "I think we will do more."

Taste of Chaos will take place at indoor venues and feature such hard rock acts as the Used, My Chemical Romance, Killswitch Engage and Senses Fail. There will also be sponsored booths and activities prior to each show. Major partners include Nintendo, MySpace and Samsung.

The tour is promoted by a number of

companies including Clear Channel Entertainment, Concerts East and Fantasma Productions.

Early sales indicate that Taste of Chaos is already on track to be a success. As of mid-December, Lyman says that it is "selling very much like a Warped show. The highlight is Philadelphia. We sold more than 1,800 tickets [at the Tweeter Center] the first weekend."

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Lyman, who is organizing Taste of Chaos with John Reese, president of Freeze Artist Management, and Darryl Eaton, booking agent for Creative Artists Agency, says that he had been looking for a new concept that could emulate the highly successful Vans Warped tour.

Warped has been bringing together punk rock acts at outdoor venues each summer for the past 10 years. According to Lyman, Warped's 10th anniversary tour in 2004 was the event's most successful ever, selling 30% more than any previous year with more than 650,000 tickets moved.

"We'd been talking about doing something in the winter time, leaning toward heavier artists," Lyman says. "Everyone wants to start a concept tour, but the artists don't want to give something up to move the project forward. They want huge guarantees. They want to get paid top dollar."

Reese, who manages the Used, says that ultimately, bands signed on with the tour because of the opportunity to reach larger crowds.

"Normally, these acts might be playing 800- to 3,000-seat clubs, and now they get to play in front of many more people," he notes. "We also make the show more of an event."

Negotiating with venues, which will range in capacity from about 3,000 to 10,000 for the tour, proved easier than expected because of the NHL strike.

"Buildings were more available," Lyman says. "Being able to put the routing together was easier. The buildings need to keep busy. We also had a low guarantee, maybe the lowest they had seen for some time."

Many venues also say that a festival-style event is highly desirable during the winter.

Gary Wyse, GM for the Toledo (Ohio) Sports Arena, says that Taste of Chaos is "unique to the cooler weather season. I would expect that it is a won-

derful alternative to being outside under 90-degree heat."

Wyse says that about 500 tickets moved during Taste of Chaos' on-sale weekend. The Toledo Sports Arena seats between 5,200 and 7,500.

Howard Jones, vocalist for Grammy Award-nominated Killswitch Engage, agrees that playing indoors is a plus. "Everyone doesn't have to endure really bad weather, and we can actually focus on having a good time and make sure that everyone that comes has a good time," Jones says. "Hopefully we can make some sort of impact."

Additionally, the event's low price, between \$20 and \$25 per ticket, is expected to generate steady sales leading up to each show.

"Our ticket price is definitely a good value," Eaton says. "A lot of the counts from our first weekend were double what some of the Warped tour counts were going on sale, and we're playing much smaller venues. We are hoping we blow it up in a few markets."

KEEP IT SIMPLE

A key idea in organizing Taste of Chaos was to "keep production simple," Lyman says.

Equipment will take up just two trucks, and setup will be minimal.

"We'll do an 11 a.m. load-in and open for a 5 p.m. concourse," Lyman says. "The stage will look nice but not over the top. We have just one backdrop, which eliminates extra rigging. Kids know these bands, and they will get involved in the show. They don't need the bells and lights.

They will be moshing and having a good time anyway."

The good time will begin two hours prior to the show, when attendees can explore a range of sponsored activities. Nintendo, for example, will host booths and gaming kiosks. MySpace, a friendship and dating Web site, is also organizing a pre-show featuring acoustic acts, including local unsigned artists.

Other promotional partners include cable channel the Fuse, which will run more than 500 Taste of Chaos spots, and Revolver magazine, which will do a 10-page preview.

Additionally, Best Buy will do an end-cap promotion involving participating artists, and a merchandise promotion will be held at retailer Hot Topic.

"The labels are saying, 'Wow.' We are bringing a lot of opportunities to the bands," Lyman says.

Eaton notes that the reputation of Warped helped garner many of these sponsors.

"We tried to find sponsorship and marketing partners that wanted to work with us, rather than just throw up banners," Eaton says. "With this infield of attractions, there will be flow and movement of fans and a lot of different things for people to do."

All of the organizers are hoping the show will go on again next year.

Eaton notes, "We built the thing to last. It's so much work to launch one of these events, laying the groundwork, getting media, getting sponsors to underwrite the show. Hopefully, it lasts long enough to become a cross-generational kind of event."



Oz Winery Tours Have Grape Expectations

BY CHRISTIE ELIEZER

MELBOURNE, Australia—Australian wineries have used classical, jazz and adult-oriented-rock concerts to draw a 40- to 60-year-old demographic since 1984.

But in the past year, the circuit has expanded to reach younger music fans and include more international acts. The shows are now incorporated into winery tours and attract sponsorship dollars.

Much of the growth stems from the A Day on the Green shows, which Roundhouse Entertainment introduced in 2001.

Based in Melbourne as part of Michael Gudinski's empire (which includes Frontier Touring and Premier Harbour agency), Roundhouse is run by former Premier booker Mick Newton and wife Anthea, formerly a Frontier publicist. Roundhouse works exclusively with winery shows.

"We're now in our 40s," Anthea says. "We realized there was an audience out there like us, who still liked to listen to live music but not necessarily in pubs or in festivals."

Roundhouse began by tapping such veteran Aussie acts as Renee Geyer and Stephen Cummings, who drew up to 2,000 people per show.

Last year, they tested their first international artist, Jackson Browne.

Since then, Elvis Costello, Boz Scaggs, Rod Stewart, Bryan Adams and Norah Jones have included ADOTG shows in their tours, drawing up to 6,000 people who pay between \$40 Australian (\$31) to \$150 Australian (\$117) per ticket.

Booking Jewel this year was a turning point. She drew younger crowds, predominantly in their 30s. Of the 27 ADOTG shows to be held in the current summer season, among them are such recent chart makers as Britain's Jamie Cullum and Australia's Pete Murray, Missy Higgins and the Waifs.

Mick says, "Wineries tell us that their weekday traffic is not just the over-40s, that they are also getting younger people with credit cards and BMWs who are interested in wines. The wineries are happy that we're also skewing toward this age group."

Anthea emphasizes that the right acts are still the key. "I can't see us booking punk, electronica or teen pop acts."

Country singer Troy Cassar-Daley finds winery crowds supportive. "At these shows, you transcend all genres," he observes.

Roundhouse now presents events at 15 wineries around the country. After releasing a branded CD this year, it intends to release a ADOTG DVD and is contemplating an entry into the New Zealand market.

Increasingly, the wineries are realizing such shows achieve more than boosting wine sales. "They increase our brand recognition and make us stand out from other wineries," says Helmut Knoecsny of Rochford Winery.

Wine sales are "significant, on the day of the concerts," says Adrian Bohm, managing director of Adrian Bohm Presents, who began

presenting high-end winery shows in the Barossa in South Australia and the Hunter Valley outside Sydney in 1996.

Despite their increasing popularity, Bohm warns that such shows are high-cost (toilets, seating, staging and fencing have to be brought in) and high-risk, with low margins and a heavy reliance on repeat business.

"It'd be easier to [play] an entertainment center in a major city," Bohm says. He adds that production costs alone can be \$300,000 Australian (\$230,000) to \$400,000 Australian (\$312,000) before artists' fees are included.

Bohm believes that winery shows need to remain special events. He uses such veteran talents as Stewart, Cliff Richard, Tony Bennett, Julio Iglesias, Michael Crawford and Shirley Bassey, often with a 60-piece orchestra.

A "Barossa Under the Stars" concert with Australian singer John Farnham drew 17,000 over two nights.

Bohm makes the day a 12-hour event, with extra entertainment and mini-villages of market stalls. The capacity of 7,000-9,000 tickets shifts each time, with "seats only" tickets upwards from \$98 Australian (\$76) to \$175 Australian (\$136) and travel and accommodations packages up to \$2,000 Australian (\$1,570).



ARTIST(S)	VENUE/ DATE	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ATTENDANCE/ CAPACITY	PROMOTER
CELINE DION	The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas Dec. 28-Jan. 1	\$2,831,105 \$225/\$175/\$127.50/\$87.50	20,532 five sellouts	Concerts West/AEG Live
RONAN KEATING, PICTUREHOUSE	Manchester Evening News Arena, Manchester, England Dec. 19	\$529,244 (\$272,525) \$48.55/\$24.28	11,277 12,000	3A Entertainment, Jack Utsick Presents
RONAN KEATING, PICTUREHOUSE	National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, England Dec. 17	\$452,450 (\$234,175) \$48.30/\$24.15	9,661 10,400	3A Entertainment, Jack Utsick Presents
RONAN KEATING, PICTUREHOUSE	Wembley Arena, London Dec. 22	\$403,362 (\$209,191) \$51.10/\$24.10	9,222 10,100	3A Entertainment, Jack Utsick Presents
LIONEL RICHIE	Aladdin Theatre for the Performing Arts, Las Vegas Dec. 31	\$391,119 \$125/\$95/\$65/\$45	5,206 7,000	Evening Star Productions
RONAN KEATING, PICTUREHOUSE	Hallam FM Arena, Sheffield, England Dec. 16	\$375,222 (\$193,075) \$48.59/\$24.29	8,006 8,500	3A Entertainment, Jack Utsick Presents
SARAH BRIGHTMAN	MGM Grand Garden, Las Vegas Nov. 20	\$373,118 \$131.25/\$52.50	3,776 5,245	Clear Channel Entertainment
VICENTE FERNANDEZ, AZUCENA	American Airlines Arena, Miami Nov. 20	\$372,290 \$87.50/\$47.50	4,584 10,600	Hauser Entertainment, Consultants Marketing Network
HFSMAS HOLIDAY NUTCRACKER: VELVET REVOLVER, GOOD CHARLOTTE, THE KILLERS, CHEVELLE, JIMMY EAT WORLD & OTHERS	Patriot Center, Fairfax, Va. Dec. 4	\$372,248 \$58/\$48	7,286 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
RONAN KEATING, PICTUREHOUSE	Metro Radio Arena, Newcastle upon Tyne, England Dec. 12	\$368,101 (\$192,200) \$47.88/\$23.94	7,688 7,800	3A Entertainment, Jack Utsick Presents
MAROONS, BIG CITY ROCK	Aladdin Theatre for the Performing Arts, Las Vegas Jan. 1	\$362,451 \$95/\$65/\$45/\$35	6,533 7,000	Evening Star Productions
NIGHT OF THE PROMS: IL NOVECENTO ORCHESTRA, JOE COCKER, SHAGGY, ROGER HODGSON, DJ BOBO, FINE FLEUR CHOIR, JOHN MILES	Messehalle, Erfurt, Germany Dec. 7	\$358,104 (267,222 Euros) \$69.69/\$62.98/\$52.26	5,771 sellout	PSE Germany
MARTINA McBRIDE	Sovereign Center, Reading, Pa. Dec. 20	\$357,678 \$59.50/\$49.50	6,476 6,686	Police Productions
R.E.M.	McCaw Hall, Seattle, Wash. Nov. 19-20	\$356,459 \$75/\$59.50/\$49.50/\$39.50	5,646 two sellouts	House of Blues Concerts
THE TRAGICALLY HIP, JOEL PLASKETT EMERGENCY	MTS Centre, Winnipeg, Man. Nov. 23	\$352,419 (\$418,108 Canadian) \$38.35/\$29.92	9,836 11,292	House of Blues Canada
TED NUGENT, DIRTY AMERICANS	Palace of Auburn Hills, Auburn Hills, Mich. Dec. 29	\$350,605 \$45/\$20	11,836 13,870	Palace Sports & Entertainment
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Providence Performing Arts Center, Providence, R.I. Nov. 27	\$320,774 \$81/\$29	6,128 two sellouts	Clear Channel Entertainment
STING	Messehalle, Friedrichshafen, Germany Nov. 28	\$311,013 (233,721 Euros) \$75.85/\$31.94	5,061 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment, Marek Lieberberg Konzertagentur
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Tacoma Dome, Tacoma, Wash. Dec. 10	\$309,910 \$85/\$59.50/\$49.50/\$39.50	5,490 8,537	House of Blues Concerts
G3: JOE SATRIANI, STEVE VAI, ROBERT FRIPP	Auditorio Nacional, Mexico City Nov. 30	\$309,540 (3,528,750 pesos) \$78.95/\$17.54	9,152 9,538	OCESA Presents
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Hartford Civic Center, Hartford, Conn. Nov. 26	\$288,824 \$47/\$27	7,191 11,655	Clear Channel Entertainment
MICHAEL W. SMITH, POINT OF GRACE, THE KATINAS	Van Andel Arena, Grand Rapids, Mich. Dec. 8	\$288,510 \$47/\$28	9,546 10,183	Premier Productions
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Rose Garden, Portland, Ore. Nov. 27	\$287,115 \$93.50/\$85/\$35	6,160 10,800	J&S Touring, AEG Live
NORAH JONES	Auditorio Nacional, Mexico City Dec. 1	\$286,580 (3,209,700 pesos) \$66.96/\$17.86	9,563 sellout	OCESA Presents
SCORPIONS	Coliseo de Puerto Rico José Miguel Agrelot, Hato Rey, P.R. Dec. 10	\$286,275 \$85/\$45	4,073 8,126	Dueño Palmer Concerts
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Pepsi Center, Denver Dec. 7	\$285,084 \$51/\$43.50/\$36	6,449 9,377	House of Blues Concerts
DOLLY PARTON, THE GRASCALS	The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas Dec. 7	\$284,695 \$91/\$77/\$68/\$59	3,979 sellout	Caesars Palace, Moore Entertainment, Concerts West/AEG Live
RONAN KEATING, PICTUREHOUSE	Nottingham Arena, Nottingham, England Dec. 23	\$283,445 (\$148,075) \$47.86/\$23.93	6,223 9,000	3A Entertainment, Jack Utsick Presents
MARTINA McBRIDE	Blue Cross Arena, Rochester, N.Y. Dec. 18	\$283,000 \$50/\$40	6,000 10,712	Police Productions
YANNI	NOKIA Theatre, Grand Prairie, Texas Dec. 2	\$282,248 \$83/\$47.50	3,786 4,654	Danny O'Donovan Presents, Concerts West/AEG Live
RASCAL FLATTS, CHRIS CAGLE, JULIE ROBERTS	Xcel Energy Center, St. Paul, Minn. Nov. 20	\$280,451 \$27.75/\$24.75	7,726 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
RASCAL FLATTS, CHRIS CAGLE, JULIE ROBERTS	Ford Center, Oklahoma City Dec. 10	\$280,073 \$34.75/\$27.75	8,167 sellout	Clear Channel Entertainment
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Blue Cross Arena, Rochester, N.Y. Dec. 22	\$275,000 \$42.50/\$32.50	7,000 8,048	Clear Channel Entertainment
MANNHEIM STEAMROLLER	Bismarck Civic Center, Bismarck, N.D. Nov. 21	\$273,040 \$98/\$29	4,768 5,296	MetraPark
TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA	Bradley Center, Milwaukee Dec. 2	\$271,325 \$45/\$27.50	7,973 13,921	Clear Channel Entertainment

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Krauss Cuts Deal With Cracker Barrel

A sponsorship deal between Alison Krauss + Union Station and Cracker Barrel Old Country Store will link the Lebanon, Tenn.-based restaurant chain with the bluegrass star and company for all of 2005.

First tipped on billboard.biz Dec. 9, the alliance, which industry sources value in the high six figures, is for the group's Lonely Runs Both Ways tour, which begins Jan. 12 at the Chattanooga (Tenn.) Memorial Auditorium.

The deal was brokered by AKUS manager Denise Stiff, Cracker Barrel VP of marketing Chris Tomasso and Marcie Allen Cardwell, president of live event marketing firm MAC Presents.

Stiff says much of the money will be put into tour production, including a year-long bus lease. AKUS' only other major sponsorship has been with Martha White Flour.

a multi-year sponsorship deal with the Opry, of which Krauss is a member.

Additional elements of the deal include a Cracker Barrel wrap for the tour bus, consumer Web site and Internet promotions, meet-

On The Road™
By Ray Waddell
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and-greets, promotional tickets, inclusion in TV and print promotions, venue signage and on-site marketing opportunities at all venues hosting performances.

AKUS is booked by Keith Case & Associates. Stiff says AKUS will work with several promoters in 2005, but many dates go to Knoxville, Tenn.-based A.C. Entertainment and Nashville-based Outback Concerts.

"Both of these companies understand this music and that our audience isn't necessarily best-reached through just mainstream country music advertising," Stiff says.

HOT WINTER TOUR: Epic hard rock band Chevelle will headline this year's Winterfresh SnoCore tour presented by MTV2. The trio will top a lineup that features Helmet, Crossfade, Future Leaders of the World and Strata. The 40-date trek begins Jan. 22 at 8150 in Vail, Colo. Darryl Eaton at Creative Artists Agency books Chevelle.

DOLLY RAMA: Dolly Parton's Hello, I'm Dolly tour wrapped in December with a gross of nearly \$5 million. The tour was produced nationwide by Steve Moore's Moore Entertainment (Billboard, Oct. 2, 2004) and included many Arena Network Theatre Group in-house promotes.

Based on the tour's success, it is likely that Parton will take the elaborate production out again this year. "We'll evaluate it, see what people take to and what they don't take to," Parton told Billboard in an earlier interview. "I'm an entertainer and a singer, and I love the audience and being onstage. So the next few years I want to go back on the road before I'm too old to do it."



KRAUSS: GOING ON THE ROAD

"This is a natural fit with a product we genuinely love," Stiff tells On The Road, adding that the deal is a rare commercial endorsement for the group. "We're very selective."

Tomasso adds, "Given the mutual admiration, it didn't take long to come to terms. I think the demographics of our audiences match up very well, and this is a great complement to our successful heritage music series."

The tour supports AKUS' new Rounder release, "Lonely Runs Both Ways," and could include as many as 100 dates during the course of 2005.

As part of the sponsorship, AKUS (featuring Jerry Douglas) will perform at least four times this year at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. Cracker Barrel has

Buzz Acts Ready For 2005 Breakthrough

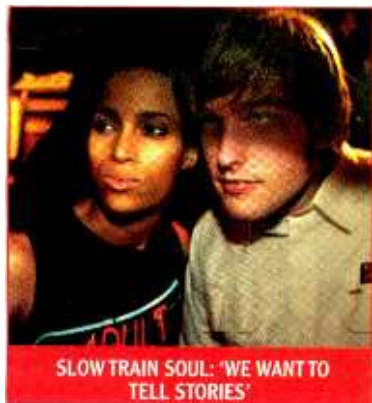
BY GAIL MITCHELL

Some of the biggest names in R&B and hip-hop released albums during fourth-quarter 2004. Destiny's Child, Eminem, Ludacris, 2Pac, Nas, Snoop Dogg and Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz are among the acts that provided end of the year fireworks.

Outside that superstar arena, however, awaits a host of diverse up-and-coming R&B/hip-hop acts. And though they may not be household names, a few sparked some buzz in 2004 and deserve honorable mentions now that the holiday dust has settled. We will spotlight several of these acts here and in the next issue.

SLOW TRAIN SOUL

"Soulectro" is a term coined to describe the music of Anglo-Danish duo Slow Train Soul. Singer/songwriter Lady Z (a.k.a. Michelle Nichol) and keyboardist/producer Morten Varano bowed in the United States last September with first album "Illegal Cargo" on Tommy Boy. Initially released in Europe a year ago, "Illegal Cargo" sports the singles "Naturally" and "Black of Night."

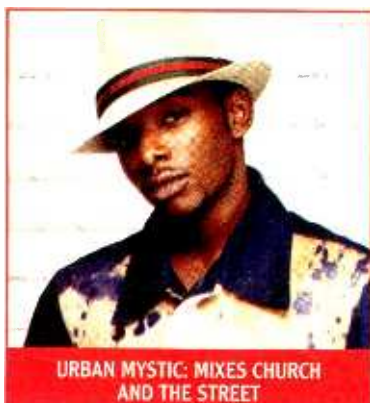


SLOW TRAIN SOUL: 'WE WANT TO TELL STORIES'

Pairing live and electronic instruments, the album's warm, atmospheric sound reveals the 3-year-old duo's love of '60s and '70s music, not to mention a range of artistic influences, from Billie Holiday, Jill Scott and Terry Callier to Fela Kuti, the Roots, D'Angelo and Jimi Hendrix.

"This is warm electronica," says Trinidad-born, London-bred Lady Z. With a background in jazz and performance poetry, she has been described as Grace Jones meets Ella Fitzgerald.

"It's not just about the clicks and beats," Lady Z says. "It's about a whole journey."



URBAN MYSTIC: MIXES CHURCH AND THE STREET

"We want to tell stories," adds Varano, who is based in Copenhagen. A classically trained pianist, he has produced electronica and dance music.

"We come from completely different backgrounds but [have] the same view of life," Varano says. "The strength of

what we're doing comes from that."

Building fans through a series of live dates stateside and internationally (including the Roskilde Festival in Denmark with Franz Ferdinand), Slow Train Soul began recording its sophomore set last month.

URBAN MYSTIC

With his retro leanings, Urban Mystic not surprisingly conjures images of such past soul masters as Sam Cooke and Bobby Womack. But the 20-year-old incorporates a contemporary edge that enhances the old-school undercurrent on his promising debut.

"Ghetto Revelations" entered the Top R&B/Hip-Hop Albums chart at No. 50 following its Nov. 30 release. It's the first album issued by SoBe Entertainment/Warner Bros.

Born Brandon Williams in Ft. Laud-

erdale, Fla., Urban Mystic comes by his R&B/gospel sound naturally. The son of a minister and a church organist, he began working toward a professional music career at 13.

His childhood experience inspired "Ghetto Revelations," Urban Mystic says. "I'm from the 'hood, while the 'revelations' part of the title speaks to my spiritual background. I still sing in the church."

For the album, he worked with such producers as Eddie F., Troy Taylor and El DeBarge (who guests on "Mystic's Spot"). The KayGee-produced first single "Where Were You?" helped garner Urban Mystic "next" profiles by BET and Vibe, video play on "MTV Jamz" and a performance at the Jan. 3 Orange Bowl Beach Bash with OutKast. A second single, "Long Ways," goes to radio later this month.

It's Wright Move For UMPG

Singer/songwriter/producer Betty Wright has signed with Universal Music Publishing Group. The exclusive worldwide co-publishing deal includes Wright's complete catalog.

"Betty is a true soul-music icon who has stayed relevant through the strength of her spirit," says David Renzer, chairman/CEO of UMPG.



WRIGHT: STILL CLEANING UP

"Her continued relevance is also a testament to her continuing to be an inspired writer/producer, having worked in recent years with everyone from Gloria Estefan, Enrique Iglesias and Jennifer Lopez to Joss Stone."

Wright earned her standing in R&B/pop history as an artist with the 1971 classic "Clean Up Woman" and later won a best R&B song Grammy Award for "Where Is the Love." Her list of hits also includes "Baby Sitter" and "Tonight Is the Night."

Wright also operates her own label, Ms. B. She has helped shape Stone's breakthrough projects. The current Grammy nominee for best new artist worked with Wright on her 2003 S-Curve Records EP, "The Soul Sessions," as well as her 2004 full-length debut, "Mind Body & Soul."

EW&F HEAT: Earth, Wind & Fire shows no signs of slowing down after 33 years. The group this year added another Grammy Award nomination to its plaudits. "Show Me the Way" featuring Raphael Saadiq is up for best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocals.

The venerable outfit was the centerpiece of December's inaugural Grammy Jam, organized by the Recording

Academy's Los Angeles chapter. A diverse lineup of artists/musicians, including Jill Scott, Stevie Wonder, Yolanda Adams and David Foster, performed signature EW&F songs to benefit

various music

and arts education programs. First-quarter 2005 will witness the release of EW&F's 23rd album, through Sanctuary Urban Group. "Illumination" brings together Saadiq, Jimmy Jam & Terry Lewis, Organized Noize, Vikter Duplaix and Brian McKnight, among others. In addition to "Show Me the Way," the set includes "Let Me Love You," featuring Floetry; "This Is How I Feel," with Sleepy Brown; and bonus track "The Way You Move," with Kenny G.

MUSICAL NOTES: Celebrating its fifth anniversary this month, music publishing firm Reach Global has signed several new deals: Virgin Records rapper Guerilla Black inks a worldwide publishing administration agreement for songs on his

album debut, "Guerilla City"; songwriter/producer Frank Romano (Jill Scott, Joe, Musiq) extends his Reach pact to include his entire catalog; and female rapper Remy Ma, featured on Terror Squad's "Lean Back," comes aboard. The latter song is a Grammy Award nominee for best rap performance by a duo or group.

Fine Gold Productions adds

producer management to its compilation and licensing divisions. Among the producers the company now represents are Steven "Lenky" Marsden (Sean Paul's "Get Busy"), Matthew Boykin (OutKast's "Roses"), Domingo Padilla (Fat Joe) and J. Marty (Lumidee).

Sahirah Uqdah has established SU Entertainment. Serving as a broker between producers and artists, the Los Angeles-based firm recently placed Universal Asian artist Sun with the Underdogs, Harvey Mason Jr. and Damon Thomas. The pair wrote and produced "Ends of the Earth" for Sun's new album, which will be released in the United States next month. Uqdah formerly headed artist development for the Tonos music Web site.

Rhythm & Blues

By Gail Mitchell
gmitchell@billboard.com



JANUARY 15, 2005		Billboard HOT RAP TRACKS™	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	Artist
1	2	LOVERS AND FRIENDS Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz Featuring Usher & Ludacris	1 Week At Number 1
2	1	DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT Snoop Dogg Featuring Pharrell	
3	4	DISCO INFERNO 50 Cent	
4	5	HOW WE DO The Game Featuring 50 Cent	
5	3	WONDERFUL Ja Rule Featuring R. Kelly & Ashanti	
6	6	GET BACK Ludacris	
7	8	BRING EM OUT T.I.	
8	7	KARMA Lloyd Banks Featuring Avant	
9	9	WHAT U GON' DO Lil Jon & The East Side Boyz Featuring Lil Scrappy	
10	10	U MAKE ME WANNA Jadakiss Featuring Mariah Carey	
11	11	NEW YORK Ja Rule Featuring Fat Joe & Jadakiss	
12	12	LET'S GO Trick Daddy Featuring Lil Jon & Twista	
13	17	LEAN BACK Terror Squad	
14	15	SHORTY WANNA RIDE Young Buck	
15	14	BREATHE Fabolous	
16	13	GO D.J. Lil Wayne	
17	16	OVER AND OVER Nelly Featuring Tim McGraw	
18	19	SOME CUT Trillville Featuring Cutty	
19	20	OYE MI CANTO N.O.R.E. Featuring Daddy Yankee, Nina Sky, Gem Star & Big Mato	
20	18	GASOLINA Daddy Yankee	
21	22	LET'S GET BLOWN Snoop Dogg	
22	23	U DON'T KNOW ME T.I.	
23		HUSH LL Cool J Featuring 7 Aurelius	
24	24	YOU'RE THE ONE Guerilla Black Featuring Mario Winans	
25	21	ENCORE Eminem Featuring Dr. Dre & 50 Cent	

Records with the greatest increase in audience impressions. The rap tracks audience is compiled from 90 R&B/Hip-Hop and 59 rhythmic top 40 stations which are electronically monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Songs ranked by number of audience, computed by cross-referencing exact times of airplay with Arbitron listener data. ♫ Videoclip availability. © 2005, VNU Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

Main Billboard Hot Latin Tracks chart listing 50 songs with columns for rank, title, artist, and weeks on chart.

Compiled from a national sample of airplay supplied by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems' Radio Track service. A panel of 94 stations (37 Latin Pop, 14 Tropical, 51 Regional Mexican) are electronically monitored 24 hrs. a day, 7 days a week.

Latin Pop Airplay chart listing 20 songs with columns for rank, title, artist, and weeks on chart.

Tropical Airplay chart listing 20 songs with columns for rank, title, artist, and weeks on chart.

Regional Mexican Airplay chart listing 20 songs with columns for rank, title, artist, and weeks on chart.

Christian Acts Build Following In Puerto Rico

BY IAN MALINOW MACEO

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Although urban *reggaetón* is currently dominating the Puerto Rican music market, a dramatically different kind of musical expression is also making a sales impact on the island.

Christian music is growing in popularity and commercialization and has become a bright spot in the Puerto Rican music industry.

According to local distributors, buyers and radio DJs, more than 50% of album sales on the island today are *reggaetón* titles. But at the same time, they say, major Christian acts are selling more albums today than popular merengue, salsa and even Latin rock acts.

GAINING GROUND

"Christian music has crossed over into the mainstream music market, and it has really picked up among the island's youth," says Pablo Aponte of Disco Hit Productions, one of Puerto Rico's biggest music distributors. "Two years ago I started my catalog with about 20 titles. Today, I have more than 150."

The list of rising Christian music stars in Puerto Rico also includes reggae-based group León de Judá, Abraham Velázquez, René González and Daniel Carveti.

The jump in popularity is attributed to a variety of factors, from better product and a growing Christian population to savvy marketing that has taken the music to the masses.

Of course, Puerto Rico is no stranger to sacred music. In the 1980s and 1990s, the island saw its share of relatively successful gospel artists, including Richie Ray, Bobby Cruz, Dagmar and Domingo Quiñones. But their music never really broke into the mainstream, primarily because their albums couldn't compete with the high-quality productions and powerful marketing machine of their pop counterparts.

In early 2003, however, things changed. Christian music began to carve a niche in the island's market with the release of several chart-topping albums by such acclaimed international Christian pop music singers as Jaci Velázquez, Rabito, Marcos Witt and Roberto Orellana.

"The launch of the albums by Witt and Orellana revolutionized the entire music industry in Puerto Rico last year," Aponte observes.

But the real Christian music explosion, he says, came later in 2003 when Samuel Hernández, a Puerto Rican Christian singer who releases his music on his own label, SH Productions, put out the album "Jesús Siempre Llega a Tiempo." Its single, "Levanta Tus Manos," was treated as a pop release and included a music video that went into rotation on Puerto Rico's mainstream music video channels.

"People went nuts because they had never seen a sexy *reggaetón* video or a rock video, followed by one with a religious message," Aponte says.

By May 2003, the album had notched seven consecutive weeks at

generation of Christian music singers is being heard not only because of the message but because of the way we are presenting the music to our fans," he adds.

As recently as 15 years ago, Latin Christian artists put out mostly low-budget productions, with simple arrangements and budget-conscious art and packaging.

Hernández says that today's new wave of singers is creating a product that's not only as competitive as secular albums but is marketed and promoted with solid, thought-out plans.

The efforts have paid off.

"Our section of Christian music has doubled in the past two years," says Tatiana Frangonglu, multi-media buyer for Borders Books & Music in Puerto Rico.

"Before we used to carry only about 100 [titles], while today we have more than 250."

Sam Torres, a former DJ with radio station Nueva Vida (97.7 FM), the most established Christian music station on the island, thinks radio played a big role in taking the genre to the masses.

But he also thinks that the population of Christian followers is increasing as a result of what he calls "today's global social crisis."

"The Christian community on the island is big," says Torres, a DJ for KQ-105. "And things aren't easy here. More people each day are looking to God for

answers. This explains why Christian music entered mainstream radio and how it is becoming more popular and profitable for big, multinational record labels."

The most recent example of that success is Juan Luis Guerra's album "Para Ti" (Vene/Universal), which owes a substantial chunk of its sales to Puerto Rico.

As for Hernández, although it has been more than a year since the release of his blockbuster album, he shows no signs of slowing down. In mid-December, he put out a best-of DVD, "Hemos Visto la Gloria de Dios: Conoce la Historia." He is also currently working on a new album, "Dios Siempre Tiene el Control," due in April.

"The key to success is remaining faithful to God's message, because we are living in tough times," he says.

"The rest is just making sure that you have meaningful lyrics, good arrangements and a solid marketing plan."



HERNÁNDEZ: HELPED LEAD THE CHRISTIAN EXPLOSION

No. 1 on Puerto Rico's secular music and album sales charts, becoming the first Christian music album to do so.

According to Hernández, the album has sold more than 300,000 copies in Puerto Rico alone. (Having signed a deal with Sony last year, the company now distributes Hernández's product outside of Puerto Rico.)

MESSAGE, PRESENTATION MATTER

Radio played a major role in pushing sales of Hernández's album. Pop station WKAQ (104.7 FM) San Juan was the first to play Hernández's single, but other stations quickly followed, and eventually "Levanta Tus Manos" became a Christian music anthem heard throughout Puerto Rico.

"I think I was successful because there's a need in people's lives today to turn to spirituality to help them cope with the social ills of this society," Hernández explains.

"But I also think that the new

Hed Kandi Is Sweet With Solasso Deal

Rumor has it that über-hot British label Hed Kandi is officially releasing the bootleg of the moment, **Solasso Vs. Bananarama's** "Really Saying Something." But, alas, at the present time it is just that: a rumor.

According to Hed Kandi founder and president **Mark Doyle**, the label is interested in releasing the tune. "Right now, we're investigating whether or not we can properly clear the track."

But Doyle does confirm that Solasso—aka **Justin**

Scharvona and **Andrew Galea**—has been signed to the label. "Whatever (Keep Me Guessing)" featuring **Kate Smith** is scheduled to be the act's first single for Hed Kandi, followed by "Hypnotize"



DOYLE: MAKING SOME BOOTLEGS LEGIT

featuring **Foster Child**.

Also forthcoming from Hed Kandi is "Everywhere" by **LnM Projekt Featuring Bonnie Bailey**. If you spent time in the clubs of Ibiza, Spain, last summer, you'll surely recall hearing a "remix" of a live version of **Fleetwood Mac's** "Everywhere." Well, **Lee Hallett** and **Marcus Gauntlett** (aka LnM Projekt) created this bootleg mix.

Realizing it would likely be difficult to properly license the Fleetwood Mac track, Doyle had Hallett and Gauntlett go back into the studio with **Eric Kupper** to "re-cut and replay the track properly" with new vocals from Bailey.

Providing the backing vocals is another Hed Kandi artist, **Peyton**, known to many as the food/wine expert on the British version of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy."

Peyton's full-length CD—a cross between **George Michael** and **Light House Family**—should be available in May, Doyle says. Lead single "Keep the Faith" will arrive in time for the Winter Music Conference.

Beat
Box™



By Michael Paoletta
mpaoletta@billboard.com



SPEAKING OF . . . As previously reported, the 20th anniversary of the Winter Music Conference takes place March 22-26 at the Wyndham Resort in Miami Beach.

Concurrent is the second annual M3 Summit, which runs March 23-26 at the Doubletree Surfcomber Hotel in the city. For info on M3, log on to m3summit.com.

Also, the seventh annual Ultra Music Festival is scheduled for March 26 at Bayfront Park in downtown Miami. As part of a multiyear partnership with the WMC, the UMF will serve as the conference's official closing party.

The 2005 edition of the UMF is receiving some additional manpower from **Track Entertainment**, which is a producer of the event. Track has produced concerts/festivals featuring such acts as **Velvet Revolver**, **Hoobastank**, **the Crystal Method**, **Green Day**, **Destiny's Child** and **Kanye West**.

For additional info on the UMF, visit ultramusicfestival.us.

LOVE TWIST: In need of some new aural treats from **Boy George**? Beat Box hears that George's alter ego, **the Twin**, has contributed original music to "Manhattan Heat," a gay porn video due Jan. 15 from New York-based **Lucas Entertainment**.

WISHFUL THINKING: Propaganda's **Claudia Brücken** and **Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark's Paul Humphrey** partnered last year to form **Onetwo**. The duo's debut EP, the lush and gorgeous "Item" (**There Music**), continues to delight with each listen. Tracks like "Sister" and "Signals" showcase a band that is very much living in the here and now. Now, where is the full-length album?

Bluegrass Is Greener For Lawson Band

Bluegrass superstars **Doyle Lawson & Quicksilver** have signed a multi-album recording contract with **Rounder Records**.

The group, which marked its silver anniversary last year, has won the **International Bluegrass**



FROM LEFT: DOYLE LAWSON, BARRY SCOTT AND JAMIE DAILEY

Music Assn.'s vocal group of the year award the past four years and has notched numerous Grammy and Dove award nominations.

In addition to vocalist/mandolin player Lawson, the group includes **Terry Baucom**, **Jamie Dailey** and **J.W. Stockman**.

The group's Rounder debut, "You Gotta Dig A Little Deeper," is due in March. The act, which will tour in support of the new album, formerly recorded for **SKK/Crossroads Records**.

KEEPING COUNT: Nashville-based **Compendia Music Group** has laid

off six employees in the wake of its December 2004 sale to **Sheridan Square Entertainment**. The cuts, mostly in the financial and legal areas, were positions deemed redundant with those held by staffers at Sheridan Square, owner of **Artemis Records** and **Musicrama**.

Compendia president/CEO **Michael Olsen**, who describes the layoffs as "a painful and unfortunate part of the job," says those "back-office func-

tions" will be consolidated in Sheridan Square's New York office.

Compendia now has 18 staffers in Nashville. As part of the recent changes, the company has closed its affiliate office in Atlanta.

Among those let go were Compendia head of legal and business affairs **John Rolfe** and manager of regional sales and marketing **Debbie Loring**. CFO **Daley Kennedy** will exit in a few weeks.

OWEN UPPED: **Jason Owen** has been promoted from VP of media, artist relations and creative services to senior VP of

those departments at **Universal Music Group Nashville**. His responsibilities include the **DreamWorks**, **MCA Nashville** and **Mercury** labels.

Also at UMG Nashville, **Retta Harvey Hatfield** has been named VP of video production, reporting to Owen. She was senior director. In addition to DreamWorks, MCA and Mercury, her duties encompass sister label **Lost Highway**.

Before joining UMG Nashville in 2002, Owen worked in the film and TV business in Los Angeles and New York. Past jobs included director of marketing and talent relations for **Columbia Tristar Television**, where he oversaw press strategies for such shows as "Dawson's Creek," "Ricki Lake" and "The Young and the Restless"; manager of talent relations for producer **Aaron Spelling**; and a publicity and talent relations position with **New Line Cinema** and **Fine Line Features**.

One of the keys to Owen's success at Universal has been his working relationship with the company's top star, **Shania Twain**. Two weeks after he joined

the company, Owen flew to Twain's adopted home country of Switzerland to meet her, intending to team her up with an independent publicist. Instead, Owen says, "we just connected from the first moment we met. It

development at independent publishing company **Murrah Music** in Nashville.

Hodges has been associated with the company as an independent songplugger for the past five years. He also operated publishing company **Large Opportunity Music** in an alliance with Murrah. His previous experience includes stints at **BMG** and **Fame Music Publishing**.

Murrah has just begun its 15th year. The company employs 13 songwriters, including owner and president **Roger Murrah** and writer/artists **Rachel Proctor** and **Shannon Brown**.

In other news, **David "Bubba" Berry** has been named Southwest promotion manager at **RCA Records**. He was a national promotion director at **Equity Music Group**. Berry replaces **Greg Sax**, who accepted an early retirement package from parent **Sony BMG** late last year.

Epic Records promotion coordinator **Ryan Barnstead** segues to sister label **Columbia** as manager of Midwest promotion. He succeeds **Tom Moran**, who was recently promoted to national director of promotion at Columbia. Meanwhile, former Columbia promotion coordinator **Liz Sledge** switches to Epic in the same capacity.

Nashville Scene™
By Phyllis Stark
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Chesney

Continued from page 1

"I didn't really set out to make this record," he says. "For the past seven years I've been spending a lot of time in the islands, living on my boat and writing some songs about some of the really cool places I've been to and some of the people that I've met."

Even though he views his boat as a place to retreat from the music business, Chesney says creative urges always begin to surface there.

"I've got a guitar that's in my closet on my boat and, after a couple of weeks, I've just got to pull it out," he says. "I always end up writing songs. I sat down and listened to these songs and [realized] I have a collection of songs that are probably more honest and real and more than anything I've ever done."

When Chesney first approached RCA Label Group chairman Joe Galante with the idea for the record, the executive was supportive. He told Chesney, "If you can't do this now, I don't know when you can do it. You've

earned the right to be able to make this statement artistically and let your fans see a little bit more of you."

The label is not treating "Be As You Are" as a typical release. A video has been released for the song "Old Blue Chair," but surprisingly, BNA does not have any plans to work a single from the album to radio.

"It's not your typical Kenny Chesney release. We approached it very differently," says Debbie Linn, BNA senior director of artist development and marketing.

Plans call for alerting fans of the record's arrival with a CMT special to be telecast live from Nashville Jan. 22. "Kenny has so much to say about this record and where it came from," Linn says. "We wanted him to have the opportunity to really explain what this record means to him and [discuss] each of these songs."

Linn says the label plans to position the project at retail and will work closely with Chesney's fan club to alert supporters. There will also be a TV advertising campaign that will include E and the Travel Channel as well as the more traditional country marketing outlets GAC and CMT.

"Be As You Are" comes at a sweet

time in Chesney's career. Of his eight previous titles on the *Billboard* Top Country Albums chart, all are gold, five have been certified platinum and four have achieved multi-platinum status. Both 2002's "No Shoes, No Shirt, No Problems" and 2004's

"I didn't write one song thinking it was going to get played on the radio. I wrote every song from the heart and every song from a true life experience."

—KENNY CHESNEY

"When the Sun Goes Down" debuted at No. 1 on the Top Country Albums chart and The *Billboard* 200.

BNA is currently working "Anything but Mine," the fifth single

from "When the Sun Goes Down." When asked if she thinks radio programmers might start airing cuts from "Be As You Are," Linn acknowledges that could happen, but says, "The promotions department is communicating well to radio just what this record is."

ONE HOT ARTIST

According to Galante, the BNA staff thought releasing a single from "Be As You Are" would cause consumer confusion.

"When you have an artist like Kenny who tours eight months out of the year and has records that last a year-and-a-half, there's never a right time," Galante says of releasing a single from a specialty album. "So we made a decision that we really couldn't release a single, because no matter what we did, it would land somewhere in the middle of a record we had."

KMPS Seattle music director Tony Thomas says radio might gravitate to the new material regardless of the game plan because Chesney is such a hot act.

"Kenny not only won the CMA's top title, he's truly the people's

champion," Thomas enthuses. "His fans are psyched for new music from him. Even without a single I wouldn't be surprised if we grab on to a cut or two. I think listeners will love that these songs have personal meaning to Kenny."

Sirius Satellite Radio will roll out a special "Be As You Are" album premiere Jan. 14, and Sirius director of country programming Scott Lindy is a fan of the new album. "Kenny's done a good job in making these songs about his life and . . . his career without making it a 'Hey, look at me!' album."

"The sound of this project is full of island stylings, but seems to be more of that sound that is only Kenny's that he's developed over the past years," Lindy says. He describes it as "a blend of crisp, acoustic guitars; island-influenced country; and Kenny's approach to the lyrics that seems more personal than ever."

Lindy predicts the album will do very well. "For not being worked to radio, I predict that this CD will be his biggest to date," he says.

Galante admits he's not sure what to expect in terms of sales. "We're (Continued on page 46)

JANUARY 15 2005

Billboard®

TOP COUNTRY ALBUMS™

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

Main Billboard Top Country Albums chart for January 15, 2005. Columns include Rank, Artist, Title, Peak Position, and Weeks on Chart. Includes 'NUMBER 1' and 'PACSETER' callouts.

Albums with the greatest sales gains this week... Recording Industry Assn. of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold)... RIAA certification for net shipment of 1 million units (Platinum)...

JANUARY 15 2005

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TOP COUNTRY CATALOG ALBUMS™

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

Billboard Top Country Catalog Albums chart for January 15, 2005. Columns include Rank, Artist, Title, Total Chart Weeks, and Weeks on Chart.

Albums with the greatest sales gains this week... Catalog albums are 2-year-old titles that have fallen below No. 100 on the Billboard 200 or reissues of older albums... RIAA certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold)...

ALBUMS

Edited by Michael Paoletta

NEW & NOTEWORTHY

THE MOANERS

Dark Snack

PRODUCERS: Rick Miller, the Moaners

Yep Roc 2088

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25

If the White Stripes were both women and grew up in the South, they might sound like the Moaners. North Carolina-based singer/guitarist Melissa Swingle and drummer Laura King spark and slash their way through 11 humidity-drenched blues originals steeped in sex, literature and rock'n'roll. The three elements fuse with controlled distortion on "Flannery Said," while the bracing "Terrier" brings a self-styled big dog down to size. "Paradise Club," their variation on "House of the Rising Sun," offers pink-collar salvation in the form of decent wages at a rural strip club. "Elizabeth's Cotten Song" really is just that, an adaptation of an archetypical lyric from the Southern blues icon. The surprising two-piece versatility is evident on "Too Many People," with a jagged Talking Heads rhythm that brings to mind Kim Deal's underappreciated mid-'90s band, the Amps. But the raucous, raw and rocking Moaners transcend comparisons on this sparkling, original debut.—**WR**

POP

★ FOZZY

All That Remains

PRODUCER: Rick Beato

Ash 2022

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 18

For a band that originated as a very talented goof on the glory days of '80s metal, Fozzy's evolution and growth exceeds that of some other rock acts currently cluttering the airwaves. "All That Remains" is the group's first album of completely original material, and it fully embraces the shredding guitars, crafty hooks and pumping beats that make old-school metal great. "Nameless Faceless," "Enemy" and the title cut are immediate standouts that pay homage to the best the genre has to offer. "Born of Anger" is an aggressive thrash finale with guest guitarist Marty Friedman, and Zakk Wylde puts his stamp on the dirge-like "Wanderlust." The rap element on "It's a Lie" (featuring Bonecrusher) doesn't quite fit within the song, but listeners will likely be too busy playing their air guitars to even notice.—**CLT**

★ THE WAIFS

A Brief History . . .

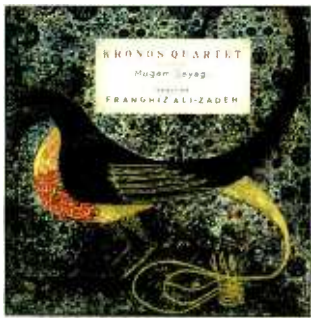
PRODUCERS: the Waifs

Jarrah 7 4394

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Bob Dylan thought enough of this Australian group to put it on his North American tour, and this live double-album testifies to his good sense. The tunes were recorded in several venues in Australia between 2002 and 2004, and they provide an excellent aural

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



KRONOS QUARTET

Mugam Sayagi—Music of Franghiz Ali-Zadeh

PRODUCER: Judith Sherman

Nonesuch 79804

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Franghiz Ali-Zadeh was born in 1947 in Baku, Azerbaijan, a former Soviet state that stands at a cultural crossroads with Persian, Turkic, Arab and Russian elements in its legacy. She writes music that absorbs and comments on not just these influences, but more recent ones as well, including her heroes Olivier Messiaen, George Crumb and John Cage. This release features four recent works: 1998's "Oasis," which contains the sounds of water dripping and men's murmuring voices; 2001's evocative "Apsheron Quintet"; the ethereal "Music for Piano," completed in 1997; and 1993's haunting "Mugam Sayagi," which the Kronos Quartet gives an electrifying reading. (Ali-Zadeh herself performs as pianist in the quintet and on "Music for Piano.") The Kronos Quartet is in top form here, and this exciting release should catapult Ali-Zadeh's name to the forefront of contemporary music.—**AT**

ANI DiFRANCO

Knuckle Down

PRODUCERS: Ani DiFranco, Joe Henry

Righteous Babe RBR-042-D

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25

"Knuckle Down" finds Ani DiFranco trying some different approaches to her music. In a first for her, she paired with another musician (Joe Henry) for production duties, and she changed her writing style by consciously composing for the set instead of writing songs and later determining how they would fit as a collection. The results are a selection of high quality that veers between brightly spirited



("Manhole," "Lag Time") and somber ("Callous"). "Parameters" is a terrifying spoken-word piece delivered over a desolate guitar loop that will raise goose bumps. DiFranco dispels the chill with "Paradigm," which reveals her immigrant parents' appreciation for their adopted country. Eight other musicians provide moving accompaniments, such as Julie Wolf's melodic on "Minerva" and the rich strings that Tony Scherr and Andrew Bird contribute to "Recoil."—**CLT**



BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB PRESENTS

MANUEL GUAJIRO MIRABAL

Buena Vista Social Club Presents

Manuel Guajiro Mirabal

PRODUCER: Nick Gold

Nonesuch 79810

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 4

Buena Vista spin-off albums tend to be hit or miss. At their best, they showcase Cuban musical tradition in a new package of sound. At their worst, they're derivative, showcasing not-so-stellar talent. This latest, an homage to the music of the great Arsenio Rodríguez that is reinterpreted by trumpet player Manuel "Guajiro" Mirabal (making his solo debut at the age of 71), is a pleasant surprise. Mirabal, a veteran of several Buena Vista albums, lends his instrument to re-create Rodríguez's trumpet-led *conjuntos* of the '40s and '50s. But he also makes wonderful use of his musicians and singers, including *tres* player Papi Oviedo in "Para Bailar el Montuno" and singers Calunga and Ibrahim Ferrer. Throughout, Mirabal's trumpet veers from virtuosic brassiness to tasteful accompaniment. This isn't an instrumental album but an example of Cuban ensemble music at its best.—**LC**

portrait of this extraordinary crew's musical vibe. The Waifs have sold a bunch of records and built a strong fan following by virtue of a sound that deftly draws on rock, modern folk and blues and takes wing on the distinctive vocals of sisters Vikki and Donna Simpson. Given the tremendous amount of time the Waifs spend on tour, this live recording has the added benefit of being a very shrewd idea, for the Waifs are gig monsters who truly shine in concert settings. Their charisma, songwriting virtuosity and enviable instrumental proficiency are front and center in this collection, which makes this a good album to attract more avid fans. Jarrah is racked by Compass Records in the United States.—**PVV**

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Sounds Eclectic 3

PRODUCER: Nic Harcourt

Palm CD2136

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Every city should be lucky enough to have a station like KCRW, the non-commercial outlet of the Los Angeles area's small Santa Monica College. And every station should have a program like the widely honored daily show "Morning Becomes Eclectic" and its

weekly syndicated program "Sounds Eclectic." The latest in a series of compilation CDs, "Sounds Eclectic 3" contains mostly tracks recorded live at KCRW. Show producer/host Nic Harcourt's taste is neither too esoteric nor predictably "edgy": This set of songs and artists could anchor a format called "progressive mainstream." Performances include the Flaming Lips acoustic, Paul Weller energetic and Steve Earle emphatic. There are rare catches like Radiohead's live "Go to Sleep," My Morning Jacket showing off its Skynyrd side on "One Big Holiday" and Kinky sounding like Carlos Santana's army on the march on the vibrating "Mirando de Lado." Personal favorites include the Polyphonic Spree impersonating the Magical Mystery Tour Choir on "It's the Sun" and Franz Ferdinand's "Take Me Out," which provides the jolt that often makes "Eclectic" so electric.—**WR**

JACOB ZACHARY

Fury and Spin

PRODUCER: Brian Morykon

Unseen UR00102

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Jacob Zachary's debut sounds like a collection of basement songs from the

hoy next door, the quiet type who knows how to express his sincerest sentiments. "Fury and Spin" strongly mirrors Duncan Sheik's gorgeous 1996 folk-pop debut, with thoughtful, shiny production and a vulnerable temperament. The arrangements are romantic and catchy, but it's Zachary's potent lyrics that transcend his ordinary songwriting; he stabs at the mystical, wrestling with the nature of God and humanity, and juxtaposing belief with unbelief. On "Human," he sings: "We keep breaking for the love of ourselves/But oh, how are we to know/The price we should pay/And what could we really expect from a nature so human," waxing similar to Christian artists like Brian Kieta and Derek Webb. Zachary has created a well-rounded, promising first effort.—**KH**

JENNIFER GENTLE

Valende

PRODUCERS: Jennifer Gentle, Marco Fasolo,

Alessio Gastaldello

Sub Pop SP658

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25

"Valende" opens with a crackling acoustic number, and its second song is an all-out "Nuggets"-era rocker, complete with handclaps, a vintage

keyboard and indefinable screeches. From here, Jennifer Gentle goes in a more atmospheric direction. Don't be fooled by the name: This is a duo, and an odd one at that. Imported from Italy via Sub Pop, this is the act's third proper album, all of them home-recorded. Yet "Valende" feels more like it was created in a demented carnival. "Hessesopoa" is all cymbal crashes and haunted-house noises, and "Liquid Coffee" hypnotizes with a mixture of lovely acoustic finger-picking and an underlying rhythmic ticking. At times compelling in its eccentricities, this record emphasizes experimentation rather than tunefulness.—**TM**

AMANDA & THE MARBLES

Angels With Dirty Faces

PRODUCERS: Amanda & the Marbles, Dan Boyd

Sick House SHR004

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25

Amanda & the Marbles pulled critical praise for their 2002 album, "More Seduction," and fans dubbed their sound "neo new wave power pop punk." It's an accurate description for the dozen tracks comprising "Angels With Dirty Faces," particularly with the addition of keyboards that further flesh out the band's early-'80s roller-rink tunes. But the 12 tracks sound so repetitive that the lyrics are the only way to discern one song from the next. With subject matter like "Lipstick," "Ode to Rock" and "Seventeen," they are sticky with retro bubble gum that is made more cloying by Amanda Marble's too-earnest warbling, which seems like an attempt to emulate the dusky tone of the Motels' Martha Davis. Covers of the Fast Cars' "Kids Just Want to Dance" and the Avengers' "Cheap Tragedies" are included, but they don't make much of a difference.—**CLT**

R&B/HIP-HOP

► SOUNDTRACK

Coach Carter

PRODUCERS: various

Capitol 63164

RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Like 1989's "Lean On Me," starring Morgan Freeman, "Coach Carter" revolves around academic performance. The film, starring Samuel L. Jackson, is inspired by the story of Richmond, Calif., high-school basketball coach Ken Carter, who benched his entire undefeated squad in 1999 for poor grades. While the "Lean" soundtrack featured such R&B, rap and rock favorites as Thelma Houston, Big Daddy Kane and Guns N' Roses, "Coach Carter" supersedes the hip-hop quotient. Name-checking credits include the St. Lunatics, Kanye West, Common, Fabolous, Chingy, Ciara and Twista. The St. Lunatics turn in a notable performance on "Time." Memorable R&B accents are provided by Faith Evans and critically acclaimed newcomer Van Hunt. Two other rookies also shine here: rapper the Game ("Southside," featuring Lil Scrappy) and singer Trey Songz ("About the Game").—**GM**

(Continued on next page)

CONTRIBUTORS: Keith Caulfield, Leila Cobo, Deborah Evans Price, Rashaun Hall, Katie Hasty, Todd Martens, Gail Mitchell, Michael Paoletta, Wayne Robins, Bram Teitelman, Christa L. Titus, Anastasia Tsioulcas, Philip van Vleck. **ESSENTIALS:** Releases deemed by the review editors to deserve special attention on the basis of musical merit and/or *Billboard* chart potential. **VITAL REISSUES:** Rereleased albums of special artistic, archival and commercial interest and outstanding collections of works by one or more artists. **PICKS (►):** New releases predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format. **CRITICS' CHOICES (★):** New releases, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended because of their musical merit. All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies and singles review copies to Michael Paoletta (*Billboard*, 770 Broadway, 6th floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

(Continued from preceding page)

▶ OL' DIRTY BASTARD

Osirus: The Official Mixtape
PRODUCERS: various
JC/Sure Shot Recordings SSR9016
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 4

The world of hip-hop lost Ol' Dirty Bastard last year, but it is certain that one of the genre's most outspoken voices won't soon be forgotten. To ensure that, ODB's mother, Cherry Jones, and his manager Jarred Weisfeld have launched JC Records. The first offering is the posthumously released "Osirus." Featuring a host of top-notch producers, including Mark Ronson and Dame Grease, the album showcases not only the unique talent that ODB was but the immense potential that he still had. Lead single "Pop Shots (Wu-Tang)" epitomizes this. Produced by DJ Premier, the song features ODB at his more lucid. His flow is crisp, understandable and, most important, on point. Similarly, ODB gets funky on the '70s-influenced "Dirty Run." While there are still rumors of a release for ODB's much-talked-about Roc-a-Fella debut, "Osirus" could easily serve as a fine final chapter in the life of one of music's most enigmatic characters.—**RH**

LATIN

FEY

La Fuerza del Destino
PRODUCER: Carlos Jaen
EMI Latin 7243 8 75692
RELEASE DATE: Dec. 14, 2004

Mexican singer Fey, an artist who made a name for herself with teeny-bopper pop, returns after a three-year absence with an album that aspires to substance and depth. "La Fuerza del Destino" is a collection of songs originally recorded by avant-garde Spanish pop group Mecano. Fey sings them with breathy earnestness, and they are arranged with synthesizers and dance grooves for club/pop effect. It's edgy, but then again, so were the originals; producer Carlos Jaen is to be commended for not trivializing these tracks. What ultimately makes this album work isn't Fey (it could be anyone on vocals), but the material. Songs like "Mujer Contra Mujer" and "Aire," with their frankly progressive lyrics and haunting melodies, are classic.—**LC**

BLUES

JOHN HAMMOND

In Your Arms Again
PRODUCERS: John & Marla Hammond
Back Porch/Virgin 70876-18987
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 25

Like the great bluesmen he learned from, John Hammond gets better and deeper with age. On this slap-happy trio affair with Marty Mallou (bass) and Stephen Hodges (drums), Hammond's crisp guitar playing, guttural singing and wily harmonica loops shine. Opening track "Jitterbug Swing," adapted from Bukka White, is the oldest and liveliest cut on this diverse collection. "It Serves Me Right to Suffer" and "Moanin' for My Baby" show that the closer Hammond hews to rural rooted urban blues, the more natural he sounds. Having written his first song for his previous album, after 40 years strictly as an interpreter, he tries two originals this time. Both are successful, particularly the

conflicted "Come to Find It." Bob Dylan's "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight" seems out of context in this traditional outing, and the two Ray Charles songs, though heartfully played, make one want to call a moratorium on tributes to the late great one.—**WR**

CLASSICAL

CHRIS COCO & SACHA PUTTNAM

Remasterpiece
PRODUCERS: Dead Composers Voice, Sacha Puttnam, Enrico Maghenzani
EMI Classics 7243 5 57873
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Purists will surely scoff at the very idea of this project: to reinterpret some very well-known works—by classical and contemporary composers—in an electronic manner. The same folks will likely also dismiss the project's masterminds: British dance music DJ/producer Chris Coco and Berklee School of Music- and Moscow Conservatory-reared film composer Sacha Puttnam, who has worked with rock band Bush and electronic outfit Hybrid. But this album is really not for classical purists. "Remasterpiece" is aimed squarely at the chill-out generation that has embraced such ambient, atmosphere-hued compilation series as Ultra Chilled and Buddha Bar. Figuring into the dreamy landscape are works by such revered names as Orff, Chopin, Debussy and Satie. In their own way, Coco and Puttnam—who also contribute new compositions to the recording—have created something new out of the tried and true. Those with an open mind and ears will surely be pleasantly surprised.—**MP**

VITAL REISSUES

MEMPHIS SLIM

Paris Mississippi Blues
PRODUCERS: various
Sunnyside 3025
RELEASE DATE: Jan. 11

Blues pianist Memphis Slim (aka John L. Chatman) was a fixture in the Chicago blues scene in the '40s and '50s (supplementing his music income by working as a bootlegger) before relocating to Paris in the early '60s. He became a major blues figure in France and western Europe, where he tracked numerous albums, many of which were produced by Philippe Rault. This double-CD provides 30 blues and boogie selections recorded between 1962 and 1975; many of them were authored by Slim. He was a fabulous keyboard player, an accomplished composer and a soulful vocalist. Like most adept blues pianists, his range goes beyond basic Chicago blues to boogie, jump blues and R&B flavors. Both discs feature a formidable array of guest artists, including Buddy Guy, Charlie McCoy, Roosevelt Sykes, Willie Dixon, Canned Heat, Peter Green and Freddy King. "Paris Mississippi Blues" should go a long way toward solidifying Memphis Slim's legacy with U.S. blues fans.—**PVV**

Billboard.com

- Lou Barlow, "EMOH" (Merge)
- Various artists, "Stones Throw 101" (Stones Throw)
- Hood, "Outside Closer" (Domino)

SINGLES

Edited by Michael Paoletta

MODERN ROCK

▶ MÖTLEY CRÜE If I Die Tomorrow (3:40)

PRODUCER: Bob Rock
WRITERS: Simple Plan, N. Sixx
PUBLISHERS: WB Music Corp. (ASCAP); Wet Wheelie Music (SOCAN); High Maintenance Music (SOCAN); Sixx/Gunner Tunes (ASCAP)

Universal Music Entertainment CTR-05159-2 (CD promo)

Mötley Crüe fans who are keeping their ears peeled for the new single from its anthology "Red, White and Crüe" likely won't recognize that "If I Die Tomorrow" is the song they are looking for. That's because the catchy modern rock ballad that contemplates one's mortality sounds nothing like the musical mayhem of the Crüe's heyday. The foursome's wild metal party sound is what diehards are waiting for, and that makes using this song as the band's reintroduction a very risky move. Bassist Nikki Sixx paired with Simple Plan to write it, which plays to the Crüe's attempt to cross over to hot AC and top 40 stations. We know that the most viable acts are usually those that adapt to the times, but given the hype surrounding an upcoming reunion tour with Vince Neil, it's disappointing not to herald the quartet's return with something in the vibe of "Girls, Girls, Girls."—**CLT**

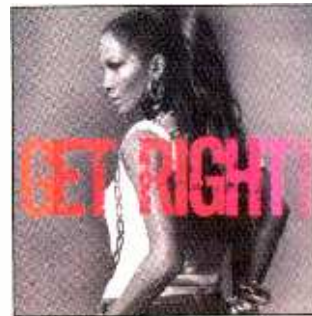
★ THE CHEMICAL BROTHERS Galvanize (4:27)

PRODUCERS: the Chemical Brothers
WRITERS: T. Rowlands, E. Simons, K. Fareed
PUBLISHERS: Universal/MCA Music Ltd./U Betta Like My Muzik (ASCAP)
Astralwerks ASW 76599 (CD single)
 With a recent Grammy Award nomination for "Get Yourself High," the Chemical Brothers could not have better timing for their new single. The adrenaline-pumping "Galvanize" is the lead track from the British duo's new studio album, "Push the Button," due Jan. 25. In signature fashion, Chemical Brothers Tom Rowlands and Ed Simons deftly intertwine in-your-face breakbeats, looped samples and guest vocals from hip-hop hero Q-Tip. "Galvanize" also finds the duo pushing to stretch its talents: Classically arranged and styled musical elements make beautiful music with a sturdy, electronic-laced rock rhythm section.—**MP**

THE USED All That I've Got (3:27)

PRODUCER: John Feldman
WRITERS: the Used
PUBLISHERS: The Used Movement Music/EMI Blackwood Music (BMI)
Reprise PRO-CDR-101482 (CD promo)
 The 2002 self-titled debut from Utah's the Used was a solid introduction, but it did little to distinguish the group from the conglomerate of generic acts combining elements of emo, punk and metal. A listen to "All That I've Got," the second single from the band's sophomore album, "In Love and Death," shows that the act has branched out. Strings and subtle drumming highlight the midtempo song, which is about the loss of a loved

ESSENTIAL REVIEWS



JENNIFER LOPEZ Get Right (3:47)

PRODUCER: Rich Harrison
WRITERS: R. Harrison, J. Brown
PUBLISHERS: Dam Rich Music (BMI), Obo Itself and EMI Blackwood Music (BMI); Unichappell Music (BMI)
Epic 51288 (CD promo)

"Get Right" is the first single from Jennifer Lopez's forthcoming album, "Rebirth," due March 1. At first listen, the cut's most striking element are whiny, repetitive horns. (Sound familiar? They should. They're sampled from Maceo & the Macks' "Soul Power '74," written by James Brown.) Radio might be charmed by the bold brass, or it could turn tail and bolt. However, the lyrically straightforward jam has an undeniably catchy thump-thump bassline. The stomping chorus elicits an involuntary head bob from the listener, which bodes well for club and radio play. Fabolous makes an appearance on the hip-hop version of the cut, which differs only in that he gets two rap interludes. With Lopez's track record at radio—nine top 10 Mainstream Top 40 hits thus far—it's likely "Get Right" will make a splashy bow on the charts.—**KC**



MICHAEL GRAY The Weekend (3:11)

PRODUCER: Michael Gray
WRITERS: various
PUBLISHERS: Warner/Chappell; Songs of Universal
Ultra 1253 (CD promo)

Michael Gray, one-half of über-hot British production/remix duo Full Intention, has already scored a top 10 pop hit in his homeland with "The Weekend." The decidedly pop jam—with dollops of disco memories—spotlights the lovely vocals of Shena, who was featured on Full Intention's now-classic underground club track "I'll Be Waiting." For the simply irresistible "The Weekend," Shena sings of living for those precious days: "I'm savin' all my soul/ And all my pain/ So I can lose control/ On Saturday." Lyrically deep? That depends on how you view the religious-like emotional release that occurs on dancefloors as Saturday night evolves into Sunday morning. Whether or not "The Weekend" becomes a crossover smash in the United States remains to be seen, but one thing is certain: It will dominate dancefloors and dance radio in the weeks to come.—**MP**

one: Lead singer Bert McCracken wrote the tune after the death of his dog. "So deep that it didn't even bleed and catch me," he sings before the song's surging chorus, in which he promises "I'll be just fine pretending I'm not." The melodic song has caught on at modern rock stations. The band will remain in the spotlight this spring, as the Taste of Chaos tour, which it is headlining, will hit the road next month.—**BT**

COUNTRY

★ KENI THOMAS WITH VINCE GILL AND EMMYLOU HARRIS Not Me (3:59)

PRODUCERS: Brent Maher, Mark Selby
WRITERS: K. Thomas, B. Montana, B. Maher
PUBLISHERS: various
Moraine Records MMC2350 (CD promo)
 When you see Vince Gill and Emmylou Harris' names as guests on a single, it immediately raises the level of expectation. The good news here is that newcomer Keni Thomas surpasses those high standards. His plaintive vocals resonate with honesty and integrity that add extra emotional punch to this well-written tune about sacrifice and responsibility. From an unwilling parent coaching a child's team to a young captain in the military who survived a tough battle, each verse tells a poignant story, with the moral eloquently summed up in the chorus. The

understated production places the focus on the weighty lyric, and Jonathan Yudkin's beautiful cello underscores the emotion in the words. Add Gill's and Harris' ethereal harmonies to the mix, and it combines to make a stunning little record that previews this former Army Ranger's Jan. 25 debut CD.—**DEP**

DANCE

▶ MARTHA WASH You Lift Me Up (3:28)

PRODUCERS: Michael Hearn, Maurice Johnson, Martha Wash
WRITERS: L. Clifford, M. Johnson, M. Hearn
PUBLISHERS: Linford-Warner/Chappell (ASCAP); Mojhn Music (ASCAP); Fierce Music (BMI)
Purple Rose 60662 15012 (CD single)
 The legendary Martha Wash is known around the world for her work with Sylvester, Two Tons O' Fun, the Weather Girls, Black Box and C+C Music Factory. She is the owner of a powerful, church-raised voice—the type that does not require studio technology to enhance it. Already a top five hit on dancefloors, the empowering "You Lift Me Up," with its rugged house beats and jazzy piano, would make a fine addition to dance radio formats; that is, if programmers can find room for such a classic-sounding club track. Of course, a poppier remix could remedy the situation.—**MP**

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

RECORD COMPANIES: Warner Strategic Marketing in Burbank, Calif., appoints **Rachael Bickerton** VP of business affairs. She was senior director of **BMG Strategic Marketing Group**.

RCA Label Group in Nashville promotes **Jo Beth Burrell** to manager of finance. She was senior financial analyst.

DISTRIBUTION: Handleman Co. in Troy, Mich., names **Roy Johnson** VP of business support and analysis and promotes **Steve Moser** to inventory manager and **Erica Babcock** to director of merchandising and advertising. Johnson was Handleman VP of budgeting and forecasting, Moser was manager of rebuying and Babcock was children's, karaoke and Latin budget product manager.

Universal Music & Video Distribution/Visual Entertainment in New York appoints **Matt Costine** regional sales director. He held the same title at **WEA Corp.**'s video division.

BOOKING AGENCIES: William Morris Agency in Beverly Hills, Calif., promotes **Dave Wirtschafter** to president, **Irv Weintraub** to COO and **Michael Dates** to CFO. Wirtschafter was executive VP/worldwide head of motion pictures, Weintraub was executive VP/CFO and Dates was senior VP of finance.

The Agency Group in Beverly Hills names **Corrie Christopher** an agent. She was founder of music agency **Fierce Talent**.

RADIO: ABC Radio Networks in New York promotes **James Robinson** to president. He remains president/GM of ABC's adult top 40 **WRQX** and smooth jazz **WJZW**, both in Washington, D.C.

Archway Broadcasting Group in East Point, Ga., promotes **Al Vicente** to vice chairman. He was president/CEO. The company also names **Kathy Stinehour** president/CEO. She was VP/market manager at **Cumulus Broadcasting**.

Infinity Broadcasting in New York appoints **Tony Jarvis** senior VP of research. He was senior VP/

director of strategic insights group at **MediaCom**.

Sirius Satellite Radio in New York names **Bill Bailey** senior VP of regulatory and government affairs. He was senior counsel for the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee.

MUSIC VIDEO: MTV Networks in New York promotes **Larry Divney** to president of ad sales. He was COO of ad sales. The company also names **Doug Rohrer** executive VP/senior advisor to Divney. He segues from his position as executive VP of ad sales.

MTV in New York appoints **Nicole Vorias** senior director of production development and **Ethan Goldman** director of production development. Vorias was VP of alternative TV development at **the Firm**, and Goldman was manager of East Coast development at **VH1**.

DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT: Music Choice in New York names **Justin Prager** director of music programming. He was director of music programming and talent at **MTV** and **MTV2**.

Digital Musicworks International in Sacramento, Calif., appoints **Jim Bacon** director of A&R, Austin-based **Jan Mirkin** director of artist development, **Jackson Griffith** product manager and **Eddie Meehan** product marketing manager. Bacon was an independent producer, Mirkin was **ASCAP** regional director, Griffith was arts editor at **Sacramento News and Review** and Meehan was a new-media staffer at modern rock **KITS** San Francisco.

RELATED FIELDS: Clear Channel Entertainment in New York promotes **David Anderson** to president/COO of theatrical North America and **Dominic Roncace** to president of North American theatrical real estate. Anderson was president of North American theatrical real estate, and Roncace was COO of music.

Film/TV company **Mark Haefeli Productions** in New York appoints **Richy Vesecky** senior director of creative sales and marketing. He was associate director of television marketing at **Warner Bros. Records**.



BICKERTON



COSTINE



DIVNEY



Checking In Avril Lavigne was the star attraction at **RCA Records'** annual hockey game, held Dec. 14 at Chelsea Piers' Sky Rink in New York. Professional hockey player **Peter Forsberg** of the Colorado Avalanche was also a guest. (Photo: Larry Busacca/WireImage.com)



Berklee Honors Berklee College of Music in Boston inaugurated its third president, **Roger H. Brown**, in a Dec. 3 ceremony. **Chaka Khan** and drummer **Dennis Chambers** (who has played with **Parliament Funkadelic** and **George Duke**) each received honorary doctorates in music at the event. Pictured, from left, are Brown, Khan, Chambers and **Linda Mason**, Brown's wife. (Photo: Phil Farnsworth)



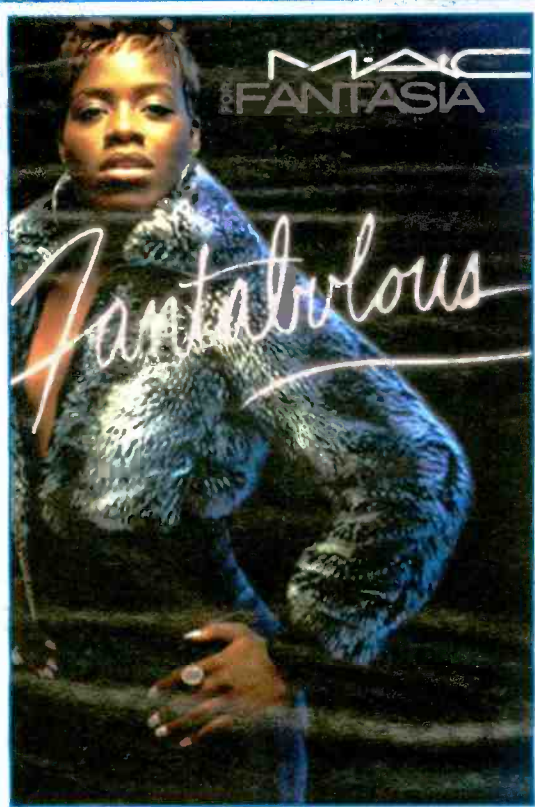
The Gospel According To BeBe

BeBe Winans performed on **NBC's** "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" in a program that aired Dec. 21. Winans was promoting his current **Hidden Beach Recordings** album, "My Christmas Prayer." The singer's next album, "Dream," is due this year. (Photo: Paul Drinkwater)



KIIS-ing Time

Gwen Stefani performs at the annual **KIIS-FM Jingle Ball** concert, presented by mainstream top 40 **KIIS** Los Angeles. The sold-out event—held Dec. 3 at Arrowhead Pond in Anaheim, Calif.—also included performances by **JoJo**, **Alicia Keys**, **Avril Lavigne**, **Snoop Dogg**, **Pharrell Williams**, **Ashlee Simpson**, **Maroon5** and **Christina Milian**. **Fox** aired the show Dec. 17 as the one-hour special "Jingle Ball Rock."



Hot Fashion ... FANTASIA

"American Idol" third-season winner **Fantasia** has teamed with **M.A.C. Cosmetics** for the new line of Fantabulous lip gloss, inspired by the singer. The product comes in two shades, Fantabulous 1 (orange copper) and Fantabulous 2 (reddened bronze), and is sold at select M.A.C. locations.

In other music-meets-fashion news, **Mariah Carey** will launch a fashion line this year called Kiss Kiss, which will initially offer lingerie... **Lil' Kim** has teamed with **World Recognition International** to debut a women's fashion line titled Hollywood... **Darryl McDaniels** of **Run-D.M.C.** is planning to launch a line of T-shirts and hats called 'Darryl M Clothing.'



Mariah Does Mickey Proud

Mariah Carey hangs with Mickey Mouse at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. Carey was among the performers at the annual Walt Disney World Christmas Day Parade, which ABC televised Dec. 25. Other artists at the event included **Wynonna**, **Ashanti** and former "American Idol" finalists **Josh Gracin** and **Diana DeGarmo**.



Saluting College Music **Marky Ramone**, pictured, was a performer and award recipient at the first College Music Awards, held Dec. 16 at New York's Irving Plaza. **The Ramones** received the Icon Award, and Ramone accepted on behalf of the band. Rolling Stone magazine, **Zilo**, **Navy** and **Mobliss** presented the show, which honors acts who have made an impact on the college radio and music scene, long an incubator for alternative talent. **The Walkmen** and **Flyleaf** also performed. Other College Music Awards winners were **Taking Back Sunday** (band of the year), **Jason Mraz** (best male rock artist), **Norah Jones** (best female rock artist), **Yellowcard's** "Ocean Avenue" (best album) and **Kanye West** (hip-hop award). (Photo: Dimitrios Kambouris/WireImage.com)



Like A Hawk **Chingy** received a personalized Atlanta Hawks jersey when he performed Dec. 9 at Atlanta's Philips Arena as part of the all-star Frosty the Snowman concert. The show, presented by Atlanta's mainstream top 40 **WWWQ (Q-100)**, also featured performances by **Alicia Keys**, **Good Charlotte** and **Diana DeGarmo**. Pictured, from left, are Philips Arena director of business development **Kevin Preast**, Chingy and Philips Arena VP of bookings **Trey Fezell**. (Photo: Rick Diamond)



Now, Hear This ... ANTHONY EVANS

Artists to Watch

When it comes to spreading the gospel, **Anthony Evans** is just carrying on a family tradition. As the son of Dr. **Tony Evans**, the **INO Records** artist saw his father lead the syndicated radio/TV show "The Urban Alternative" and serve as pastor for the 7,000-member Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas. "I didn't know that music was going to be my thing until the last few years," says the younger Evans, who came to Nashville to write songs and record an independent album. When his talent landed the Dallas native the **INO** deal, he was hardly a novice in the music world. In college, he was a member of Liberty University's **Sounds of Liberty**. He was a singer in **Truth** before signing on as a background vocalist for **Kirk Franklin**. Since the 2004 release of his debut album, "Even More," Evans has been busy. He was part of the 2004 Hopeville tour with Franklin, **Yolanda Adams** and **Donnie McClurkin**. This spring he will go on a 40-city tour with **FFH** and **Matthew West**. And Evans' new single, "Restore Me," has been gaining steam at Christian AC radio. "The puzzle pieces are starting to make sense," Evans says. "When you start with a puzzle, you can't really tell, and now that the pieces have been put together, I'm starting to figure out what God is doing. It's real cool."

DEBORAH EVANS PRICE



Place In The Sun **Tim McGraw** became the first inductee in the Mohegan Sun Walk of Fame at a Dec. 3 ceremony held at the Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville, Conn. McGraw was the first artist to play at the arena, and he has performed several sold-out shows there since that 2001 debut. Pictured, from left, are MoheganTribe chairman **Mark Brown**, McGraw and Mohegan Sun senior VP of sports and entertainment **Paul Munick**.

New 'Songbook' Series Shows EMI Synergy

BY JIM BESSMAN

NEW YORK—"The Definitive American Songbook," a just-completed 10-CD series, represents a cross-company effort between EMI Music Publishing and EMI Records to capitalize on their extensive catalogs.

"EMI Publishing has always prioritized catalog exploitation of our incredible songs," EMI Music Publishing chairman/CEO Martin Bandier says. "EMI Records presents an incredible opportunity for us to maximize [EMI Music] Group profits by matching up with their vast and magnificent master recording repertoire."

The "Songbook" set is now available through EMI's direct-response company Castalian Music for "four easy payments of \$29.98 each," according to a 30-minute infomercial hosted by Andy Williams. (He is represented on the "First Gentlemen of Song" disc). Buyers can order through an 800-number or the Web site songbookcollection.com.

GATHERING THE HITS

EMI Music Publishing's senior VP of global catalog promotion Alan

Warner, who is credited as reissue producer for "The Definitive American Songbook," says the concept originated at Castalian after staffers polled their parents in compiling a list of most-remembered songs.

"David Munns [EMI Music North America chairman/CEO] sent me the list and asked that I identify the best Capitol/EMI-owned recordings," Warner says. "Anita Stewart, who runs Castalian, then brought me in, and I developed the concept—in co-ordination with Castalian's Peter Holden—into a series of multi-artist albums."

EMI Music Publishing first plumbed the rich vaults at sister company Capitol Records, but tracks were also leased from Sony, BMG, Elektra, Universal, Atlantic and Concord Jazz.

"I naturally included a significant number of EMI-published copyrights—more than 50 songs—while maintaining the credibility of the concept by choosing titles from all the other major catalogs," Warner says.

So he notes that the project "not only signifies Capitol/EMI's long-term commitment to a series spotlighting some of the greatest examples of American popular song, but it also is an illus-



WARNER HELPED PICK SONGBOOK TUNES

tration of the synergy between EMI's record and publishing operations."

As Warner points out, the so-called "Great American Songbook" is a loose designation.

"I felt it necessary to limit the time period covered," he explains. "Therefore, the compositions themselves date from the 1920s through the 1950s."

The discs are presented thematically. "Songs That Won the War" features ballad and novelty favorites from the 1940s. "When Swing Was King" includes big band hits, while "Hollywood Hit Parade" features

memorable songs from the movies. "Songs That Stopped the Show" is a disc of Broadway memories.

The first two discs are "The Best of the Definitive American Songbook," volumes one and two. The final two salute 36 outstanding "First Ladies" and "First Gentlemen" from the golden age of popular song, including Frank Sinatra, Nat "King" Cole, Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Peggy Lee.

The remaining titles are "The Thrill of Romance," a love song collection, and "This Is My Song," a set of signature tunes like Judy Garland's "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

STELLAR PERFORMANCES

"So many tracks stand out," notes Warner, singling out Fitzgerald's "hauntingly beautiful" reading of Hoagy Carmichael and Mitchell Parish's "Stardust" accompanied only by piano, and Louis Armstrong's trademark raspy vocal performance of the Bert Kalmar-Harry Ruby-Oscar Hammerstein evergreen ballad "A Kiss to Build a Dream On."

The song was written for, but never used in, a Marx Brothers

movie, according to Warner. It was finally introduced in "The Strip," a 1951 musical film noir starring Mickey Rooney and a performance by Armstrong himself.

Warner also cites a "rarely heard" version of the Jule Styne-Betty Comden-Adolph Green song "The Party's Over," sung by Diahann Carroll and arranged and accompanied by Andre Previn.

"What was particularly gratifying as the compilations unfolded was Anita Stewart's total belief in the project and her determination that the albums would be sold via a half-hour infomercial, thereby guaranteeing the kind of exposure that gives the series its very best shot," Warner says. If the package is successful, he adds, it could be an ongoing series.

Saluting the initial direct-response offering, Munns concludes, "This package has been compiled by some of our best music people, and the flow and continuity in its makeup is testament to their expertise. Not only does it represent a definitive account of American music history, but it also provides hours of tremendous listening."

Spirit Songs: Cash's Dharma, Cohen's Karma

Rosanne Cash gave an extraordinary trio of performances at the end of last year at Manhattan's Ruben Museum of Art, a new cultural and educational institution dedicated to the art of the Himalayas and designed to explore connections among world cultures.

The "Acoustic Cash" programs featured Cash accompanied by her producer/husband, John Leventhal, on guitar, performing songs inspired by Tibetan painting "The Wheel of Life" that illustrates the essential Buddhist teachings.

Cash also engaged guest artists

Marshall Crenshaw, Teddy Thompson and Black 47's Larry Kirwan in song and conversation, so each informal evening was part music, part monologue and part talk show—an innovative and intriguing format worthy of further exploration.

In fact, Cash will do just that Feb. 10 as part of Lincoln Center's "American Songbook" series (which also includes Lisa Loeb, Nellie McKay and Elaine Stritch). She is likely to perform new material from her next Capitol album, due later in 2005. And maybe she'll cover the

still mysterious, monumental 1967 Bobbie Gentry hit "Ode to Billie Joe," as she did with Kirwan at the Ruben Museum series' Dec. 3 finale.

"I read recently that Bobbie Gentry thought the most compelling part of the song was the nonchalance with which the family discussed the suicide—and I get that," Cash said afterwards, having delivered a more lengthy analysis of the much discussed and disputed Tallahatchie Bridge incident that is at the heart of the song. "I see why that moved her the most. Of course, we Philistines are just obsessed with *what* she threw off the bridge: The most obvious—and the answer with the most votes over the years—seems to be a baby, but maybe that's too easy. Maybe it was a written vow—or a ring. But I love that people are still discussing this 30 years later. It gives me hope as a songwriter!"

WARNES ON COHEN: Reticent singer/songwriter genius Leonard Cohen, not surprisingly, proved unavailable to discuss his new Columbia album, "Dear Heather."

Still, these are productive times for the 70-year-old Cohen's repertoire. Rhino recently released "Judy Collins Sings Leonard Cohen: Democracy," which of course includes her classic 1966 version of "Suzanne," plus three

new recordings. Former Cohen backup vocalist Perla Batalla has her own upcoming album-length homage.

Luckily, another one-time Cohen backup singer, Jennifer Warnes, whose 1987 album "Famous Blue Raincoat" remains the standard for Cohen tributes, stepped in with her ever-insightful thoughts about her friend and mentor.

"There are moments in company with Leonard, while doing something otherwise boring and simple—like sharing a cup of coffee—when I am struck by the possibility that ordinary life is art," Warnes says. "Art being not something we *do* but something that we *are*, and the 'product' we create flows outward from this place."

As a singer, she brings her "complicated heart to his songs, and all my various parts have been given something to sing," Warnes says.

"Non-Cohen songs often leave me wanting, unless their simplicity is quite profound," she continues. "Leonard refers to 'Blueberry Hill,'

for instance, as one of those great simple/profound ones. He didn't write it, but during [his] many long hours in silent retreat, Leonard must have refined his understanding of the power of little things—how these fit into the big picture and how the delicate timing of words can release this understanding to others."



CASH, LEFT, AND CRENSHAW: PERFORMING SONGS BASED ON BUDDHIST TEACHINGS

Words & Music™



By Jim Bessman
jbessman@billboard.com



Cohen "looks at life from far away and up close at the same time," Warnes concludes. "As a writer, he stands above, below, around and through. He opens his arms and a nameless grace, or intoxication perhaps, or better yet, something that must remain nameless, enters: A third magical element, beyond one's personal feelings and interesting material, that starts happening when great music is created and recognized."



39
The hip-e digital media system was designed by teens, for teens

RETAIL / DISTRIBUTION / DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT / DVD / MOBILE / WIRELESS



Retail Stocks Close 2004 On An Upward Path

BY ED CHRISTMAN

NEW YORK—Eight consecutive months of U.S. album sales growth in 2004, after three years of declining sales, have helped music retail stocks regain some of their luster.

Traditional music accounts also seemed to benefit from public statements by high-profile executives at the majors that physical product—whether it is the CD or one of the formats vying to replace it—will fuel the industry's engine for the next five years, if not longer.

Music merchandisers are part of a market sector that performed well this year, Goldman Sachs retail analyst Matt Fassler says. The average retail stock in the Standard & Poor's 500 was up 21.6% this year, while the

Morgan Stanley Retail Index was up 18.1%, Fassler notes. "So some of this is just retail doing well."

HOW MUSIC MERCHANTS ARE FARING

Hastings Entertainment in Amarillo, Texas, was one of the best-performing music merchandisers. Its stock (HAST) nearly doubled from its Dec. 31, 2003, close of \$4.23 to its Dec. 31, 2004, close of \$8.28. At year's end, Hastings' market capitalization totaled \$94.7 million.

Trans World Entertainment continued its upswing since its shares (TWMC) hit a low of \$3.63 on Dec. 31, 2002. At the end of 2004, Trans World shares had increased 75.1% from their

(Continued on page 36)

Targeting Illicit Uploaders

New Service Identifies Piracy Source

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—Internet security firm BayTSP is adding a tool to its arsenal in the fight against piracy.

The Los Gatos, Calif.-based company has debuted its FirstSource service, which identifies the first user who uploads copyrighted content to the eDonkey and Bit Torrent peer-to-peer networks. BayTSP (TSP stands for "tracking security protection") says it has record label and studio clients but declines to provide specific names.

Though industry experts applaud FirstSource, they say the speed with which media files are being distributed on P2P networks means the service will not have a long-term effect against piracy.

"You can alert infringers early and hope that it has an impact. Unfortunately, the content may have already started to multiply exponentially," says Eric Garland, CEO of P2P market research company BigChampagne. He says FirstSource "is another tool, [but] this kind of piracy is here to stay."

According to BigChampagne, overall P2P use continues to grow. In November 2004, P2Ps had almost 7.5 million simultaneous users worldwide, up from 6.3 million the month before. Usage last year reached its peak in April, with about 7.6 million simultaneous users.

"The bottom line is, these files get out there and are pirated literally millions of times a month, unless we get between the pirates and the files," says Marc Morgenstern, VP/GM of Loudeye's asset protection and promotions operation, which runs

Internet security firm Overpeer. "Piracy has expanded with the growth of bandwidth around the world, and these files are exploding into distribution so quickly. All it takes is one file."

BayTSP CEO Mark Ishikawa says FirstSource was developed to make initial uploaders think twice about posting material. The program works

by identifying the Internet protocol address of the first propagator and allowing clients to immediately send a takedown notice, contact the propagator's Internet service provider or commence other action.

BayTSP's regular service is similar, but does not focus on the first uploader.

"With the IP address, a client has the option of filing a subpoena with the individual's ISP to learn the individual's name and address," Ishikawa says. "Our idea is that if you can make people understand that we can identify them as the first uploaders,

they run a very high risk of being held liable for damages incurred when the pirated files they made available are copied hundreds of thousands of times."

The Motion Picture Assn. of America says FirstSource should make P2P uploaders wary.

"Hopefully this announcement will reaffirm to individuals that they can't be fil-

ters of mass piracy anonymously," MPAA director of worldwide Internet enforcement Chad Tilbury says. "FirstSource fills a gap in the enforcement realm."

The Recording Industry Assn. of America declined to comment. The Video Software Dealers Assn. could not be reached by press time.



ISHIKAWA: 'WE CAN ID INITIAL UPLOADERS'



MORGENSTERN: PIRACY IS LINKED TO BANDWIDTH

'Files get out there and are pirated literally millions of times a month.'

—MARC MORGENSTERN, LOUDEYE

Ninja Tune Ramps Up Licensing Efforts

London-based electronic label **Ninja Tune** has been aggressive in the licensing department, employing two full-time staffers to “shop things as much as possible,” says **Jeff Wayne**, who runs the company’s North American office in Montreal.

This year Ninja Tune will issue a set of limited-edition toys, each sold with a 3-inch CD. The label will release two full-length CD editions of **Amon Tobin’s** soundtrack to the latest videogame in **UbiSoft’s** “Splinter Cell” series. In the last few years, Ninja Tune has licensed songs to more than a dozen games.

Yet the label is still selective in its ventures. “When I hear songs in commercials, I always get a dirty feeling,” Wayne says. “Videogames



WAYNE: FINDING AN AUDIENCE OF GAMERS

kind of fall in line with the music industry. A lot of them are developed by good independent companies, so it doesn’t feel as gross. It’s better than shilling luxury cars.”

Indeed, Ninja Tune prefers to stay away from TV advertisements. Wayne says there’s a constant struggle between his independent ethos and the need to find a wider audience for his artists.

“There’s a million holes in the theory, obviously,” Wayne says, “but I would assume the majority of people buying Ninja Tune records are playing videogames as opposed to buying BMWs.”

UbiSoft will release “Splinter Cell 3” in March for Xbox. Ninja Tune will issue a stereo mix of the CD this month, and a 5.1 surround mix of the soundtrack will arrive in the spring. It’s a far larger roll-out than Ninja Tune typically gives its acts. Wayne says the “Splinter Cell” games sell about 2 million copies, and he wants to take advantage of that reach.

Wayne aims to have the album stocked alongside the game. “We’re searching for good indie game retailers,” he says. “Most retailers are set in their ways, but we’re finding plenty who are adventurous.”

He says Ninja Tune retains the master and publishing rights on most of its catalog, making it easy to license quickly. Yet as majors jump on the videogame handwagon,

he fears indies may lose that outlet.

“Hopefully [videogames] won’t get to the point of major Hollywood movies, where songs are just paid to be in a movie and don’t make any sense.”

RECORD PACE: Shares in New Hope, Minn.-based **Navarre** closed Dec. 31, 2004, at \$17.60, nearly three times their price (\$6.08) at the end of 2003. Strong gains in DVD and software marked the company’s stellar year, but recently appointed VP/GM **Bob Freese** says music will be a huge priority in 2005.

First, however, the company may need to make some slight adjustments, according to Freese. Late last summer, Navarre restructured its sales staff (*Billboard* Aug. 28, 2004) and began beefing up its telephone sales team. There are now four employees in that division, compared with one about a year ago.

“To really penetrate that independent retail, we had to increase the inside sales team, and all these guys do is call the mom-and-pop stores around the country,” Freese says. “As retail consolidated, we needed to find ways we can still pen-

trate that indie world. That’s something I’m going to really encourage us to continue to expand.”

Additionally, Freese has set to increasing Navarre’s number of college reps. There were 12 when he took over in November 2004, and there could be 24 by the end of this month. Freese says adding

The Indies
By Todd Martens
tmartens@billboard.com



these reps is an important step in bringing new indie labels into the Navarre fold.

“We’re identifying areas where we can offer more marketing services to our labels,” Freese says. “We have always been a great distribution, back-room, accounting company, but that may not be the first thing that will attract a label. To get a label, we really need to show that we are hip enough to market these records.”

MADACY HOLIDAY: For the chart week ending Dec. 25, 2004, Montreal-

based **Madacy Entertainment** placed six distributed records on *Billboard’s* Top Independent Albums chart. The company regularly has success around the holidays, thanks to its **Thomas Kinkadee** series, but this year it scored its biggest hit with a **Ray Charles** set.

“Ray Charles Celebrates a Gospel Christmas With the Voices of Jubilation!” peaked at No. 4 on the indie chart, and even breached The *Billboard* 200, making it the third Charles CD to land on the big chart in 2004. Madacy was able to distribute the album through a deal with DVD handler **Ventura Distribution**.

Thousand Oaks, Calif.-based Ventura owns **Urban Works Entertainment**, which began distributing the Charles Christmas video last year. Ventura contacted Madacy to handle the audio companion to “Gospel Christmas,” which has sold more than 68,000 copies in the United States since its September release, according to **Nielsen SoundScan**.

Urban Works also sold the DVD and CD together, and it plans to release more of such combos this year. The DVDs of hip-hop documentary “Soundz of Spirit” and high-school football documentary “Year of the Bull” will each come bundled with a soundtrack for a \$14.98 list.

Stocks

Continued from page 35

2003 close of \$7.12, to \$12.47—just off their 52-week high of \$13.08.

“In the first part of the year, the biggest move [for Trans World stock] came when it became clear that there was sustained momentum to the music business, and earnings estimates had to be raised accordingly,” Fassler says.

The stock appreciation in the second part of the year is “a little tough to explain,” he adds, “given that industry momentum has moderated and [Trans World] wasn’t meeting earnings expectations. But considering its price-to-cash-flow [ratio], it is still one of the cheapest stocks in retail, given its clean balance sheet.”

Another observer of the Trans World stock says the shares’ year-end boost resulted from recommendations by some analysts at small investment-banking firms, as well as the company’s inclusion in a *Business Week* article on cheap stocks. At year’s end, Trans World’s market capitalization totaled \$426.4 million.

Navarre was the big winner among publicly traded music wholesalers. The New Hope, Minn.-based company—which also sells computer software, videogames and DVDs—nearly tripled its stock price during 2004. Its shares (NAVR) finished the year at \$17.60, up from their 2003 close of \$6.08 (see *The Indies*, this page). That year-end price translates to a market capitalization of \$475.2 million.

Troy, Mich.-based Handleman lagged behind other traditional music merchandisers. Its customers, discount department stores, had the strongest year of all traditional music retail sectors, but Handleman stock (HDL) still finished 2004 at \$21.48, an increase of just 4.6% from its 2003 close of \$20.53. Handleman’s market capitalization was \$476.9 million.

BIG JUMP AT BIG BOXES

Moving to the mass merchants, Troy-based Kmart enjoyed the biggest jump. Its stock (KMRT) more than quadrupled from its 2003 close of \$23.95, finishing 2004 at \$98.95. Kmart filed for Chapter 11 protection in January 2002 and emerged in April 2003, and the stock market rewarded its

turnaround. Kmart’s shares reached \$109 in November 2004 but have been dropping ever since its announcement that month that it would merge with Sears.

Looking at the other discount department store chains, Target shares (TGT) finished the year at \$51.93, up 35.2% from their 2003 ending price of \$38.40.

In the consumer electronics sector, Circuit City in Richmond, Va., enjoyed the next-largest percentage increase. Its shares (CC) finished the year at \$15.64, up 54.4% from their 2003 close of \$10.13.

“Circuit City showed the world that it has a profit formula even with a choppy top line,” Fassler says. “Sales were mixed through the year, but margins held in there quite well.”

Gains for Minneapolis-based Best Buy trailed those of Circuit City in percentage terms, but Best Buy’s stock (BBY) still appreciated \$7.18, good for a 13.7% increase to its 2004 close of \$59.42.

“Best Buy had excellent fundamental performance,” Fassler observes, “but noise associated with [its] ‘customer-centricity’ program probably led to some jitters through the year, and a decelerating sales

trend led to a more sluggish stock-price performance.”

In a recent conference call with Wall Street, chain executives admitted that music was underperforming compared with other product lines, while iPod sales were strong.

“You can’t have your cake and eat it forever,” one Wall Street observer says, noting that iPod sales “hurt CD sales.”

RESULTS VARY FOR BOOK STORES

Book merchants that carry music also had decent showings, with Barnes & Noble outperforming Borders Books & Music, thanks to the former’s October 2004 spin-off of its GameStop holdings.

Barnes & Noble stock (BKS) closed 2004 at \$32.27, but after adjustments for the GameStop spinoff, it finished the year at \$23.68, according to Fassler.

Barnes & Noble stock appreciated 36.3% “when you exclude the impact of GameStop,” he adds. Barnes & Noble also “won kudos for executing what was essentially a stock buyback by calling its convertible bonds.”

Barnes & Noble’s “outperformance of Borders reflected strong

sales trends, which were evident throughout 2004,” Fassler continues. “Borders, in contrast, had a mixed year, with a disappointing third-quarter performance. But the company’s earnings held relatively well, despite soft sales and a modest multiple,” allowing its stock (BGP) to gain ground for the full year. It finished 2004 at \$25.40, up 17.5% from its 2003 close of \$21.62.

Amazon.com (AMZN), on the other hand, suffered a 15.8% decline from its 2003 close of \$52.62, to \$44.29 at the end of 2004. It nevertheless has a market capitalization of nearly \$17 billion, roughly eight times that of Barnes & Noble, even though the two companies’ total sales are about the same.

On the video side, Blockbuster shares (BBI) were cut nearly in half in 2004. The stock ended 2003 at \$17.95 and dropped 46.9% by the end of 2004, to \$9.54. Hollywood Entertainment (HLYW) finished 2004 at \$13.75, good for a 5% increase from its 2003 close of \$13.09. At year’s end, Hollywood management was fighting off a hostile takeover bid from Blockbuster.

Is Warner Music Group IPO On The Horizon?

It is widely believed on Wall Street that **Warner Music Group** is poised to do a public stock offering, maybe as soon as this summer. This comes on the heels of WMG's third successful refinancing (*Billboard*, Jan. 8) since an investment group led by **Edgar Bronfman Jr.** and **Thomas H. Lee Partners** (which includes **Bain Capital**, **Providence Equity Partners** and Bronfman's **Lexa Partners**) acquired WMG in February 2004.

In the latest refinancing, the company issued some \$700 million in debentures, which was used to pay equity shareholders a \$680 million return.

Since putting up \$1.25 billion toward the \$2.6 billion acquisition, the investment partners have taken out about \$1.23 billion, leaving about \$20 million in equity in WMG. As of Sept. 30, 2004, shareholders' equity was listed at \$978 million, but that was before a \$350 million payout announced in October and the latest \$680 million return, which was split between a dividend and a share buyback.



BRONFMAN: BETTING ON EXEC'S EXPERIENCE

While those numbers suggest that the balance sheet actually carries a negative net worth for shareholder equity, a source familiar with the situation suggests that some of the \$350 million payout reported in October was made before Sept. 30 and that a small amount of shareholder equity remains in WMG.

If a financial company had acquired a retailer through a leveraged buyout and then somehow removed most of the equity, the majors would have squealed like stuck pigs, since they provide credit to retail.

That's exactly what happened when **Sun Capital** acquired **Musicland Group** by merely assuming the company's liabilities, without putting any equity in the chain. It took awhile

before all the majors agreed to continue providing credit and other normal terms of trade to Musicland under the new ownership.

But in the current situation, there is little risk to retail, because of the WMG leveraged balance sheet. When dealing with suppliers, retailers' main concern is whether or not a particular label or distributor has the financial wherewithal to assume responsibility for returns.

With WMG expected to eventually achieve \$500 million-\$600 million in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, retail need not worry.

Indeed, what really shows the strength of the WMG turnaround is that sophisticated Wall Street institutional investors were eager to buy into the private debt placement of the company, even though they could see that the refinancings would leave behind a balance sheet that is debt-laden but almost equity-free.

With Wall Street's hunger for WMG securities, there seems to be a belief that an IPO is imminent. Listen to what **Bishop Cheen**, a director at Charlotte, N.C., **Wachovia Securities**, has to say: "The next shoe to drop is the proposed IPO that could come as soon as the summer of 2005."

WMG had no comment.

There is no guarantee that it will occur, but when one looks at the various bonds and notes issued by WMG, one of the offerings has an unusual call structure: If it's not exercised beginning on June 15, the actual premium to bondholders increases within three months, Cheen reports.

If WMG issues stock before the premium kicks in, it can buy back the bond at par, saving the company money and increasing shareholder value. That makes for a "motivating window," according to Cheen, if the shareholders determine at that time that the market is favorable to a public equity offering.

Another executive familiar with the U.S. capital markets and the music industry says the word on the Street is that a well-known New York investment bank is already preparing for an IPO that will value WMG at \$6 billion.

That's more than double the \$2.6 billion paid for the company. The amount may sound far-fetched to some, but consider that **Scott Sperling**, managing director of Thomas H. Lee

Partners, valued WMG at \$3.5 billion only four days after his group acquired it. And that was before WMG initiated a restruc-

Retail Track
By Ed Christman
echristman@billboard.com



turing that included lopping off \$250 million in overhead.

So far, the new management has shown that it is good at cutting costs, which is what the debt market has bought into. But is that enough to make an IPO fly? Another Wall Street analyst says that Bronfman and company likely will be touting the new revenue streams from downloads and wireless when selling any offering.

"It will all be about the future

... about **Apple** downloads and mobile phones," he says. "But they have yet to do anything that shows that they can grow the business."

That analyst is of course talking about whether **Lyor Cohen** and the management teams he has installed or inherited at the various WMG labels can spark market-share growth after years of erosion.

That remains to be seen, but it is clear that Bronfman and his investors have been betting on Cohen's track record as an integral part of the plan from the very beginning. If an IPO occurs this summer, it almost takes out of the equation the A&R factor and whether management can build the company, since it will still be too early to pass judgment.

"If they can get the company valued at even \$3 billion in an IPO, with the initial investors already getting back almost their total investment already, Tommy Lee and Bain and company will look like geniuses to their investors," the executive familiar with the capital markets says.

CATCHING UP: The **Sony BMG Music Entertainment Sales** field staff has been set for a while, but **Retail Track** hasn't had a chance to report on it.

In Los Angeles, **Gary Kelly** is the sales manager, and **Bobby Sherman** is the marketing director. **Christine Eichelberger** is marketing director in Seattle. For Dallas, **Drew Kantor** is the marketing director, and **Jerry Wilkie** is the sales manager. In Chicago, **Wayne Chiodo** is the marketing director, and **Tony Camardo** is the sales manager, while **Diane Steffens** is marketing director in Detroit.

Coming east, in New York, **Larry Feldstein** is the marketing manager, and **Steve Kennedy** is the sales manager. In Atlanta, **Chris Stone** is the marketing manager, and **John Hawn** is the sales manager.

On the national staff, **Paul Calabretta** has been named senior director of sales, while **Barry Levine** is senior director of marketing. The label relations staff includes **David Smith**, **John Conway** and **Patty Schreiber**.

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Wireless Biz Ironing Out Music Kinks

BY ANTONY BRUNO

The outlook for mobile music in 2005 can be summed up in one word: more.

Wireless operators say they will introduce more content, more services, more music-optimized devices and more partnerships with music labels—which they hope will lead to an increase in customers and sales.

“A big part of [this] year is increasing our take rate and pulling in more customers outside of the hip-hop user base,” says Eileen Merciliott, director of digital media products for Nextel.

In the short term, music will remain primarily a tool for personalizing mobile phones with such applications as master ringtones and ringback tones. But the ultimate goal for the music and wireless industries is to enable more advanced music services that use broadband wireless networks and music-optimized phones as the means of distribution.

ISSUES IN NEED OF RESOLUTION

Both industries expect consumers to be able to purchase, download and play digital music on their wireless devices before year's end. Behind the scenes, major efforts are under way to resolve the outstanding digital-rights-management issues that concern music labels. But the mobile industry faces other issues as well, including establishing a standard content rating system, managing support for various digital music file formats and working out business models with content providers.

Essential to the success of these initiatives is a close working relationship with the music industry, and wireless executives hope their counterparts in the music field will match their level of activity and commitment. Although labels receive the largest portion of revenue gained from mobile music services, some in the wireless industry are concerned about the music sector's contributions to the market's development.

“To date, the wireless industry has been doing all the leg-work, going to the labels and asking them to get on board

with initiatives,” says Michael Gallelli, director of content and acquisitions for T-Mobile USA. “[The innovation] has been done by the wireless side, and I think it's important for labels to start contributing to the innovation pool.”

The wireless industry recognizes that DRM concerns are largely responsible for the music industry's careful pace.

“It's a concern for everybody,” says Mark Nagel, director of entertainment and premium content for Cingular. “It's not something we're going to let completely dominate the business, but it is something we're working on.”

Another wireless-industry initiative expected to gain traction this year is a standard rating system for content. Wireless carriers want to expand the range of content they offer subscribers, and at the same time begin targeting younger first-time wireless consumers. A rating system, they say, is necessary to ensure a smooth user experience, particularly when offering

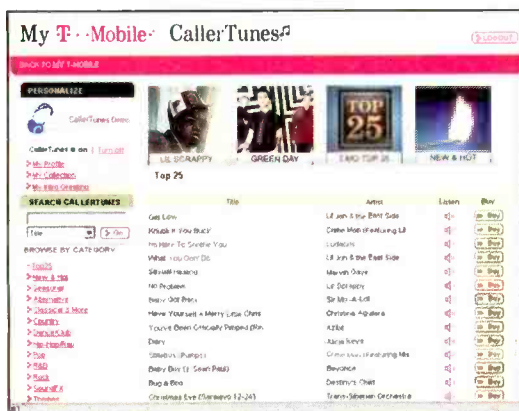
over-the-air music download services.

“It's important to advise customers of the content they're accessing, and it makes it easier to roll out edgier content if they understand what they're getting,” Merciliott says.

The wireless industry also hopes to resolve such technical issues as competing file formats for digital music. But questions about business models, like how subscribers will be charged for wirelessly downloading music and how the revenue will be shared, remain the biggest hurdles.

“We may have a technical solution before we have a business model,” Gallelli says. “Publishers and labels have to find a way to work with each other so we don't stall or hinder the pace of development. Future opportunities will require fast deployment and a willingness to try new business models.”

The music industry has devoted much time recently to finding solutions to licensing-rights issues. For example, EMI Music Publishing and Sony BMG Music Entertainment forged an agreement Dec. 17 that sets guidelines for clearing rights between the two companies for master ringtones, ringbacks and other digital delivery options (*Billboard*, Dec. 25, 2004). Warner/Chappell Music Publishing and Warner Music Group have also forged an alliance.



Wireless providers such as T-Mobile USA are working with the music industry to increase content offerings.



No. 1: Nelly, left, and Tim McGraw's duet refuses to die, far outpacing the rest of the Launch streams field during the past month.

LAUNCH: Top 20 Streams (Dec. 6, 2004–Jan. 2, 2005)

1	NELLY FEATURING TIM MCGRAW	5,339,515
2	CIARA	3,840,268
3	MARIO	3,132,706
4	EMINEM	3,030,932
5	SIMPLE PLAN	2,898,028
6	EMINEM	2,565,958
7	GREEN DAY	2,513,371
8	SNOOP DOGG	2,494,408
9	DESTINY'S CHILD	2,475,836
10	DESTINY'S CHILD	2,401,536
11	LINDSAY LOHAN	2,316,357
12	USHER FEATURING ALICIA KEYS	2,311,458
13	ASHANTI	2,267,611
14	KELLY CLARKSON	2,197,389
15	GWEN STEFANI	2,116,641
16	JESSE McCARTNEY	2,094,828
17	JAY-Z/LINKIN PARK	1,999,209
18	JOJO	1,923,264
19	FANTASIA	1,858,353
20	ASHLEE SIMPSON	1,797,834

The top 20 audio and video streams (combined) for the four weeks ending Jan. 2. Source: Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems



Nos. 9 & 10: Destiny's Child made a big splash with comeback album "Destiny Fulfilled." Two of its tracks have found their way into Launch's top 10.



Apple's Play Date

The hottest consumer electronic device on the market has found a new angle. Playboy.com is offering iPod Photo owners 25 free digital Playmate images in a promotional effort dubbed "iBod."

The images do not feature nudity. Those looking to download racier content will have to subscribe to one of Playboy's various member-based Web archives.

The offering is Playboy's latest effort to find a place in the portable digital space. Most recently, the company partnered with content developer Dwango Wireless to bring Playboy-themed images, videoclips, ringtones and games to mobile phones.



Indies On Demand

Indie-music fans have a new outlet to find videos of their favorite artists. On New Year's Eve, NetMusic Entertainment launched a video-on-demand service that provides digital access to clips from such acts as the Dropkick Murphys, Girls Against Boys, Leftover Salmon and Nick Cave.

The service also features on-demand downloads of certain feature-length films and enables live broadcast of concerts, sporting events and the like, including those filmed in high definition.

With its recent acquisition of indie music giant Audio Lunchbox, NetMusic claims an online catalog of more than 1 million indie tracks from 4,000 labels.

In conjunction with its VOD launch, NetMusic also unveiled its rebranded Web site, based on Audio Lunchbox's design. The company said it is in the process of acquiring additional content rights from major labels and film studios for its VOD service, digital jukebox and music store.



Mobile Dead

Deadheads may soon augment their mini-van bumper stickers with Grateful Dead images on their mobile phones, thanks to a partnership between mobile media application provider Summus and Grateful Dead Productions.

To mark the band's 40th anniversary, the companies have made available a collection of classic Grateful Dead artwork and icons. Fans may also download more than a dozen videoclips selectively edited from the recently rereleased DVD "The Grateful Dead Movie" to install as mobile phone screensavers.

NEWTECH

Digital Lifestyles Group is targeting the 33-million-strong teenage demographic with "hip-e," a PC and media system designed by teens.

The system's centerpiece is the hip-e "node," a modular digital media hub that offers Internet access, instant messaging and online shopping. Users can access all hip-e content and services through a portal dubbed the "hip-e hangout," which links to selected teen-oriented Web sites.

The node includes a built-in TV tuner with digital recording capabilities, CD/DVD player/recorder and MusicMatch digital music store connectivity. It also contains docking slots for such optional hip-e accessories as a 512MB MP3 player and a prepaid wireless phone with service from Sprint.



All of the elements are modular and interchangeable. For instance, the flat-screen monitor can be detached from the computer and hung on the wall like a TV screen. The unit's speaker system can be removed and integrated with the MP3 player for a portable digital boombox.

Digital Lifestyles says it designed the hip-e system after conducting focus group sessions with teenagers. This interactive philosophy also spills over to its marketing strategy. The company recruited more than 1,000 teens in the top 10 markets to host online sessions with their friends to promote hip-e.

The system retails for \$1,700-\$1,900, depending on the hardware bundle selected.

ANTONY BRUNO

Creative Group's 5.1 Boom

BY CHRISTOPHER WALSH

NEW YORK—The growing demand for high-resolution, surround-sound audio mixing and sound design is vividly illustrated at Creative Group, a large and fast-growing technical and creative services provider based in Times Square.

Founded as a visual business, the privately owned Creative Group now features three identical surround mixing suites among the 18 studios in its 30,000-square-foot facility.

With a client base that includes media giants like Viacom, Disney and Time Warner, Creative Group makes audio recording studios look antiquated. To call its suites "cutting-edge" does not do them justice.

Indeed, the breadth of work the facility's sound designers and clients can accomplish—and the speed at which it happens—is dizzying.

"I've done this 22 years, did a lot of major records in L.A., and I've done a lot of post-production," says sound designer/mixer Troy Krueger, a veteran of recording studios including the Village, Sunset Sound and Sunset Sound Factory, all in Los Angeles. "This is hands-down the finest studio I'll ever work in. Many people come back and say they're the finest studios in New York, if not the country, for what we do."

Krueger, with sound designer/mixers David Jaunai and Doug DiFranco, occupy Creative Group's audio suites featuring Pro Tools high-definition workstations and a custom-built, 5-terabyte Rorke Data storage area network.

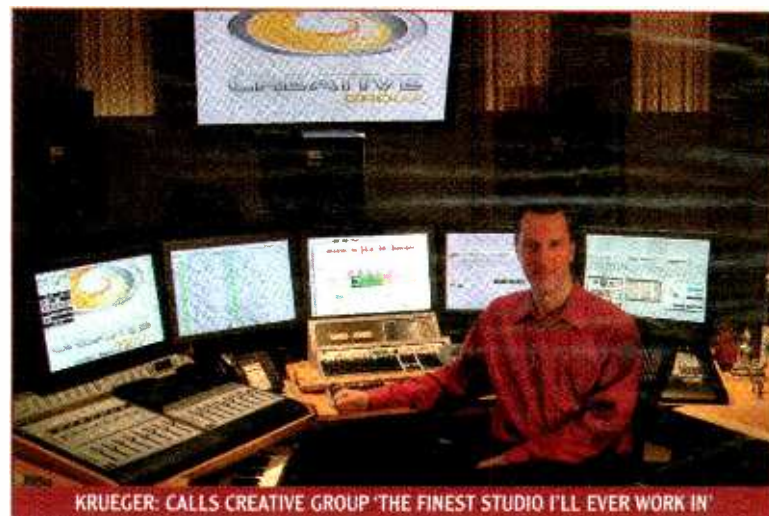
"We have these Pro Tools systems that are definitely on steroids," says Krueger, who has programmed a database of 59 music libraries comprising 415,000 music cuts, as well as

215,000 sound effects. "I'm getting to the point where there's no outboard gear that's auxiliary to our mixing; it's all internal plug-ins."

Among Jaunai's clients is iN Demand Networks, a video-on-demand and pay-per-view provider. It is a relationship that ensures more surround-sound work for Creative Group. "They have two HD channels coming out full-blown," Jaunai says, "so everything on there is 5.1-channel."

Creative Group's own HD TV channel, Fangoria TV, is negotiating a carrier agreement. "We soft-launched on the INHD network, which is owned by iN Demand," Creative Group president Joseph Avallone explains. "We started by broadcasting New York's [Greenwich] Village Halloween parade in HD."

Most recently, Creative Group announced the acquisition of assets of the Star-Log Group, publishers of the



KRUEGER: CALLS CREATIVE GROUP 'THE FINEST STUDIO I'LL EVER WORK IN'

"Fangoria" and "Star-Log" horror/sci-fi magazines. The Star-Log acquisition adds another member to Creative Group's growing family, which includes subsidiaries 91 East in Bridgehampton, N.Y.; Creative Group (CT) in Bristol, Conn.; and New York-based design and production company Moe Greene Associates.

At a time when many recording

studios are downsizing, Creative Group is averaging 25 projects per day at its Times Square headquarters.

"I have to provide a facility that makes the producer extremely productive," Avallone says. "What he creates has to be better than what he can get anywhere else, and I have to meet his price point. If I can do those things, I can be very successful."

JANUARY 15 2005 Billboard® PRODUCTION CREDITS

BILLBOARD'S NO. 1 SINGLES (JANUARY 8, 2005)

CATEGORY	HOT 100	R&B	COUNTRY
TITLE Artist/ Producer (Label)	LET ME LOVE YOU Mario/ S Storch (3rd Street/J/RMG)	LET ME LOVE YOU Mario/ S Storch (3rd Street/J/RMG)	SOME BEACH Blake Shelton/ B. Braddock (Warner Bros. [Nashville])
RECORDING STUDIO(S) (Location) Engineer(s)	SOUNDVILLA (Miami Beach, Fla.) Kameron Houff, Conrad Golding	SOUNDVILLA (Miami Beach, Fla.) Kameron Houff, Conrad Golding	THE TRACKING ROOM @ EMERALD (Nashville, Tenn.) Ed Seay
CONSOLE(S)/ DAW(S)	SSL 4056 G+	SSL 4056 G+	SSL 9000 J
MULTITRACK RECORDER(S)/PLAYBACK MEDIA	Pro Tools HD	Pro Tools HD	Pro Tools HD
RECORDING MEDIA	Pro Tools HD	Pro Tools HD	Pro Tools HD
MIX DOWN STUDIO(S) (Location) Engineer(s)	LARRABEE NORTH (North Hollywood, Calif.) Manny Marroquin	LARRABEE NORTH (North Hollywood, Calif.) Manny Marroquin	COOL TOOLS AUDIO (Franklin, Tenn.) Ed Seay
CONSOLE(S)/DAW(S)	SSL 9000 K, Pro Tools 5.1.3	SSL 9000 K, Pro Tools 5.1.3	Digidesign Pro Control
MIXDOWN RECORDER(S)/MEDIA	Ampex ATR 102	Ampex ATR 102	Pro Tools HD
MIX DOWN MEDIA	Quantegy GP9	Quantegy GP9	Pro Tools HD
MASTERING (Location) Engineer	HIT FACTORY (New York) Herb Powers, Jr.	HIT FACTORY (New York) Herb Powers, Jr.	MASTERMIX (Nashville, Tenn.) Hank Williams
CD/CASSETTE MANUFACTURER	BMG	BMG	WEA

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Schmitt Up For Five Grammys

Al Schmitt, winner of 12 Grammy Awards, is a multiple nominee for the 47th annual ceremonies, to be held Feb. 13 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

This year, Schmitt earned five mentions. Two are for best engineered album, non-classical, for Diana Krall's "The Girl in the Other Room" and "Genius Loves Company," which paired the late Ray Charles with various artists.

Schmitt's three other noms are also for "Genius," in the categories of album and record of the year (for the song "Here We Go Again"), as well as the inaugural best surround sound album award.

Topping off his Grammy-related endeavors is his appearance in "Tom Dowd and the Language of Music," a nominee for best long-form music video.

"I thought it was a terrific effort and a very courageous effort on

her part," Schmitt says of Krall's album. It is a departure for her because it features several original compositions.

"She deserves the right to do this; she's been wanting to write for a long time and has been writing fabulous melodies.

"Some of it was made at Avatar Studios in New York," Schmitt adds, "but most of it was done at Capitol [in Hollywood], and we mixed it at Capitol." Schmitt also mixed "Genius Loves Company" there.

But it is "Tom Dowd and the Language of Music" for which Schmitt reserves the most praise. Along with his uncle, engineer/studio owner Harry Smith, Schmitt calls Dowd a primary influence on his career.

"He just took me like a kid brother and taught me everything," Schmitt recalls. "He was an amazing human, a giving guy, a fun guy to be around. I'm happy for the Dowd family that this recognition has come now, and young guys get a chance to see what this is all about and what it was like when we were making records back in the '50s."

ACQUISITION: Shortly before Christmas, Tokyo-based Yamaha Corp. announced that it had reached an agreement to acquire 100% of the

common stock of Steinberg Media Technologies GmbH (billboard.biz, Dec. 22, 2004).

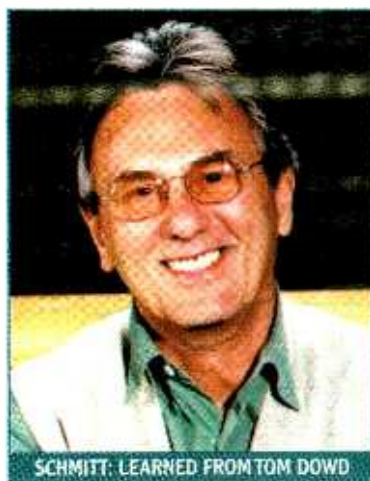
The acquisition includes Steinberg's U.S. sales operations. Yamaha's U.S. subsidiary, Yamaha Corp. of America, will over-

see U.S. sales of software developed by Steinberg. The total acquisition is valued at \$28.5 million.

Hamburg-based Steinberg Media Technologies, which became part of Pinnacle Systems Group in 2003, manufactures and markets music and media production software, including the Nuendo and Cubase platforms.

Yamaha and Steinberg have had a relationship since the mid-1990s, when the former began using the latter's computer music products and bundled software.

More recently, the relationship has grown with the Studio Connections initiative begun in 2004, a project in which Yamaha hardware, such as digital mixers and synthesizers, will be seamlessly integrated with Steinberg's software products.



SCHMITT: LEARNED FROM TOM DOWD

Studio
Monitor™
By Christopher Walsh
cwalsh@billboard.com



F.O.D. plans U.K. launch with Chris Field's debut, 'Powis Square'



Global



EMI's Peter Ende applauds a German court ruling on ringtone rights

UNITED KINGDOM / EUROPE / ASIA / JAPAN / AUSTRALIA / AFRICA / CANADA

HMV Shuns iPod Users

Microsoft To Develop Software For British Retailer

BY TOM FERGUSON and JULIANA KORANTENG

LONDON—HMV's new music download service will be available to U.K. consumers in the second half of this year—unless they happen to be iPod users.

HMV Group announced its plans for the service, which is being developed with Microsoft, in a Dec. 22, 2004, statement to the London Stock Exchange. A spokesman says HMV "will be offering a software situation that is not iPod-compatible."

The British retailer says it is investing about £10 million (\$19.28 million) in the launch, including capital and marketing costs. The service will be available at the retailer's existing U.K. Web site, hmv.co.uk.

HMV has not begun negotiations with record companies about licensing repertoire for the service. Accordingly, no information on pricing has been issued.

The service will be based on software that



GILES BRAND HAS CLOUD

will create a customized "virtual jukebox." HMV says this will enable customers to "find, buy, enjoy and manage their music online all in one place." Microsoft and HMV are developing the software, which will be available on disc in stores or as a download from the Web site.

Song downloads will be compatible with Microsoft's Windows Media Audio standard.

A limited number of digital players are already available in HMV's 200 U.K. stores, and the company is looking at expanding that range. Although HMV stocks Apple Computer's iPods, the spokesman says that situation "will be reviewed."

HMV currently offers downloads on its U.K. site through a deal with digital-music service supplier OD2. However, OD2 has not been involved in the development of the new project. HMV says it is in talks with several companies to handle fulfillment and back-room functions. OD2 did not

(Continued on page 46)

UMI Opens 'Factory'

New Division Connects Repertoire, Manufacturing

BY EMMANUEL LEGRAND

LONDON—With the music business developing a wider range of physical carriers and digital platforms, Universal Music International has reshaped its manufacturing and logistics operations to better accommodate the needs of its creative units.

Central to the plan is the creation of the Virtual Factory, a London-based division that will link UMI's repertoire centers and its manufacturing arm.

UMI VP of asset management Rahmyn Kress has taken the new role of managing director of Virtual Factory. The division has 18 staffers in London and 20 in Hanover, Germany, the homebase of manufacturing operation Universal Manufacturing & Logistics.

London-based Kress reports to UMI executive VP/CFO Boyd Muir and executive VP of marketing and A&R Max Hole. Kress joined Universal 10 years ago and was named VP of asset management in September 2000.

Muir says, "The formation of the Virtual Factory is a progressive step to help the labels find

the most effective route to a changing marketplace through manufacturing—whether physical or digital—and through our retail and distribution partners. Those partners, in turn, bring our music to consumers in all the various formats which they want today."



MUIR: BIZ IN TRANSITION

Kress will act as liaison between the repertoire units and the division responsible for producing and delivering music to distribution and retail partners. Hence the dual reporting structure, according to a UMI spokesman.

Muir says Kress and his team have been instrumental in "the successful digitization of the company's entire back catalog. He is uniquely qualified to manage the transition of our business in this complex, challenging and fast-changing area."

For Hole, the creation of the Virtual Factory "will ensure that we can produce and deliver our repertoire in all current—and future—formats and through all distribution channels."

Muir adds that the organizational changes position UMI "to deliver our repertoire to

(Continued on page 44)

The Gift Of Music

Somerset Fine-Tunes Deal With Hallmark

BY LARRY LeBLANC

TORONTO—Canada's Somerset Entertainment is seeking a bigger slice of the U.S. gift music business.

Following a 2004 deal with the Hallmark Licensing division of Hallmark Cards, Somerset has placed an exclusive series of 38 CDs in 2,000 U.S. Hallmark Gold Crown stores. Titles in the series, which carry the Hallmark Music brand name, sell for \$15.95.

Toronto-based Somerset is paying an undisclosed licensing fee to Kansas City, Mo.-based Hallmark Licensing and is responsible for sales and distribution of the series.

"It is major that we have established ourselves in 2,000 stores," Somerset president Andy Burgess says. "All of these stores make their own buying decisions."

"We liked the fact that Somerset knows the speciality store business and knows what it takes to reach the independent special retailer," Hallmark Licensing VP Jay Quickel says.

The series launched in March 2004 with 32 titles. Since then, six have been added, and another six are slated for March. Included are individual-artist titles featuring Elvis Presley, Nat "King" Cole and Louis Armstrong, as well as compilations of 1950s pop, jazz, country, Christian and Celtic music.

"For a program that is only eight months old, we're posting a solid performance we are happy with," Quickel says.

Hallmark, which has 4,200 U.S. stores, is no stranger to selling music. The company produced its

(Continued on page 44)

Martina McBride's "My Heart" will be Hallmark's exclusive Valentine's Day 2005 album.



Photo: Theo Wargo/WireImage.com

JANUARY 15 2005



JAPAN		UNITED KINGDOM		FRANCE		GERMANY	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
<small>(SOUNDCAN JAPAN) 01/04/05</small>		<small>(THE OFFICIAL UK CHARTS CO.) 01/03/05</small>		<small>(SNEP/FOP/TITE-LIVE) 01/04/05</small>		<small>(MEDIA CONTROL) 01/05/05</small>	
SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES	
1	NEW	1	2	1	2	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	2
3	2	3	4	3	3	3	4
4	3	4	3	4	8	4	6
5	4	5	6	5	4	5	13
6	NEW	6	7	6	7	6	5
7	13	7	13	7	10	7	3
8	10	8	5	8	5	8	15
9	6	9	15	9	6	9	14
10	9	10	10	10	9	10	7
ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS	
1	NEW	1	13	1	NEW	1	1
2	1	2	3	2	1	2	4
3	NEW	3	5	3	3	3	6
4	4	4	10	4	2	4	2
5	3	5	24	5	4	5	12
6	5	6	36	6	7	6	9
7	6	7	7	7	12	7	5
8	8	8	NEW	8	13	8	3
9	9	9	1	9	6	9	13
10	2	10	35	10	14	10	10

CANADA		ITALY		SPAIN		AUSTRALIA	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
<small>(SOUNDCAN) 01/15/05</small>		<small>(FIMI/NIELSEN) 01/03/05</small>		<small>(AFYVE/MEDIA CONTROL) 01/05/05</small>		<small>(ARIA) 01/03/05</small>	
SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES	
1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
2	2	2	5	2	1	2	3
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
4	4	4	2	4	10	4	6
5	8	5	4	5	8	5	8
6	5	6	7	6	9	6	9
7	6	7	9	7	14	7	5
8	7	8	10	8	4	8	4
9	10	9	11	9	11	9	10
10	9	10	18	10	7	10	11
ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS	
1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	4	2	2	2	2	2	3
3	1	3	4	3	3	3	4
4	3	4	3	4	6	4	9
5	7	5	5	5	10	5	7
6	9	6	7	6	5	6	6
7	5	7	9	7	8	7	2
8	RE	8	6	8	7	8	13
9	RE	9	8	9	18	9	8
10	RE	10	11	10	9	10	5

THE NETHERLANDS		SWEDEN		NORWAY		SWITZERLAND	
THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
<small>(MEGA CHARTS BV) 12/31/04</small>		<small>(GLF) 12/31/04</small>		<small>(VERDENS GANG NORWAY) 01/03/05</small>		<small>(MEDIA CONTROL) 01/04/05</small>	
SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES		SINGLES	
1	2	1	1	1	2	1	5
2	1	2	2	2	10	2	1
3	3	3	4	3	3	3	2
4	5	4	6	4	1	4	4
5	8	5	5	5	7	5	3
ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS		ALBUMS	
1	1	1	1	1	11	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	5	2	NEW
3	3	3	4	3	2	3	10
4	4	4	3	4	3	4	8
5	6	5	9	5	30	5	2

Uni Ringtone Reversal

German Court: Song Fragments Require Secondary License

BY WOLFGANG SPAHR and
EMMANUEL LEGRAND

HAMBURG—A German court ruling is forcing Universal Mobile, a division of Universal Music International, to rethink the way it licenses repertoire for use in ringtones it produces.

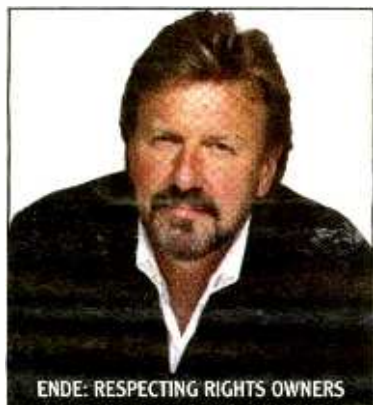
The Regional Court of Hamburg ruled before Christmas that the use of compositions for monophonic or polyphonic ringtones is not covered by a license granted by collecting societies. Such tones, the court ruled, require a secondary license from the publisher of the music, on the ground that they are an "adaptation" of the original works.

The case was brought in September 2004 by EMI Music Publishing Germany against Universal Music Germany. EMI argued that under German law, Universal's mobile unit did not have the right to license works that had not been cleared by publishers.

Before the ruling, Universal supplied monophonic or polyphonic ringtones to German mobile companies, believing that the license granted by collecting societies was sufficient.

The court's judgment has not yet been made available in full to all the parties. However, legal experts suggest that by considering ringtones as fragments of works that need to be treated as "adaptations," the ruling vindicates publishers and authors.

A source tells *Billboard* that this was the position of EMI and publishers in general. "Like any adaptation, it needs to get the approval of the authors, and that should be done through their publisher," the source says. "What the ruling says is that Universal was shopping ring-



ENDE: RESPECTING RIGHTS OWNERS

of "crucial importance." He stresses that based on this ruling, the licensing of music works for ringtones "must always be determined on a case-by-case basis by applying for permission [from] the publishers representing the authors of the works."

Hamburg-based Peter Ende, president/CEO of EMI Music Publishing Continental Europe, says, "This decision confirms the legal position of authors and publishers. It again stresses the key status of copyrights held by owners with respect to their use as ringtones."

Universal Music International says it plans to appeal the decision. "The legal questions on which the ruling was based were only addressed in a summary manner, and the grounds for the court's decision have not yet been presented to any of the parties," the company says in a statement.

It is understood that while Universal Music Germany waits to receive the judge's ruling in full, it will be seeking adaptation licenses for other ringtones through interim agreements with publishers.

Master ringtones, which are original recordings of works, are not included in the ruling. However, a German publisher says they are also fragments of works, and therefore constitute "an alteration of the copyright," which requires a specific license from the original owners through their publishers.

tones with rights that it did not control."

The source says that most of the other ringtone suppliers in Germany have been seeking copyright clearance from publishers, and that the court decision should bring Universal to do the same. "We hope they'll come to a decent view on this situation and work with [publishers] the way most of the other ringtones suppliers do," the source says.

Intellectual property lawyer Jens Schippmann of Hamburg-based law firm Kamin & Wilke says the ruling is



BURGESS: A MAJOR DEAL FOR SOMERSET



ANSLEY: STAY TRUE TO THE BRAND

During the past decade, Somerset has evolved from a peripheral "nature sounds and music" entity to a full-line label group and distributor of concept-based recordings to nontraditional outlets worldwide. The bulk of its U.S.

sales are in the alternative market—specialty/gift shops—which it services with its own sales force.

Burgess says, "Hallmark saw our expertise in nontraditional channels. They appreciate our expertise in merchandising, packaging and understanding consumers. They had confidence we could deliver an attractive line and run a program that could drive sales."

The series was developed to appeal to Hallmark's core consumer, women over 40.

Somerset says Hallmark set clear guidelines for the CDs to stay true to its brand.

"We developed positioning statements for the line in terms of what it had to accomplish," Ansley says. "Whether it was music that consumers could use for entertaining, music they could use for romantic occasions, music that would help them relax or music that was comforting and inspiring."

Despite being created by Somerset, the series is unavailable in Canada.

"Ironically, Hallmark Canada has not signed on," Burgess says with a laugh. "We're a Canadian company that beat out American competition, but the Canadians aren't sure they want it. They'll come around."

NEWSLINE

THE INTERNATIONAL WEEK IN BRIEF

MTV Networks is stepping up its European localization strategy with the rollout of specific channels for Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland.

The regions are currently serviced by MTV's Stockholm-based Nordic stream. Each of the new channels will feature tailored programming and music, local language productions and local presenters.

London-based MTV Networks Europe president/CEO Brent Hansen says the new services will provide greater choice for viewers and create opportunities for artists, labels, distributors and advertisers. "We are committed to localizing content, style and tone in all our territories around the world," Hansen says.

The broadcaster is recruiting for key posts at the new operations. The Danish channel is expected to launch in May. Start dates for the others have not been announced.



HANSEN

LARS BRANDLE

Avril Lavigne's single "Don't Tell Me" (BMG Funhouse) was named the record of 2004 at the annual Japan Radio Popular Discs Awards ceremony Dec. 13 in Tokyo.

The ceremony is sponsored by the Japan Radio Hit Research Committee, which represents 34 privately owned AM radio stations nationwide. Members of the committee voted for winners in various categories comprising chart hits by non-Japanese acts during the period from Nov. 1, 2003, to Oct. 31, 2004.

Usher and the late Ray Charles were jointly named best male vocalist for "Yeah!" (BMG Funhouse) and "Here We Go Again" (Victor Entertainment), respectively. Norah Jones won best female vocalist honors for "Sunrise" (Toshiba-EMI).

Universal Music K.K. received the best promotion prize for its campaigns on behalf of foreign music during the year.

STEVE MCCLURE

The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry has failed in its bid to prosecute a Russian optical disc manufacturer that it claims was responsible for producing high volumes of counterfeit CDs.

On behalf of a number of leading record companies, the IFPI in December 2003 launched a suit against the Moscow-based Russobit-Soft plant for damages totaling \$1,366,600.

An IFPI probe into Russobit-Soft's activities linked it to numerous illegally produced CDs, which were located both domestically and abroad. The Arbitration Court of Moscow Region, however, rejected the IFPI's move after the plant's legal representatives denied any connection with the illegal discs.

The case was the first such civil action taken against an optical disc plant in Russia. A spokesman says the IFPI will "consider its options" before deciding whether to contend the decision.

With a pirate market valued at \$332 million in 2003 and piracy levels reaching 64%, the IFPI recognizes Russia as a "priority territory."

LARS BRANDLE

The Music Managers Forum Australia has elected Peter Bayliss, managing director of Canberra-based Sunflower Entertainment, as the chairman of its board.

Kim Thomas, GM of Sydney-based Black Yak Management, was also elected vice chair for a year at the body's recent annual general meeting in Adelaide.

CHRISTIE ELIEZER

Hallmark

Continued from page 41

first promotional Christmas music release in the mid-1980s and has offered seasonal recordings each year since, through its advertising and promotion division. In 2005, the division will introduce its first exclusive Valentine's Day album, Martina McBride's "My Heart."

Hallmark launched its year-round Hallmark Music line in 1998. The series originally consisted of contemporary instrumental pop titles and some classical releases. In 2002, the line was broadened to include popular vocal artists.

Somerset scored the Hallmark license following bidding by more than 30 companies. The decision to move to an outside source for a music line licensed under the Hallmark name and sold in its stores represented a significant change for the company.

"While they had been doing music programs themselves, it was not their expertise, and they recognized that," Somerset director of premium brands Jennifer Ansley says. "They felt an outside company could do it better."

UMI

Continued from page 41

consumers irrespective of whether the format is physical or digital."

The new division was announced before Christmas as UMI was realigning its senior management in this sector.

At Universal Manufacturing & Logistics, senior VP Cor van Dijk has become nonexecutive chairman. After 31 years with the company, he is taking what is described as "the first step toward retirement." He continues to be based in Baarn, the Netherlands.

UML CFO Roger Morgan adds

stripes as head of operations, reporting to Muir. Reporting to Morgan at UML are Bodo Wiechmann, managing director of manufacturing, and Yorck Kohn, managing director of logistics. They previously reported to van Dijk.

According to the UMI spokesman, Morgan will oversee the day-to-day operations of UML, splitting his time between Hanover and London, while van Dijk "is still very much involved and will make sure that the transition and the new structure works."

"Cor is a legend in his field—the consummate professional," Muir says. "It's gratifying to know that he will continue to represent Universal Music in a number of board positions, work on various projects and assist in the transition to UMI's Virtual Factory concept."

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SLEEP IN JIM MORRISON'S BEDROOM

Jim Morrison of "the Doors" private apartment is now open for public overnight stays. In 1970, Jim and longtime girlfriend Pamela Courson moved into 8216 1/2 W. Norton Ave., West Hollywood. The 2 bedroom apartment is known amongst The Doors fans worldwide as "Jim Morrison's last known U.S. residence" prior to his moving to Paris in March 1971, where he reportedly died 4 months later. Chuck Berry and other music icons were frequent visitors at the building. Guests will be able to step back in time to the 70's restored apartment that features vintage furniture, kitchen and bathroom fixtures, and Jim Morrison posters displayed throughout. It also has modern conveniences such as a microwave, cable TV/VCR, and free wireless Internet access. Guests can stay at a daily rate of \$200, or a discounted weekly rate of \$1000. "We are offering any rock 'n roll buff or Doors fans the chance of a lifetime" stated Cheri Woods, owner of the historic building, named "Cheri Amour". For reservations call (818) 225-5347 or E-Mail: cheriwoods@elvis.com Go to website: www.cheriwoods.com

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HMV Shuns iPod Users

Continued from page 41

return calls by press time.

Mark Mulligan, U.K.-based senior analyst/research director at Jupiter Research, says the industry should

not be shocked that HMV has decided to take control of its digital-music operation.

"This isn't a reflection of the service that OD2 has been providing, but a natural progression," Mulligan says. "HMV has a huge amount of retail expertise. It knows a lot about selling physical CDs online. So it's natural for them to want to own the [digital] service for themselves."

Mulligan says traditional brick-and-mortar retailers could be the

dark horses in the increasingly competitive digital-music sector.

FOR THE MAINSTREAM CONSUMER

He notes that digital is still a young business that appeals mostly to early adopters. "The next stage in the sector's growth is when the mainstream music consumer comes online," Mulligan says. "Music is becoming more competitively priced, with lower margins for retailers; they now want to own the relationship with the consumer. HMV is basically saying that the time is right to make that serious investment."

According to HMV Group chief

executive Alan Giles, the new service will offer "a unique opportunity to leverage the HMV brand, customer base and store network to establish a strong position in the newly emerging market for paid-for music downloads."

Alistair Baker, Microsoft U.K. managing director/VP of Europe, the Middle East and Africa, adds: "I'm delighted that the partnership extends to the development of the player, which will be constructed by a joint team from Microsoft and HMV, combining the industry knowledge of the HMV team with the software development, product expertise

and consulting skills of Microsoft."

Stuart Rowe, HMV Europe's London-based e-commerce director, is heading the development of the service.

Outside of Britain, HMV offers downloads on its Australian Web site through a deal with ninemsn, a joint venture between Microsoft and Australian media conglomerate PBL.

The HMV Web sites in Japan and Canada do not yet offer downloads. HMV will study the progress of the download service in Britain before making a decision on rolling it out to other territories.

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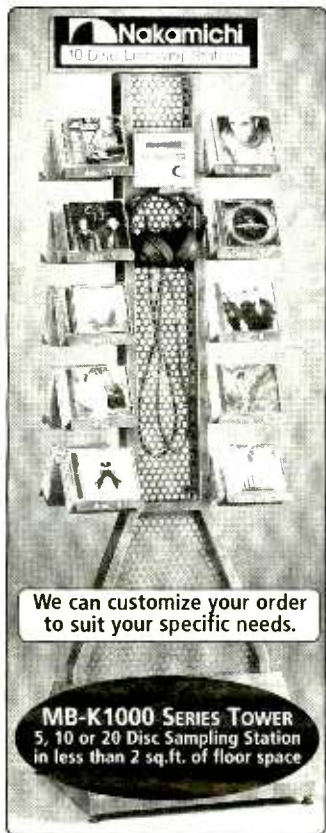
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The Game

Continued from page 13

as a high-school shooting guard took a backseat to the Game's street life of stealing cars and dealing drugs.

Then the Game's home was broken into on Oct. 1, 2001, and he was shot five times. While recuperating, he began studying the techniques of his rap role models, among them Dr. Dre, Eazy-E, Jay-Z, Ice Cube, Snoop Dogg and 2Pac.

The result is "The Documentary." Initially titled "The Game, Vol. 1," the album weaves such themes as peace, truth and hope within its hardcore raps. Besides Dr. Dre, producers include Kanye West, Just Blaze and Scott Storch. Guest artists range from Nate Dogg and 50 Cent

to Floetry and Faith Evans. Even Dr. Dre does some rapping. ("Don't ask me how I did that," Game says.)

While he doesn't like to dwell on the shooting incident, the Game also doesn't apologize for the album's often frank, autobiographical tone.

"'The Documentary' is pretty much my life," he explains. "There are 17 tracks representing the 17 years since I was put in a foster home. I'm on a straight path and have a son now. Music can be instrumental to a child, and I want to paint as positive a picture as possible. But this is my life told through me. There is graphic and violent language, but I'm not trying to glorify the lifestyle I led."

The imaging/marketing picture for "The Documentary" revolves around several main components borne out of "tastemakers' genuine response to the Game as an artist," Interscope Geffen A&M head of sales and marketing Steve

Berman says. A DVD that tells his story is also part of a limited-edition collector's package, of which 200,000 copies will be available at retail.

The Game will be featured in a print campaign on behalf of the Sean John clothing line, which is held by Seam "P. Diddy" Combs. It is said to tentatively kick off next month.

Then there is the rapper's first-time acting stint in the forthcoming theatrical film "Millionaire Boys' Club." The independent movie, which he is putting together himself, also features Michael Williams ("The Wire"). The Game is currently shopping for a distributor.

Looking back, the Game has no regrets, because "my life has made such a dramatic turn. Rap is my thing now. I'm not a star or better than anybody else. I'm just a hip-hop artist in the rawest form, down to earth and approachable."

Chesney

Continued from page 27

not anticipating anything," he says. "Kenny said, 'I'm doing this because I want to, and you're supporting me because you want to. Whatever the fans want to buy, they buy.'"

Chesney fans in six cities will have the chance to hear the album up close and personal when he plays another series of Keg in the Closet tour dates on college campuses, as he has done previously.

"We are still looking at dates and looking at colleges," Chesney says of the shows, whose proceeds go to charity. The short college tour will give his band a chance to rev up before his regular tour kicks off in March.

ISLAND LIFE

Chesney is anxious for people to hear the album and says he's grateful for the label's low-key marketing plan.

"I really felt like I wanted it to be a special project, totally for my fans," he says. "For the first time as a person and as a songwriter I felt more confident about putting myself out there on a silver platter... I didn't want to miss a beat as far as promoting my other stuff,

because the big sound systems and the big crowds are very much a part of my life, but when people hear this record, they'll hear a very much more hushed, laid-back Kenny.

"My whole life is about time and expectation and schedules when I'm on the road, and there's something about my life [in the Caribbean] that melts all that away. That's the essence of this record."

Listeners can hear the waves on the track "Somewhere in the Sun," which is actually the only song not written in the Caribbean. Chesney penned the tune two years ago when snow and ice cancelled one of his shows in Austin, leaving him stranded on his bus in a Holiday Inn parking lot, longing for the islands. He wrote the song with his bus driver, Danny Tucker, and crew members Tim Holt and Dale Hobby.

Chesney wrote "French Kissing Life" after his exhausting 2003 Margaritas 'n' Senoritas tour. "Island Boy" is a portrait of a carefree friend who Chesney says taught him to live in the moment. "There's Something Sexy About the Rain" is a sultry, romantic ballad inspired by another friend's island date.

"You never know under what circumstance or conditions or what life experiences [are] going to lead you to a song," he says. "That's what I love about this record, because I didn't write one song thinking it was going to get played

on the radio. I wrote every song from the heart and every song from a true life experience or about a true living person."

Chesney admits it's difficult to assign a genre to "Be As You Are," which he co-produced with Buddy Cannon.

"I'm still a country singer, but if you listen to the tracks of this record, I just wanted people [to feel like they were] on my boat when they heard it," he says. "I didn't necessarily want them to go to a honky-tonk. It isn't rock'n'roll and it isn't country. It's just a bunch of cool songs."

Chesney knows artists can draw fire from critics for trying something new, but he's not worried. "Not slamming the artist who did this, because I think artists should be free to do what they want to do, but this is not a Chris Gaines project," he says, referring to the album in which Garth Brooks adopted a pseudonym and rock persona.

"This is Kenny Chesney. If critics don't like it, I understand it. But deep down, everybody—no matter who you are—is suffering for the truth, and I've never made a more truthful record."

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Stocks

Continued from page 5

Analysts are quick to point out that whereas most big-media stocks with music holdings were trading north of \$70 per share five years ago, today they trade at half that amount.

At the same time, leading radio and TV broadcasters saw their stock prices cool in the last year amid concerns over the challenge from new technologies like the Internet and digital video recorders.

"Media companies were more or less moving sideways," says Harold Vogel, an independent media analyst. "I don't think investors were all that impressed. These companies are looking tired, and they're finding organic growth to be difficult."

MAKING EFFORTS TO RECOVER

While growth remains a source of concern, the parent companies of the major labels all posted stock gains in 2004, continuing a slight upward trend that started in 2003.

The stock of Universal Music Group parent Vivendi Universal bettered its 2003 finish by 32%, ending 2004 at \$32.07. The stock movement was driven by the conglomerate's

ongoing efforts to streamline its businesses and slash debt.

Sony Corp.—which completed its deal with Bertelsmann to merge Sony Music Entertainment with BMG—saw its stock price rebound from a disappointing 2003, ending the year up 12% at \$38.96.

EMI shares were up more than 66%, driven by improved operating results and ongoing speculation of an eventual merger with the now privately held Warner Music Group. EMI's stock ended the year at £2.64 (\$4.95), after opening 2004 at £1.59 (\$2.98).

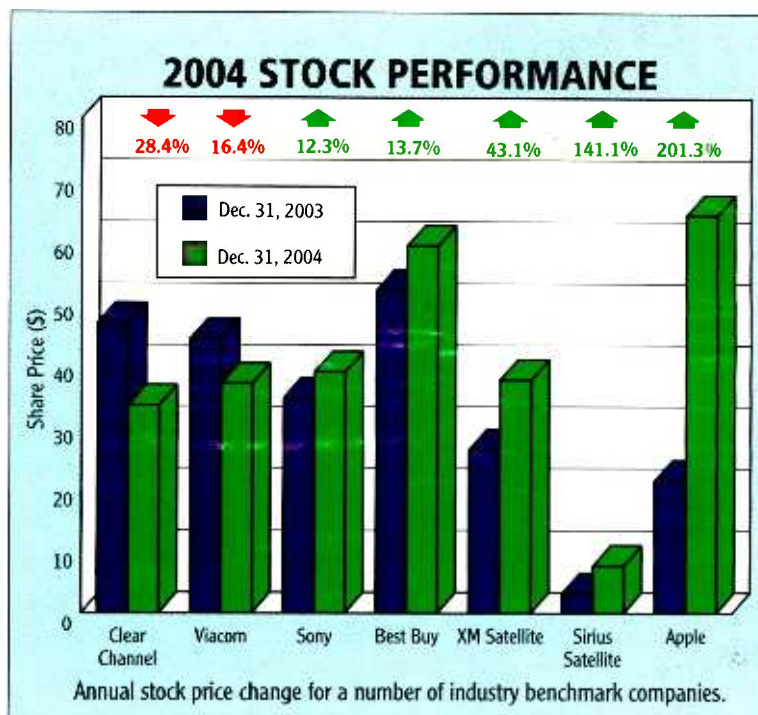
As for Time Warner, owner of AOL and former parent of Warner Music Group, its shares ended the year up 8.1% at \$19.45.

Broadcasters and live-entertainment specialists found themselves struggling.

Stock in radio and touring giant Clear Channel Communications ended 2004 down 28.4% at \$33.49, amid a flat year for the overall U.S. touring business and flat performance in radio.

Stock in MTV and Infinity Radio parent Viacom dropped more than 16% to \$37.08 in a year filled with management turbulence and concerns about growth in the radio and movie divisions.

Univision Communications also



slid in 2004, falling 26% year over year to \$29.27.

The industry's biggest gainers were linked to new distribution opportunities.

Shares in Apple Computer ended 2004 valued at \$64.40, after opening the year at \$21.37—a jump of more than 201%. Credit that to high-flying sales of the iPod digital music player

and associated download purchases through iTunes Music Store.

Among other digital music retailers, Napster showed the greatest percentage growth, rising more than 95% to \$9.36. During the course of the year, the company jettisoned its core CD-burning business to focus on digital music services and changed its name

from Roxio to Napster.

RealNetworks, which launched an à la carte download service at the beginning of the year to complement its Rhapsody subscription service, ended 2004 up 15.9% at \$6.62.

Shares in Loudeye Technologies—which acquired European digital music service OD2 during 2004—closed the year up 5% at \$2.05.

Two companies that figure to have a growing presence in the digital distribution market in 2005—Yahoo and amazon.com—cooled slightly in the last year. Yahoo, which acquired MusicMatch for \$160 million, closed down 16% at \$37.68. Amazon slipped 15.8% to \$44.29.

SATELLITE SPARKS ACTIVITY

Some of the most actively traded stocks this year were in satellite radio.

Sirius Satellite Radio's stock bounced alongside a mountain of publicity late in the year from its mega-dollar deals with Stern and Karmazin. Its shares closed the year at \$7.62 after starting at \$3.16 in January—a gain of more than 141%.

Despite the hype surrounding Sirius, Wall Street continued to place its bets with rival XM Satellite Radio. XM shares ended the year at \$37.62—up 43% from the end of 2003.

Promoter

Continued from page 6

is planned.

The 176-page decision by Judge Robert P. Patterson Jr., says the plaintiffs failed to present evidence to support their antitrust claims or evidence of conspiracy in restraint of trade.

Creative Artists Agency and the William Morris Agency, along with independent promoters Jam Productions in Chicago and Beaver Productions in New Orleans, were among the remaining defendants in the case.

The Agency for the Performing Arts, followed by Variety Artists, Clear Channel Entertainment and the Howard Rose Agency, had previously settled with the black promoters and were subsequently dropped from the suit. Sources say the settlements totaled in the tens of millions of dollars.

'CONSPIRACY' CHARGED

In November 1998, the plaintiffs filed a \$700 million lawsuit against numerous booking agencies and concert promoters (most of the latter are now under the CCE banner), alleging antitrust and civil-rights violations for "maintaining and profiting from a conspiracy to do business only with white promoters and to exclude black promoters."

(*Billboard*, Nov. 20, 1998.)

"Because of an all-white concert promotion fraternity, the black concert promoters are systematically excluded from the promotions of concerts given by white performers . . . [and] top-drawing black performers," the suit alleged. All of the booking agencies and promoters named in the action are controlled by whites, the suit said.

The plaintiffs added that "the entrenched racism and exclusionary practices in the concert promotion industry which this lawsuit seeks to remedy are a repulsive vestige of another era . . . On some occasions, certain defendants have even ridiculed plaintiffs' demands, laughing in the plaintiffs' faces at the very suggestion of contracting with black promoters to promote concerts to be performed by white and major

black artists."

But Patterson found no conspiracy to discriminate by any of the defendants. "The court concludes, after weighing all the evidence in this case and drawing all inferences in favor of the plaintiffs, that the plaintiffs have raised no genuine issue of material fact and that no rational trier of fact could find for plaintiffs on any of the myriad claims made in this action," Patterson wrote.

"Thankfully, the judge realized the same things we realized, that [the black promoters] were trying to extort us and blackmail us," Jam co-president Jerry Mickelson says. "We feel fully vindicated. The court system really works."

The four promoter plaintiffs in the suit—members of the Black Promoters Assn.—were Rowe Entertainment in Atlanta (Leonard

Rowe), Sun Song Productions in New York (Jesse Boseman), Summit Management of Memphis (Fred Jones), and Lee King Productions of Jackson, Miss.

Rowe tells *Billboard* that Judge Patterson's ruling is not the end of the suit. "We're disappointed with the court's decision, and . . . we're working on an appeal," Rowe says.

The suit was marked by picketing in front of the Beverly Hills, Calif., offices of CAA and WMA. Well-known civil-rights activist Dr. Joseph Lowery, chairman of the Black Leadership Forum, also joined the cause.

In 2001, high-profile litigator Willie E. Gary joined the legal team representing the plaintiffs in their lawsuit. Gary is known for winning large damages for small businesses in cases against corporate giants.

Fire

Continued from page 5

and blocked by his order.

It has yet to be determined which city government official was responsible for permitting the club to operate under the circumstances it did that night.

Local promoters are asking the city to re-evaluate the high taxes it places on live concerts, saying such charges lead to scams as organizers try to avoid paying them. Promoters have asked that concerts be taxed the same amount as live theater shows, which pay much less.

"That money should be invested

by all of us in security," chamber president Daniel Vazquez says.

In the wake of the fire, most Argentine acts canceled their shows for New Year's Eve weekend.

Popular group La Renga went so far as to suspend its tour of southern Argentina, which had been slated for early this month.

"We are not in the mood to perform," La Renga's manager says, "and we all need to give serious thought about the minimum [safety] requirements for clubs and dance-halls and how to enforce them."

FLARES ARE COMMONPLACE

Many acts have called for a prohibition on flare-throwing during concerts. Traditional during soccer matches, flares have become com-

mon during rock concerts in the last 10 years. The practice has been identified particularly with shows by Los Callejeros.

The group, which was playing the last of three dates at Cromagnon on Dec. 30, has suspended all performances for this month and the next. Its members were slated to head a Jan. 6 march to City Hall petitioning for better safety codes.

Neither Los Callejeros nor their label, indie Pelo Music, have made formal statements to the press.

The band's members were affected personally by the fire, which claimed the drummer's mother, the guitarist's father and the manager's wife. The lead singer's girlfriend and mother are hospitalized.

Download Blitz

Continued from page 6

music via digital gift cards," says Susan Roberts, senior VP of new media at Universal Music & Video Distribution. "So I think we're seeing a response to the iPod sales over the holiday season but also the redemption of some of those gift cards."

Ciara's "1, 2 Step," is the top-selling track on the current Hot Digital Tracks chart with 49,500 downloads. Four tracks on the chart surpass the prior one-week sales record of 37,000 units, set by U2's "Vertigo" in October 2004.

On Nielsen SoundScan's new Digital Songs chart, which combines multiple versions of tracks, Snoop Dogg's "Drop It Like It's Hot" sets a new collective sales mark with 57,500 paid transactions.

Full-year track sales top 142 million downloads for 2004, not including full-album downloads.

Apple Computer's iTunes Music Store appears to be driving the bulk of the downloading volume because of the popularity of its iPod music players.

Apple declined to comment. However, the company recently announced that it has sold more than 200 million downloads—both singles and album bundles—since the introduction of iTunes in 2003.

Additional reporting by Silvio Pietrolungo in New York.



SALES / AIRPLAY / TRENDS / ANALYSIS

Bonus Week Boosts Biz

After a rough fourth quarter that saw the lead in album sales over 2003 slide from 5.8% at the start of October to as little as 1.2% the week before Christmas, the new year might just start off on the right foot.

As has been mentioned in this column and other *Billboard* pages during recent weeks, the way the calendar breaks adds a 53rd week to Nielsen SoundScan's 2004 tracking year, the first time that has happened since 1998.

The sales charts in this issue reflect that extra week. Since there was no 53rd frame in 2003, you will not see any references to the same week of last year on this page's Market Watch report. That said, it is appropriate to compare this week with the first frame of 2004, as both reflect weeks that followed a Christmas stanza, and if you do that, the latest New Year's Day week comes out a winner.

Over the Counter

By Geoff Mayfield
gmayfield@billboard.com

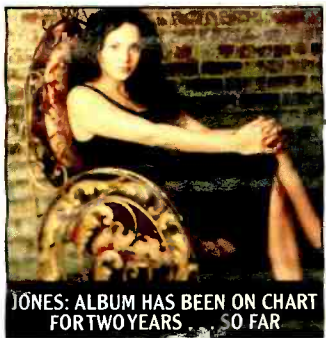


The week after Christmas 2003, **OutKast's** "Speakerboxxx/The Love Below" lead The Billboard 200 with 151,000 copies while industry-wide album sales stood at 15.6 million units. Those numbers trail comparables from the frame that followed Christmas of 2004 as **Eminem's** "Encore" leads the list with 198,000, 31% more than OutKast rang in the 2003 week. Album volume of 15.9 million units represents an uptick of 1.9% over the frame that followed Christmas 2003.

What makes the win even more satisfying is that the week's stronger album picture developed even as the sale of digital tracks went through the roof (see story, page 6).

That snapshot, like the year-end numbers of 2004 (see story, page 5), suggest that physical albums can remain vibrant, even as digital distribution grows. The way those numbers play against each other in the weeks and months to come will shape one of the most intriguing stories of 2005.

FINALLY: The No. 2 position on Top Pop Catalog represents the end of an era for **Norah Jones'** first album. The title hit its second birthday 45 weeks ago, but held on to current status for an extended stay because it never fell below No. 100 on The Billboard 200 until the post-Christmas sales frame.



JONES: ALBUM HAS BEEN ON CHART FOR TWO YEARS—SO FAR

The album's 148-week tenure on the big chart represents the longest by any since **Shania Twain's** 1997 set "Come On Over" clocked 151 weeks.

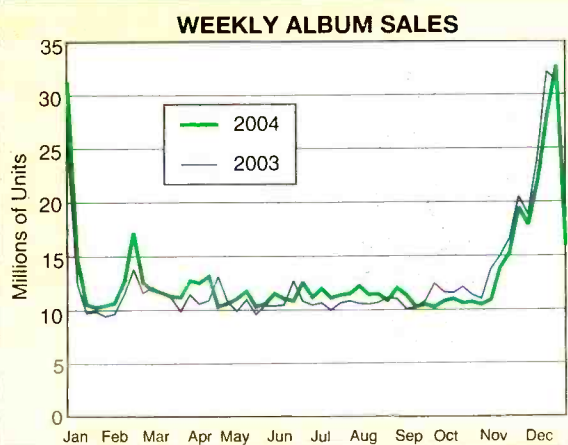
During Jones' esteemed marathon, her "Come Away

With Me" held the No. 1 slot on Top Contemporary Jazz for 143 consecutive weeks, the longest reign by any title since that chart bowed in 1987. For combined weeks on the big chart and the catalog list, it trails **Pink Floyd's** "The Dark

(Continued on page 52)

Market Watch

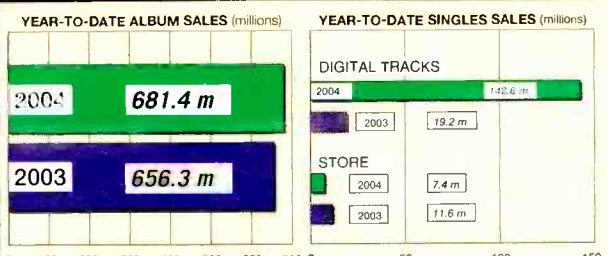
A Weekly National Music Sales Report



WEEKLY UNIT SALES

	Albums	Store Singles	Digital Tracks
This Week	15,941,000	112,000	6,690,000
Last Week	32,707,000	134,000	5,046,000
Change	◊51.3%	◊16.4%	◊32.6%
This Week 2003	NA*	NA*	NA*

*There were 53 weeks in 2004 versus 52 in 2003.

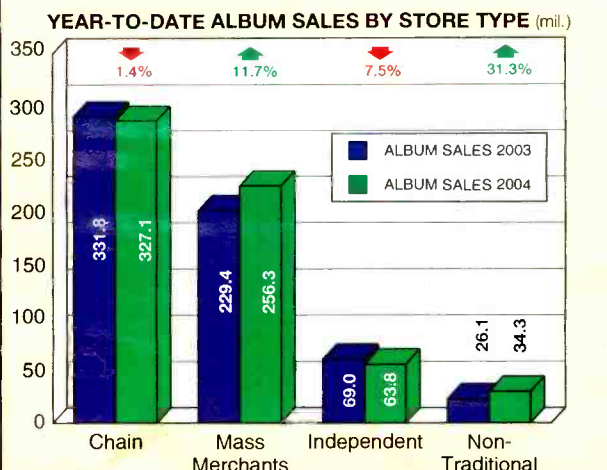


YEAR-TO-DATE OVERALL UNIT SALES

	2003	2004	Change
Total	686,895,000	831,474,000	◊21.0%
Albums	656,296,000	681,437,000	◊3.8%
Store Singles	11,647,000	7,443,000	◊36.1%
Digital Tracks	19,200,000	142,594,000	◊642.7%

YEAR-TO-DATE SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

	2003	2004	Change
CD	636,489,000	670,981,000	◊5.4%
Cassette	17,949,000	8,869,000	◊50.6%
Other	1,858,000	1,587,000	◊14.6%



For week ending 1/2/05. Rounded figures.

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

Nielsen SoundScan

This Song's Been Around

Between 1974 and 1991, **Daryl Hall & John Oates** scored 34 chart entries on The Billboard Hot 100. The duo's 35th song to appear on the survey—its first chart entry in 12 years—is this week's Hot Shot Debut, a remake of the **Spinners'** 32-year-old "I'll Be Around."

This new Hall & Oates single is the pair's fourth cover version to appear on the Hot 100. The others were remakes of the **Righteous Brothers'** "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" in 1980, **Mike Oldfield's** "Family Man" in 1983 and a medley of the **Temptations'** "The Way You Do the Things You Do/My Girl" in 1985.

In 1972, "I'll Be Around" was the Spinners' first hit for **Atlantic** after their stint with **Motown**. "Around" was originally intended as the B-side to "How Could I Let You Get Away," which charted first. But it stopped at No. 77, as radio preferred the flip, which peaked at No. 3.

This issue, the Hall & Oates version is not only the highest new entry, it's the only new entry in a week where there are usually few or no debuts.

GOING DOWN: Just six weeks ago, **Josh Groban** set a record on the Adult Contemporary chart when "Believe," his song from the soundtrack to "The Polar Express," made a 19-1 leap, the biggest jump to the top in the history of this survey.

But with the holidays over and AC radio returning to non-Christmas fare, "Believe" drops 1-15. It's not a record for the biggest plunge, though. The week of Jan. 13, 2001, **NewSong's** "The Christmas Shoes" had a more dramatic decline, from 1-24.

Chart Beat

By Fred Bronson
fbronson@billboard.com



"The Christmas Shoes" only spent two weeks in the top 10 and four weeks on the entire chart. The song debuted at No. 18, then moved 10-1-24. "Believe" had a longer stay in the top 10—five weeks in all, and all spent in pole position. That makes "Believe" the only No. 1 song in the history of the AC chart to spend its entire run in the top 10 at No. 1, never occupying any other position from No. 2 to No. 10.

X-PHILE: Now Sweden has fallen under the sway of the "Idol" franchise. **Daniel Lindstrom**, winner of the first season of the Swedish "Idol" TV series, has the No. 1 single ("Coming True") and the No. 1 album (a self-titled set) on the Swedish charts.

Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom, the winner of **Simon Cowell's** TV series "The X-Factor" has the new No. 1 single. **Steve Brookstein** is the second artist to have a No. 1 hit with "Against All Odds." In 2000, a version by **Mariah Carey** and **Westlife** topped the chart. The original, by **Phil Collins**, peaked at No. 2 in 1984.

TWO-STEPPING: "1, 2 Step" (**Sho'nuff-MusicLine/LaFace**) by **Ciara** Featuring **Missy Elliott** is No. 2 on The Billboard Hot 100 for the second week in a row.

The song is tied with **Len Barry's** 1965 hit "1-2-3" as the highest-ranking song in the history of the chart with a title that begins with the digit "1."

Billboard THE BILLBOARD. 200

Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan

Main Billboard chart table with columns: Rank, Last Week, Weeks Ago, Weeks on, Artist, Title, Peak Position, This Week, Last Week, Weeks Ago, Weeks on, Artist, Title, Peak Position. Includes special callouts like 'NUMBER 1', 'HOT SHOT DEBUT', 'GREATEST GAINER', 'HEATSEEKER IMPACT', and 'PACESETTER/HEATSEEKER IMPACT'.

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, 2 WKS AGO, ARTIST, IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL, Title. Top entry: KEITH URBAN Golden Road.

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, 2 WKS AGO, ARTIST, IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL, Title. Top entry: HAWTHORNE HEIGHTS The Silence In Black And White.

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, 2 WKS AGO, ARTIST, IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL, Title. Top entry: LIL JON & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ Crunk Juice.

Catalog albums are 2-year-old titles that have fallen below No. 100 on The Billboard 200 or re-issues of older albums. Total Weeks column reflects combined weeks title has appeared on The Billboard 200 and Top Pop Catalog Albums. The Heatseekers chart lists the best-selling albums by new and developing artists, defined as those who have never appeared in the top 100 of The Billboard 200. If a Heatseekers title reaches that level, it and the act's subsequent albums are immediately ineligible to appear on the Heatseekers chart.

Billboard TOP BLUES ALBUMS
JANUARY 15 2005
Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan
ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL Title
1 GEORGE THOROGOOD & THE DESTROYERS Capitol 98430 20 Weeks At Number 1 Greatest Hits: 30 Years Of Rock

Billboard TOP CHRISTIAN ALBUMS
JANUARY 15 2005
Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan
ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL Title
1 SWITCHFOOT Columbia/SPARROW 1976/EMICMG 31 Weeks At Number 1 The Beautiful Letdown

Billboard TOP REGGAE ALBUMS
JANUARY 15 2005
Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan
ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL Title
1 SKINDRED Bieler Bros./Lava 93304/AG 9 Weeks At Number 1 Babylon

Billboard TOP GOSPEL ALBUMS
JANUARY 15 2005
Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan
ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL Title
1 RUBEN STUDDARD J 62623/RMG 6 Weeks At Number 1 I Need An Angel

Billboard TOP WORLD ALBUMS
JANUARY 15 2005
Sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan
ARTIST IMPRINT & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL Title
1 VARIOUS ARTISTS Windham Hill 45502/BMG Strategic Marketing Group 1 Week At Number 1 The Celtic Circle 2

Albums with the greatest sales gains this week... Recording Industry Assn. Of America (RIAA) certification for net shipment of 500,000 album units (Gold).

gun a slow descent into the scrapheap of dead music formats.

Speak of the devil, cassette albums finished 2004 with 8.9 million scans, down 50.6% from the 17.9 million scans the format generated in 2003. As a percentage of total album sales, the cassette has dwindled to nearly the 1% mark.

Comparing sales by genre for the 52-week year, Latin and country enjoyed the largest gains on a percentage basis, while R&B scored the biggest increase in units. Latin albums finished up 16.4% to 31.9 million units, compared with 27.4

million units scanned in 2003. Country albums totaled 77.9 million units, versus 69.3 million units in 2003.

R&B broke its slide with its first up year since 2001, when album sales for the genre—which includes rap—totalled 197 million units. In 2004, R&B enjoyed 7.6% growth to 162.2 million units, up nearly 12 million units from 2003. Rap by itself accounted for nearly 81 million units of R&B's 2004 total, up 5.5% from the previous year.

The other genres showing sales growth in 2004 were alternative rock and metal. The former scanned 132.5

million units, up 3.2% from the 128.4 million counted in the previous year. Metal was up 2% to 75.3 million units.

Soundtracks were the big loser among genres on a unit basis, with scans of 27.4 million units, down 16.1% from 32.6 million in 2003. Jazz, meanwhile, chalked up the largest drop on a percentage basis, with scans totaling 18.8 million, down 17.7% from the 23.1 million recorded in the previous year.

New age also suffered a decline, scanning 4.8 million units, down 15.3%, while classical and Christian/

gospel were each down less than 1%.

Classical album sales totaled 18.7 million units in 2004, while Christian/gospel scans stood at 43.4 million.

Titles in a number of overlapping genres—alternative and metal, R&B and rap, classical and soundtracks—often are double-counted in genre totals if they are listed on multiple charts.

Looking at current versus catalog for the 53-week year, current showed a 3.1% increase, finishing with 437.2 million units, while catalog was up 5.8%, with 244.3 million scans. The deep-catalog subset was up only 2%.

DVD Player Sales Up 10% Over 2003

BY JILL KIPNIS

LOS ANGELES—The DVD format maintained its allure for consumers in 2004, when hardware sales and software shipments reached new highs, according to the Digital Entertainment Group.

At the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, L.A.-based DEG announced Jan. 6 that more than 37 million DVD players were sold in the United States last year. That is a 10% increase from 2003. The hardware figures, which were compiled by the Consumer Electronics Assn., also revealed that more than 127 million DVD players have been sold since the format launched in 1997.

DVD player sales set a record in fourth-quarter 2004. More than 17 million players were sold during that period, a slight increase over the 16.9 million players sold in fourth-quarter 2003.

DEG further reported that the total number of DVD households has reached 70 million and that about 45% of DVD owners have more than one player. The group projects that more than 80% of

U.S. households will have at least one DVD player by the end of this year.

On the software side, DEG said U.S. consumers spent a record \$21.2 billion renting and buying DVDs in 2004. Total home video spending, including VHS sales and rentals, was \$24.5 billion, a 9% increase over 2003.

Retail DVD sales reached \$15.5 billion, a 33% increase over 2003. Spending on DVD rental totaled \$5.7 billion, up from \$4.5 billion in 2003.

More than 1.5 billion software units shipped in 2004, DEG reported, bringing shipments since 1997 to more than 3.9 billion discs. Software figures were compiled by Kaplan, Swicker and Simha on behalf of DEG.

The fourth quarter was also a record-setter on the software side. About 530 million DVDs shipped to retail, a 39% increase over the previous year's fourth quarter.

DEG also announced the winners of its second annual awards in Las Vegas. Best Buy was named retailer of the year for 2004. The award was deter-

mined by votes from DEG members.

Three digital innovation awards, named for Emiel N. Petrone, the late founder of DEG, were determined by a panel of product reviewers. The Sony Qualia 004 SXRD projector won the Petrone Digital Innovation Award for sight, the Pioneer Elite DV-59AVI DVD player won the Petrone Digital Innovation Award for source and the Denon AVR-5805 receiver won the Petrone Digital Award for sound.

Five DEG creative excellence awards were determined by a panel of DVD reviewers. New Line Home Entertainment's "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King Extended Edition" DVD was named theatrical DVD title of the year. Warner Home Video's "Gone With the Wind: Collector's Edition" won catalog title of the year.

The TV-on-DVD title of the year was Sony Pictures Home Entertainment's "Seinfeld: Seasons 1-2." The direct-to-DVD title of the year was Buena Vista Home Entertainment's "The Lion King 1 1/2." The music-on-DVD title of the year was Universal Music Group's "Bon Jovi—This Left Feels Right: Live."

Bandier

Continued from page 6

cession plans later in the day," he adds. "My belief is that you have to do it from a position of strength instead of weakness, and EMI Music Publishing is in great shape."

Nicoli dismissed as "nonsense" reports that the succession plan was announced because Bandier, 63, was planning to acquire EMI Music Publishing and was rebuffed.

While he remains at EMI, Bandier says he would not be permitted to make a personal acquisition of outside publishing catalogs. However, he will be free to do so in 2008.

The announcement surprised many in financial circles. "It is not something we anticipated," London-based UBS analyst Helen Snell says. "But it looks like a good arrangement. It will keep Marty Bandier in the group for some time while Roger Faxon will gradually play an increasing role."

Nicoli says the decision to begin the process was facilitated by the fact that Bandier and Faxon worked together already and have mutual respect. "Their relationship is a proven one," he adds.

Martin Stewart, CFO of British

Sky Broadcasting Group, replaces Faxon as EMI Group CFO.

Bob Flax will remain in his post as the publishing unit's U.S. president, and no other personnel changes are expected, a spokeswoman says.

Bandier has EMI Group's most lucrative financial package. According to the company's 2004 annual report, he was paid a total of £3,318 million (\$6.24 million) last year. The base salary of £1.819 million (\$3.42 million) was augmented by benefits and incentives worth £1.455 million (\$2.74 million).

Faxon's full remuneration as CFO reached £885,000 (\$1.66 million). The publishing unit annually contributes about 35% to the overall group's profit, an EMI spokeswoman says.

Nicoli declined to reveal the financial terms of Bandier's contract renewal. He says they are "appropriate terms that I am comfortable with, and so is the board."

Bandier and Faxon say they are looking forward to working together again. "We had fun the last time we did it; it will be great fun now," Faxon says.

MILEPOSTS

BIRTHS

Twin boys, Dashiell David and Oliver Haviland, to **Jennifer and Jim Merlis**, Dec. 4 in New York. Father is head of publicity for Geffen Records.

Girl, Catherine Jordan, to **Tracie and Greg Maffei**, Dec. 9 in Los Angeles. Mother is VP/director of sales for Interep. Father is executive director of integrated sales and business development for Billboard Radio Monitor.

Girl, Avery Max, to **Elyn Diamond Resnick and Mitchel Resnick**, Dec. 20 in Los Angeles.

Father is a producer. Grandfather is recording artist **Neil Diamond**.

Boy, Daniel Joseph, to **Jessica and John Kilcullen**, Jan. 3 in New York. Father is president and publisher of *Billboard*.

DEATHS

Mack Vickery, 66, of an apparent heart attack, Dec. 21 in Nashville. The songwriter wrote such hits as George Strait's "The Fireman" and Ricky Van Shelton's "I'll Leave This World Loving You." Vickery also wrote songs for Jerry Lee Lewis. He was inducted into the Alabama Music Hall of Fame in 2003.

META

Continued from page 8

equipment—ranging from portable digital players to complex, multichannel home theaters—has confused consumers, while the MP3 format has lowered standards, especially among young people, they say.

"Even though it is apparent that the consumer is into 16-bit technology, we aren't," Scheiner says. "We want them to be able to hear the difference. More than anything,

we want to reach the youth."

Such outreach to consumers is mirrored by an appeal to META's own industry. "We're going to try to educate music professionals and technology providers, as well as consumers," Schmitt says.

While META's primary objective, Ainlay says, is to work with manufacturers in the certification of their equipment, education within the production industry is an important goal. Along with many other professionals, he cites poorly labeled and organized recordings made by inexperienced recordists as a frustrating byproduct of inexpensive digital gear.

"There's a lot of work being done by non-professionals," he says, "and it would be helpful for us to educate and mentor people on how to do it properly. As a group, META can help bring standardization."

Filipetti summarizes. "There's a whole range of issues that aren't taking care of themselves. It's a pretty wide mission statement, but it's all related to one thing, and that's trying to increase the awareness of high-end audio."

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'The Devastation Permeates Everything'

Ann Chaitovitz, director of sound recordings at the American Federation of Radio and Television Artists, decided to spend the holidays exploring the ancient historical sites of Sri Lanka. She arrived just hours before the tsunami occurred Dec. 26. Luckily, she was staying on the west coast, away from the direct force of the water and its devastation. Chaitovitz spoke with Bill Holland from Sri Lanka, where she remained at press time.

Q: What were you doing before the tsunami hit?

A: I'd just arrived at 1 a.m. and checked into my hotel, right on the beach in Negombo, which is above Colombo on the west coast. I left Negombo at 9:30 a.m. to head for the ancient cities in the center of the island. Negombo was not hit badly by the tsunami, at least compared to the rest of Sri Lanka, but it was hit about an hour after I left. I was totally unaware about all this until the news that evening, because I was inland by then.

Q: Did you try to leave immediately?

A: No, but I am leaving five days earlier than planned, so I will have been there for just over two weeks. The physical devastation did not reach the inland. It circles most of the island along the coast, but the inland section of the island has not been affected. I think the inland is a little more crowded than usual now because

all of the tourists, most of whom are usually on the coast.

Q: What's your sense of things now?

A: Well, it's a mind-boggling tragedy. Nearly everyone in the country has been affected. The people are amazing—the whole community is chipping in to get the necessary provisions to the people in need, and I hear, there are plenty of medical personnel around.

On the day of the tsunami, the manager of the guest house where I was staying collected an extraordinary amount of money from his workers, packed up the hotel's extra sheets and towels, filled bottles with boiled water and purchased medicines and sanitary supplies. He got a truck and sent everything to the north coast. The international community has really stepped in to help too. This is the first time in my life I ever wished I was a doctor, because then I could do something and not feel so useless.

I haven't seen the devastation along the coasts. But it permeates everything—nearly everyone lost a relative or had relatives who lost their homes and possessions. The people who have lost a relative have hung out white flags,

and they are everywhere.

Q: Do you think the relief effort will exacerbate or ease tension with the [rebel] Tamil Tigers?

A: Well, I hope the relief effort has the potential to bring the government and the Tigers together . . . to bring relief to the north. The government has said it will work together with the Tigers to distribute the aid, which could bring the parties together. On the other hand, the Tigers have already claimed that aid is not being sent to the devastated areas in the north, which if true, would only exacerbate tensions.

Many of the beaches in the north were full of land mines. I worry that the tsunami may have relocated those mines to unexpected places.

Q: Have you met other tourists who were there?

A: Yes, a number—all with grim and scary tales. I met a British family on the 27th who had been on the southern coast. The parents had taken their two children out of school for a year to travel, and this was their first week.



CHAITOVITZ: SURVIVORS CROWDED INLAND

The mother said her heart broke when her daughter looked at her and asked if they were going to die. Luckily, that family made it.

Q: What are the long-term prospects for Sri Lanka?

A: Aside from the immediate medical concerns and disaster relief efforts, obviously there will be long-term reconstruction efforts needed to rebuild the roads, homes and hotels. Tourism in Sri Lanka had recently increased due to the cease-fire with the Tamils. I'm guessing tourism will likely decline and the entire economy dependent on tourism will suffer.

Also, entire fishing villages were wiped out. The price of fish has dropped precipitously, as people out of fear no longer want to eat fish [because of the corpses still in the coast waters].

I heard on the news that the rescue workers have not found any dead animals. Apparently, the tsunami had an audio wave the people couldn't pick up, but the animals could. They say that even if the animals only had a one-minute warning, that would have been enough time to get far enough inland.

They are also talking about a giant mental health crisis that they are unprepared to handle. Post-traumatic stress, survivors' guilt. I saw an article which compared the mental health consequences to 9-11, except they do not have the necessary mental health infrastructure here.

BILL HOLLAND

Tsunami

Continued from page 1

More than 155,000 people were killed in the disaster. Relief organizations say it will take years, if not decades, to rebuild affected areas.

In recent days, artists have announced new benefit concerts and recordings on a continuous basis. Additionally, major music corporations and radio groups are putting together fundraising efforts that will tally several million dollars.

Artists lending their names to the cause will also help raise additional millions for relief agencies.

Celebrity involvement "has a huge impact, because it helps educate the public with what we do and what our resources are," says Karen Ogden, development officer in disaster fundraising for the American Red Cross.

One of the first acts to respond to the disaster was Linkin Park. The band donated \$100,000 to the American Red Cross through a new fundraising initiative, Music for Relief.

"Everyone has a responsibility to get involved," Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington stresses, "but musicians have a more interesting responsibility, because bands like us have fans who have supported us and who have given us this blessed life, and we have an obligation to give back."

Here is a look at selected efforts

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taking place across the musical spectrum:

CONCERTS

Artists have quickly mobilized to raise funds, whether it be through club dates or massive stadium shows. In chronological order, some events include:

- The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra donated \$136,000 to the World Health Organization to provide drinking water for tsunami survivors. The donation came during the symphony's annual New Year's Day concert, broadcast worldwide.

- A seven-hour fundraising show and telethon was to be held Jan. 7 at the 40,000-capacity Hong Kong Football Stadium with major stars from the film, music and sports sectors. Organized by the Hong Kong Performance Artists' Assn. and Radio Television Hong Kong, the event is free, although the audience will be asked to make donations.

- Willie Nelson is spearheading a Jan. 9 concert at the Austin (Texas) Music Hall that also includes the Joe Ely Band, Patti Griffin, Alejandro Escovedo and others. Proceeds benefit the American Red Cross, CARE and UNICEF.

- A Jan. 10 benefit concert at the Beatrix Theatre in Utrecht, the Netherlands, will feature several major local artists, such as Bastiaan Ragas and Simone Kleinsma.

- Proceeds from the Jan. 12 London performance of Queen's musical production "We Will Rock You" will be donated to the Disaster Emergency Committee fund. The date marks the 1,000th presentation of the show. There are rumors that the band's Brian May and Roger Taylor may perform at the production.

- Avril Lavigne, Sarah McLachlan, Barenaked Ladies, Chantal Kreviazuk, Raine Maida and others will participate in the Jan. 29 Concert for Tsunami Relief at GM Place in Vancouver. Clear Channel Entertainment will produce the show. Sources say CCE will announce other concerts shortly.

- Sting will play a benefit Feb. 10 at the Leeuwin Estate Winery in Perth, Australia, with 100% of the net proceeds donated to relief efforts. He already had two sold-out shows booked at the 6,000-capacity venue for Feb. 12-13, but added the date following the disaster. Sting had been slated to play a now-cancelled Sri Lankan gig Feb. 9.

- The New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority announced Jan. 5 that it is planning a tsunami benefit concert. Although no date or participating artists have been named, according to sources, the authority will offer Continental Airlines Arena in East Rutherford, N.J. rent-free, self-promote the show if necessary and donate all concession and parking profits to relief efforts.

- Organizers say they are putting together a relief concert at Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, Wales, Jan. 22-23. Venue manager Paul Sergeant says his facility could hold up to 50,000. No acts have been announced for the tentatively titled Wave Aid, but Wales' two most popular rock acts, Stereophonics and Manic Street Preachers, were understood to be high on the event's wish list.

For a full list of live benefits, go to billboard.com.

TV

- A Jan. 2 Hong Kong charity event—featuring, among others, Andy Lau and Leon Lai—that was broadcast on TVB raised more than \$6.2 million

for relief. Artists performed a Cantonese and Mandarin version of "We Are the World" during the benefit.

The new version of the song, which is expected to be released to retail, will also serve as the theme for a Jan. 8 fundraiser, featuring many of the same artists, that will be broadcast in China and Taiwan.

- Reach Out to Asia, an all-star Australian benefit and telethon, will be held Jan. 8 outside of the Sydney Opera House. The concert will feature Kasey Chambers, "Australian Idol" winners Guy Sebastian and Casey Donovan and members of several top Australian rock bands, including Jet's Nic Cester, You Am I's Dave Lane and Living End's Chris Cheney. It will air live on Australia's three commercial TV networks and on national radio stations.

- NBC Universal will air "The Concert for the Tsunami Victims" Jan. 15 in the United States on its network and cable outlets, which include NBC, USA, Bravo, Sci-Fi, Pax and Telemundo. Kenny Chesney is the first announced artist, and the format is expected to be similar to the TV telethon that followed the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. That event raised more than \$150 million.

- According to sources, the BBC is discussing with artists a Pan-European fundraising concert that would be televised in late January.

- The Grammy Awards will incorporate some element of tsunami relief into the Feb. 13 telecast. Ron Roecker, VP of communications for the Recording Academy, says, "We're talking with sponsors, trying to plan something that is thoughtful and will have impact with the world watching us. We've also gotten calls from managers and artists wanting to help out, participate."

RECORDINGS

- Artists are uniting for an all-star charity single, which Universal Music Group will release under the collective name One World. Sir Cliff Richard and Boy George were the first artists to sign on for "Grief Never Grows Old," written by English broadcaster/author Mike Read.

Other participants on the Steve Levine-produced track, according to sources, include Robin Gibb, Bill Wyman and tenor Russell Watson. Date and territories of release are to be determined. All funds will go to the Disasters Emergency Committee.

"The impact of the destruction has hit us all," says Read, who wrote the song before the disaster. "Briefly speaking to my friends in the music world, from artists to managers and executives, it was clear that they had all been touched in some way and wished to help."

- Elsewhere in the United Kingdom, Steve Brookstein, the winner of the pre-Christmas ITV talent series "The X Factor," announced that all proceeds from his single "Against All Odds" will go to the appeal. The track, on the Sony BMG-distributed Syco Music, climbed to No. 1 on the Official U.K. Charts Co. singles chart Jan. 2.

- On Jan. 1, several Dutch acts—including Marco Borsato, Gio, the Sheer, Ch!pz, Raffish and Laura Fygi—joined together at Wisseloord Studios to record "Als Je Iets Kan Doen" ("If You Can Do Something"), which EMI will release Jan. 7. The single was to premiere on Dutch TV Jan. 6 during a fundraiser airing on commercial channels TV2, RTL4 and SBS6.

- Universal Music India is talking with several leading local artists to record an all-star tribute. "The initial

(Continued on page 61)

But the situation should quickly change in 2005.

Latin labels, until now comfortable relying on physical sales and traditional marketing and promotion, are scrambling to digitize their catalogs for downloads.

"We see it as an enormous opportunity," says Susan Roberts, senior VP of new media for Universal Music Video & Distribution.

At the same time, online music stores are actively seeking to expand and promote their Latin catalogs.

"We're very interested in the Latin category as part of our music downloads business," says Kevin Swint, director of media categories at walmart.com.

For now, Latin music remains a tiny fraction of overall download sales. For the week ending Dec. 12, for example, José Feliciano's "Feliz Navidad" was the lone Spanish track (bilingual, really) among the top 200 downloads, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

"We're still very nascent," Roberts concedes. But she adds, "It's very positive that all of the retailers are talking about how best to merchandise Latin music."

Wal-Mart, which has seen disproportionate growth of Latin music sales in its brick-and-mortar stores, is targeting Latin downloads as a growth area.

"We've experienced positive customer response to our available Latin tracks. We will build... this category as fast as the labels can clear the content," Swint says.

But, he adds, clearance issues

remain a problem. The responsibility for clearing and digitizing content typically falls to the labels.

"It's not a simple thing to do for a company that thinks it's still not interesting for their business," one executive says. "It's a huge investment. It's a huge amount of people looking at every single detail."

CHANGING PRIORITIES

The larger Latin labels have been subject to the priorities of parent companies, which often anticipate more immediate digital revenue from mainstream artists. Now these Latin labels are digitizing content as fast as they can, initially tackling new offerings by



SWINT: CLEARANCE STILL A PROBLEM

established pop acts before moving on to the rest of their catalog.

"Our sales department is very concerned about satisfying the Latin market in this area," says Gabriela Martínez, VP of marketing for Warner Music Latin America. "For the past year, we've been slowly digitizing our catalog, and it is selling."

According to Martínez, last year, between Jan. 1 and Dec. 12, Warner Music Group sold fewer than 80,000

Spanish-language tracks, accounting for less than 0.25% of the company's overall business.

But, Martínez says, the future is definitely pointing in a digital direction. She says WMG is in the process of closing deals that will make its catalog available digitally throughout Latin America.

The agreements anticipate the advent of widespread broadband use in the region and the creation of virtual music stores by traditional retailers, including MixUp in Mexico and La Feria del Disco in Chile.

In the United States, Universal Music Latino president John Echevarría says his label has seen recent "significant income" from legal downloads, aided by several campaigns with different acts.

For example, the fall launch of Juanes' album "Mi Sangre" included an aggressive campaign on iTunes that featured an exclusive track with the Black Eyed Peas.

Sony Music also has placed its artists in online marketing campaigns, including a promotion with walmart.com involving Ricardo Arjona's album "Solo."

"There's been a number of digital and mobile initiatives that are being looked at, and everybody is optimistic for growth," says Seth A. Schachner of the Global Digital Business Group at Sony BMG Music Entertainment in New York.

Echevarría contends that a huge amount of Latin music is already being downloaded illegally. "There is this mistaken notion that Latinos don't download. And of course, they do," he says.

Because authorized Latin repertoire is limited, most major download sites, including Napster and Apple's iTunes Music Store, do not highlight their Latin

offerings. Representatives of iTunes did not return calls for comment.

POTENTIAL REALIZED

The potential of the legal Latin download market can perhaps best be seen with univision.com, the Spanish-language site that belongs to Univision Communications.

Launched in June 2000, univision.com claims 6.1 million users per month. Music-only visits rose from 638,000 in January 2004 to nearly 1 million last November.

"Music is so important that we pulled it out of the entertainment channel and made it its own channel," says Bruno López, VP/GM of univision.com.



SCHOLL: LATIN CONTENT A PRIORITY

"Early on it was very hard to convince the labels to provide content. There was a huge distrust in terms of giving us their assets, giving us their music. With time, we've convinced them that we can be used as well and probably easier than you can use radio," López says.

Today, univision.com plays an integral part in the promotion and marketing plans of most labels. Campaigns are tailor-made for individual

releases and can include online chats and contests to choose singles and album titles.

The site also has a record store, and by the second quarter of 2005 it expects to offer downloads as well.

The sales potential for a site with Univision's traffic is hinted at by emusiclatino.com. An online Latin music label that sells full albums and single downloads, it moved only 200 tracks in its opening month of April 2004. By the end of 2004, founder Miguel Sierralta says, the site was averaging 3,000 downloads per month, with 7,000 downloads in its best month.

"The reaction was better than I expected, because our catalog was very limited," says Sierralta, whose marketing has been minimal and who has only sold acts or content he has signed directly. Digital support has come from liquid.com.

In February, emusiclatino.com is due to relaunch as a full-fledged Latin digital music store that has its own technology in partnership with LabOne, a provider of digital media management and delivery services.

Sierralta says he is negotiating content deals for the relaunch with major labels and indies. In addition to offering more content, the new site, he says, will be able to digitize music for a fee.

That's similar to the service offered by The Orchard, which claims to be the largest digital distributor and marketer of independent music. It also handles publishing clearances.

The company is hoping to beef up its slim Latin category.

"It's absolutely a priority," Greg Scholl, CEO of The Orchard says. "We are actively soliciting and are engaged with acquiring content from Latin sources. But it's a process. It's a process of explaining our value proposition and the mechanics of digital distribution."

The Orchard hopes to reach small labels via relationships with independents throughout the Latin region. The first such partner is Epsa in Argentina, which specializes in tango and other traditional Argentine music but also has relationships with other labels. The Orchard is in negotiations with companies in Mexico and Brazil, but does not yet have any deals with key U.S. Latin indies.

"There's an enormous opportunity," says Scholl, who would like to reach non-Latin audiences as well as younger Latin buyers.

Another site hoping to benefit from demand for Latin downloads, emepe3.com, launched last spring and claims a library of 300,000 songs from labels around the world. The site recently reported that it includes repertoire from EMI, although no deal has officially been announced.

Tsunami

Continued from page 60

dialogue has been extremely positive," Universal Music India managing director Rajat Kakar says.

"The extent of pain and suffering in the affected parts of the country is extremely distressing," he continues. "Our employees and partners in the affected parts of South India and our associates in Sri Lanka are safe and helping in the local relief measures, which is a daunting task."

• In France, Universal Music will release a charity compilation album Jan. 17, with tracks from such acts as Florent Pagny, Calogero, Johnny Hallyday and Isabelle Boulay, Zazie and De Palmas.

OTHER LABEL INITIATIVES

• In Asia, Hans Ebert, Hong Kong-based EMI Music South East

Asia executive director, tells *Billboard* that EMI is working with Pan-Asian broadcaster Star TV to create a public service announcement "to bring attention to the ongoing work of the various relief organizations and how everyone should give generously and support the efforts of UNICEF, Oxfam, the Red Cross, etc."

The PSA, which will begin airing across Asia soon, will feature music from EMI artists. EMI hopes to adapt the PSA to other territories.

EMI Group made a corporate donation of £100,000 (\$187,468) to UNICEF. Additionally, the company will match employee donations up to a maximum of \$500,000 (\$937,438), with proceeds also going to UNICEF.

• UMG and Universal Music International are coordinating a relief plan with their artists and affiliated companies. "The response is about rebuilding schools, villages, towns, communities. Everyone here feels the same way. We know people who have friends and relatives who have died or

are missing. All of us are affected, even one step removed," says David Loiteron, Universal Music South East Asia VP of strategic marketing, who is based in Hong Kong.

• Warner Music Group is making \$100,000 in donations to AmeriCares and Save the Children. It will also match employee contributions of up to \$200,000 with proceeds split among the Red Cross International Relief Fund, Save the Children, UNICEF and AmeriCares.

• Sony BMG Music Entertainment is exploring a number of initiatives to benefit victims, starting with a company donation to an international relief organization, according to a Sony BMG representative.

BROADCASTERS

• Chicago radio and TV broadcasters banded together Dec. 29 to air PSAs throughout the day urging listeners and viewers to donate money to the local American Red Cross.

• Starting Jan. 3, Clear Channel is

airing PSAs on its more than 1,200 U.S. stations asking for support for the United States Fund for UNICEF.

• On Jan. 5, most U.K. radio stations observed a three-minute silence in honor of those who died in the tsunami. Some stations that did not fall silent, such as London's 95.8 Capital FM and Kiss 100 FM, instead broadcast details of how listeners could donate to the appeal.

• On Jan. 10, representatives of all 10 Los Angeles Viacom/Infinity media partners, including eight radio stations and two TV stations, will be at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena and Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park collecting donations. Contributions can also be made at the offices of the stations and through individual station Web sites.

Events include a free concert at Knott's Berry Farm by saxophonist Dave Koz, who is also morning co-host on smooth jazz outlet KTWV. The 7:30 p.m. show is free with a suggested \$20 donation. Koz says to expect special guests.

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'You Can't Run A Company The Way We Started Anymore'

BY DEBORAH EVANS PRICE

Great risks often yield great rewards. Vicki Mack Lataillade typifies that philosophy.

In 1992, the veteran music executive had the faith to launch her own label, GospoCentric, which has become one of the industry's most successful independent ventures.

Its major claim to fame has been the platinum success of gospel phenomenon Kirk Franklin, whom Mack Lataillade signed in 1992. Franklin issued four albums on GospoCentric before exiting late in 2004 to start his own label, Fo Yo Soul Entertainment (*Billboard*, Oct. 30, 2004).

In October, Mack Lataillade surprised the gospel music community by selling GospoCentric Records LLC, which includes the GospoCentric Records and B-Rite Music labels, to Zomba Label Group. She has remained as president, reporting to Tom Carrabba, senior VP of sales and marketing/GM of Zomba Label Group.

"Knowing Vicki and her passion and her entrepreneurial mindset, there's a lot of similarities between GospoCentric and Zomba. This is a perfect fit," Carrabba says. "A lot of people in the music industry try to become an entrepreneur, but she's one that has actually done it."

Q: How did you get started in the music industry?

A: My first job in the music industry was as an intern for RCA Records. [They] gave me a stool, and that was to count Elvis inventories. There weren't computers back then. Everything was manual. I was an inventory specialist, and we counted product. I loved it. I got an appreciation for sellers like Elvis.

Q: What were some of the things you learned early in your career that helped shape the way you operated GospoCentric?

A: I got hired on in sales at RCA. The thing that stuck with me was working Dolly Parton and listening to people like [longtime RCA executive] Joe Galante and some others talking about strategies that would bring country to mainstream. That's how I learned the dual-marketing approach, and that's why GospoCentric has been so successful in crossing over gospel.

Q: Tell me about your stint as an artist.

A: The name of the group was Rejoice. We weren't on a label. I wouldn't have signed me to a label [*she laughs*]. We were a group of three girls who would take the songs of the day—this was in the '70s—and change them into Christian kind of songs.

Q: Why did you decide to start GospoCentric?

A: [My daughters listened to] the Imperials and they were OK with that, but it wasn't competing with Bobby Brown. That's what the kids wanted. They said I was in the music business and for me to do something about it.

Q: Did you have any idea how big Kirk Franklin would be?

A: Absolutely not . . . I thought this was a great record and it would sell about 50,000 units, but it did that in one month. That's when I knew something was happening. It did 50,000 in one month, and about a year or so later it did 100,000 in one week. [My husband] Claude and I took everything we had and kept putting it back into the project.

Q: Who was your distributor when you broke Franklin?

A: The distribution deal was with Sparrow, which was strictly Christian distribution at the time, and . . . right after we had the distribution deal [with them], they were purchased by Liberty. Liberty was [owned] by EMI. So, very quickly we went from just having Christian distribution to Christian and secular distribution.



The Last Word



A Q&A With Vicki Mack Lataillade

Vicki Mack Lataillade: Career Highlights

- 1975: Started as an intern at RCA Records in Los Angeles and worked her way into the sales department
- 1978-1988: Worked in marketing and promotion at Light Records and was instrumental in the careers of Andrae Crouch, Waller Hawkins and Truine Hawkins
- 1988: Hired by Sparrow Records, where she developed and headed Sparrow's gospel division
- 1992: Launches GospoCentric in her garage with \$6,000
- 2004: Sells GospoCentric to Zomba Label Group

Q: How much heat did you take for releasing gospel music that was so edgy and worldly in its musical approach for the time?

A: I had people tell me I was the devil. We got a lot of hate mail and [were] told we were going to hell.

Q: What were some of the tactics you employed at GospoCentric that made the label so successful?

A: The dual-marketing approach [targeting gospel and mainstream consumers] and not playing by any of the rules. We put more money into our projects. We would do whatever we needed to do for our artists.

Q: You have always been a strong advocate for women in business. What has spurred your convictions?

A: A woman should be able to get her education, graduate, have that in place and raise a family on her own terms, take the time to do it and still get paid.

Q: What's been the most difficult thing about being a woman heading up her own label?

A: When I first started, I had people come to me and say, "Why do you want to do this? You should be a good secretary," or "Women should be at home." I even had a man that told me I reminded him of their maid, and "Boy, could she clean a good toilet." I've had stuff like that.

But then on the other hand, I've had people like [Provident Music Group president/CEO] Terry Hemmings . . . and [Zomba Group president/CEO] Barry Weiss—they always kind of got me. They treated me like another guy in the business, and I like that.

Q: Is it true some people did not believe you owned the label?

A: When I started in gospel there were no women in gospel in any kind of [executive] positions, VP or president and owner of anything. They were mainly secretaries. That was expected of you . . . Most people could never understand that I was the owner. People would say that I was fronting the company for someone else.

I had to have bodyguards at one time. I was being threatened that people were going to come and shoot me if I didn't hand over Kirk Franklin's contract.

Once SoundScan came in, that was the kiss of death for me, actually. It was great for the artists, because you could record the sales. For me, it just made me a mark, because we were getting so much of the market share, a lot of people had a lot to say about it. There were people at that time who felt they could just come in and take over my company.

Q: How did you remedy that?

A: One of the things I found . . . helpful when you have problems like that was trying [to] align myself with major companies. [GospoCentric signed a distribution deal with Interscope in 1997.] . . . It's good to align yourself with credible record companies, and then people don't come after you the same way.

When you are black and a woman and everybody knows you did this with \$6,000 of your dad's postal retirement money, and you've got records going platinum in a business when nobody else is doing that, it's very difficult.

Q: What prompted you to sell GospoCentric?

A: The music business has changed. I'm 50, which actually I'm very excited about because I'm at a company with Clive Davis, so I'm a young girl and that has really encouraged me in terms of my future, but . . . the industry changed so much. It was beginning to be very difficult. You can't run a company the way we started GospoCentric anymore.

Q: If you started GospoCentric today with that \$6,000, could you have grown it to what it has become?

A: No. I do not think I would be able to do that today, because the industry is so different. Retail is so different. The computer age is here. Downloading is here. I might have done something, but no, I wouldn't be able to do what we're doing now the same way. No way.

Q: What do you think about Franklin starting his own label?

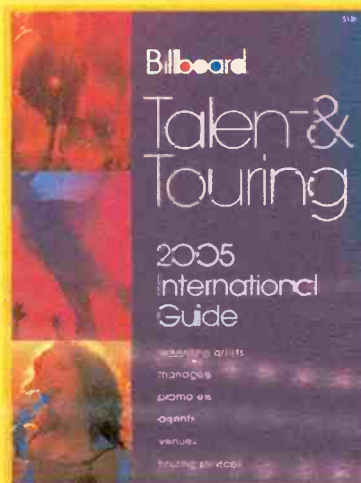
A: Nobody deserves it more than him . . . When we started with him, he was a kid. Now he's a businessman. That's great.

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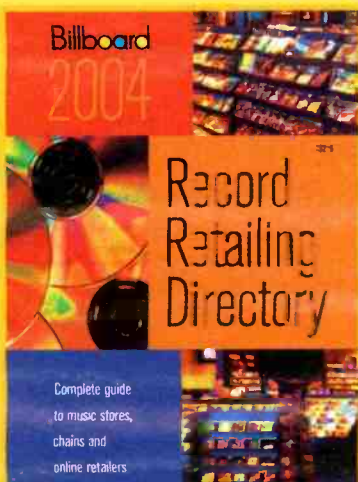
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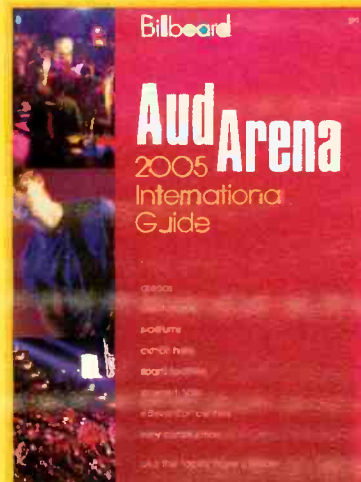
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