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SONGS OF THE YEAR

"Be Without You"

Writers: Johntá Austin, Mary J. Blige
Publishers: Chrysalis Music, Mary J. Blige Music, Naked Under My Clothes Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Because of You"

Writer: Kelly Clarkson
Publisher: Smelly Songs



FOUNDERS AWARD
Melissa Etheridge



VANGUARD AWARD
The All-American Rejects
Nick Wheeler, Tyson Ritter

"Behind These Hazel Eyes"

Writers: Kelly Clarkson, Lukasz "Dr. Luke" Gottwald, Max Martin (STIM)
Publishers: Kasz Money Publishing, Smelly Songs, Zomba Enterprises Inc.

"Better Days"

Writer: John Rzeznik
Publishers: Corner of Clark and Kent Music, EMI Music Publishing

"Boulevard of Broken Dreams"

Writers: Billie Joe Armstrong, Tre Cool, Mike Dirnt
Publishers: Green Day Music, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"Breathe (2AM)"

Writer: Anna Nalick
Publisher: Annibonna Music

"Call Me When You're Sober"

Writer: Terry Balsamo
Publisher: Sweet 1665 Music

"Check On It"

Writers: Angela Beyincos, Beyoncé, Sean Garrett, Swizz Beatz
Publishers: Angela Beyincos Music, Beyoncé Publishing, Christopher Garrett's Publishing, EMI Music Publishing, Hitco South, New Columbia Pictures Music, Inc., Swizz Beatz

"Cool"

Writer: Gwen Stefani
Publisher: Harajuku Lover Music

"Crazy"

Writer: Danger Mouse
Publisher: Chrysalis Music

"Dirty Little Secret"

Writers: Tyson Ritter, Nick Wheeler
Publishers: BMG Songs, Inc., Smells Like Phys Ed Music

"Do It To It"

Writer: John "Cheese" Williams
Publisher: Uncle Willmese Music

"Don't Forget About Us"

Writers: Johntá Austin, Jermaine Dupri
Publishers: Chrysalis Music, EMI Music Publishing, Naked Under My Clothes Music, Shaniah Cymone Music

"Ever The Same"

Writer: Rob Thomas
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, U Rule Music

"Fee! Good Inc."

Writer: Danger Mouse
Publisher: Chrysalis Music

"Give It Up to Me"

Writers: Keyshia Cole, Ron Fair, Jigzag, Sean Paul, Nigel A. Staff
Publishers: 150 Lafayette Music, BMG Songs, Inc., EMI Music Publishing, Faircraft Music, She Wrote It, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Grillz"

Writers: Beyoncé, Jermaine Dupri, Sean Garrett, Ali Jones, L'Foc, Nelly, Kelly Rowland, T.I., Paul Wall, Michelle Williams
Publishers: 2 Kingpins Publishing, Air Control Music Inc., Basajamba Music, Beyoncé Publishing, BMG Songs, Inc., Christopher Garrett's Publishing, D2 Pro Publishing, Domani and Ya Majesty's Music, EMI Music Publishing, Hitco South, Jackie Frost Music, Kelendria Music Publishing, Faultwall Publishing, Sam Swap Publishing, Shaniah Cymone Music, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC, Williams Publishing, Universal Music Publishing Group, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"Hate Me"

Writer: Justin Furstenfeld
Publishers: Paris On Paper Publishing, Primary Wave Music Publishing

"Hips Don't Lie"

Writers: Onar Altanno, Luis Diaz, Wyclef Jean, Latavia Parker
Publishers: Huss Zwingli Publishing Inc., Lanfranco Music, Quisqueya Music Publishing, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC, Yahshay Publishing

"Holiday"

Writers: Billie Joe Armstrong, Tre Cool, Mike Dirnt
Publishers: Green Day Music, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"How To Save a Life"

Writers: Joe King, Isaac Slade
Publishers: Aaron Edwards Publishing, EMI Music Publishing

"I Write Sins Not Tragedies"

Writers: Ryan Ross, Spencer Smith, Brendon Urie, Brent Wilson
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Sweet Chin Music

"It's Goin' Down"

Writer: Nitti
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Regina's Son Music, Slide That Music

"Laffy Taffy"

Writers: Dennis "Mock B" Butler, Michael "Space Cowboy" Jonzun, Adrian "Stuntman" Parks, Richard "K-RAB" Sims, Jr., Maurice Starr, Todola Fabo
Publishers: 30318 Underground Music Publishing, ARL Music, no Artist Publishing Group, Black Eye Music, BMG Songs, Inc., Boston International Music Co., EMI Music Publishing, Maurice Starr Music, Perry Homes Music Publishing, Stony Man Music

"Lean Wit It, Rock Wit It"

Writers: Bucki, Maurice "Parlee" Gleaton, Bernard "Jizzal Man" Leverette, Jr., Gerald "Buckie" Tiller, Jamall "Pimpin'" Willingham
Publishers: Buck 3485 Publishing, EMI Music Publishing, Honey's Baby Boy Music, Jamall Willingham Publishing, Parlee DFB Publishing, Slide That Music

"Like You"

Writers: Iaron "The Kid Slim" Astor, Johntá Austin, Ricky Bell, Jermaine Dupri, Ralph Trasant
Publishers: Chrysalis Music, EMI Music Publishing, Naked Under My Clothes Music, Shaniah Cymone Music, Slide That Music, The Kid Slim, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Loney No More"

Writer: Rob Thomas
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, U Rue Music

"Loosen Up My Buttons"

Writer: Follow Da Don
Publishers: Showdy Pimp Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Me & U"

Writer: Ryan Leslie
Publishers: Aspen Songs, Next Selection Music

"Move Along"

Writers: Tyson Ritter, Nick Wheeler
Publishers: BMG Songs, Inc., Smells Like Phys Ed Music



POP MUSIC AWARDS



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PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR
EMI Music Publishing



WRITERS OF THE YEAR
Johntá Austin
Jermaine Dupri

"Wake Me Up When September Ends"

Writers: Billie Joe Armstrong, Tre Cool, Mike Dirnt
Publishers: Green Day Music, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"Walk Away"

Writers: Kelly Clarkson, Chantal Kreviazuk (SOCAN), Raine Maida (SOCAN)
Publishers: Smelly Songs, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC.

"We Belong Together"

Writers: Johntá Austin, Jermaine Dupri, Manuel Seal
Publishers: BMG Songs, Inc., Chrysalis Music, EMI Music Publishing, Naked Under My Clothes Music, Shaniah Cymone Music, E L A C K A D Music

"What's Left of Me"

Writers: Jess Cates, Emaruel Kinakou, Nick Lachey, Lindy Robbins
Publishers: Angelou Music, Ikenator Music, Inc., My Getaway Driver Music, Right Bark Music, Reditis Music, Inc., Universal Music Publishing Group

"What You Know About That"

Writer: Gabriel Wonder Arillo
Publisher: K Milagro Music

"Who Says You Can't Go Home"

Writers: Jon Bon Jovi, Rickie Sambora
Publishers: Aggressive Music, Eon Jovi Publishing, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Yo (Excuse Me Miss)"

Writers: Johntá Austin, Vidal Davis, Andre Harris
Publishers: Chrysalis Music, Dirty Dre Music, Lil Vidal Music, Naked Under My Clothes Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"You'll Think of Me"

Writers: Darrell Brown, Ty Lacy, Dennis Matkosky
Publishers: Almo Music Corp., Baldy Baldy Music, EMI Music Publishing, Original Biss Music, Ty Me A River Music

"My Love"

Writers: Timbaland, Justin Timberlake
Publishers: Tennman Tunes, Virginia Beach Music, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"One Wish"

Writers: LaShawn Daniels
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, LaShawn Daniels Productions

"Over My Head (Cable Car)"

Writers: Joe King, Isaac Slade
Publishers: Aaron Edwards Publishing, EMI Music Publishing

"Promiscuous"

Writers: Timothy "Attitude" Clayton, Nelly Furtado (SOCAN), Timbaland
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Six Tron Studios Publishing, Universal Music Publishing Group, Virginia Beach Music, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"Pullin' Me Back"

Writers: Craigy, Jermaine Dupri, L'Foc, Brian Alexander Morgan, Jaco Pastorius
Publishers: A Stolen People's Music, Air Control Music Inc., Basajamba Music, BMG Songs Inc., Chngy Music, EMI Music Publishing, Jaco Pastorius Inc., Shaniah Cymone Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Ridin'"

Writers: Chamillionaire, Krayzie Bone, Juan "Play" Salinas, Oscar "Skillz" Salinas
Publishers: Almo Music Corp., Chamillitary Camp Music, EMI Music Publishing, Play For Play N Skillz Music, Skillz For Skillz N Play Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Right Here"

Writers: John April, Aaron Lewis, Michael Mushok, Jonathan Wyszocki
Publishers: Greenfund, I'm Nobody Music, My Blue Car Music Company, Pimp Yug, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"Run It!"

Writer: Scott Storch
Publishers: Scott Storch Music, TVT Music, Inc.

"Sexy Love"

Writers: Mikkel Eriksen (PRS), Tor Hermansen (PRS)
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC

"Sexyback"

Writers: Timbaland, Justin Timberlake
Publishers: Tennman Tunes, Virginia Beach Music, Warner/Chappell Music, Inc.

"Shake It Off"

Writers: Johntá Austin, Jermaine Dupri
Publishers: Chrysalis Music, EMI Music Publishing, Naked Under My Clothes Music, Shaniah Cymone Music

"Snap Yo Fingers"

Writer: Sean P
Publishers: How Ya Luv Dat Music, Notting Dale Songs Inc.

"So Sack"

Writers: Mikkel Eriksen (PRS), Tor Hermansen (PRS)
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC

"So What"

Writer: Ciara
Publishers: Royalty Rightings, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Soul Survivor"

Writer: Akon
Publishers: Byefal Productions Inc., Famous Music Corp.

"Temperature"

Writers: Rohan "Snowcone" Fuller, Adrian "Izes" Marshall, Sean Paul
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Jencore Snowcone Publishing, STB Music Inc.

"There It Go (The Whistle Song)"

Writers: Terence "The Politician" Anderson, Daren Joseph, Juelz Santana, Carlisle Young
Publishers: Carlise Young Music, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Too Little Too Late"

Writers: Josh Alexander, Ruth-Anne Cunningham (IMRO), Billy Steinberg
Publishers: Jerk Awake, Jetanon Music, Shapiro Bernstein & Co., Inc.

"U And Dat"

Writer: Kandi Burruss
Publishers: Air Control Music Inc., EMI Music Publishing, Kandacy Music

"Unfaithful"

Writers: Mikkel Eriksen (PRS), Tor Hermansen (PRS)
Publishers: EMI Music Publishing, Sony/ATV Tunes LLC

"Unpredictable"

Writer: Ludacris
Publishers: Ludacris Universal Publishing, Universal Music Publishing Group

"Unwritten"

Writer: Wayne Rodrigues
Publisher: WSRJ Music

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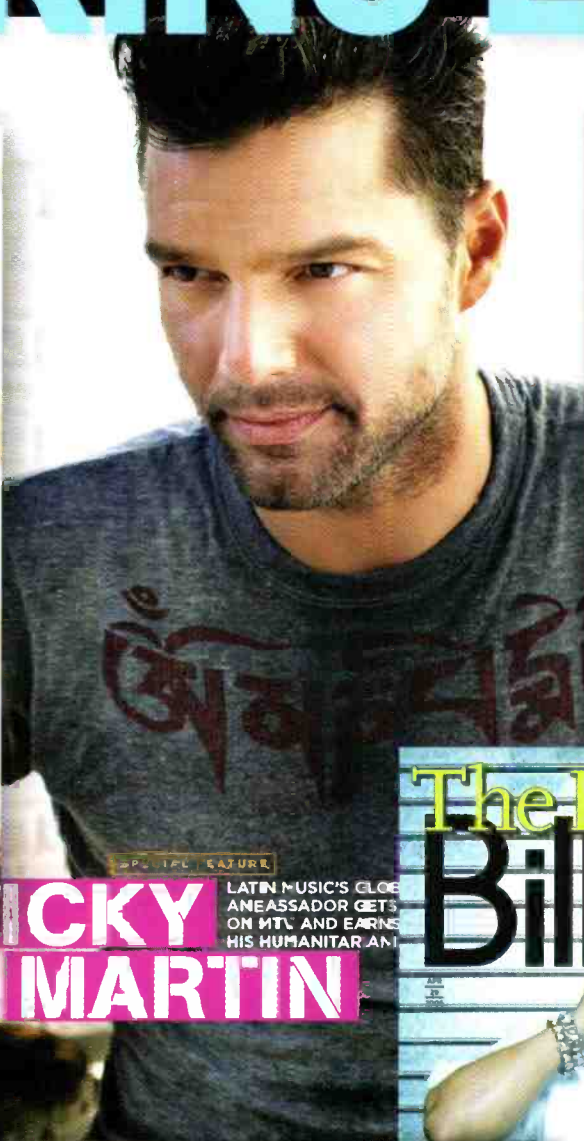
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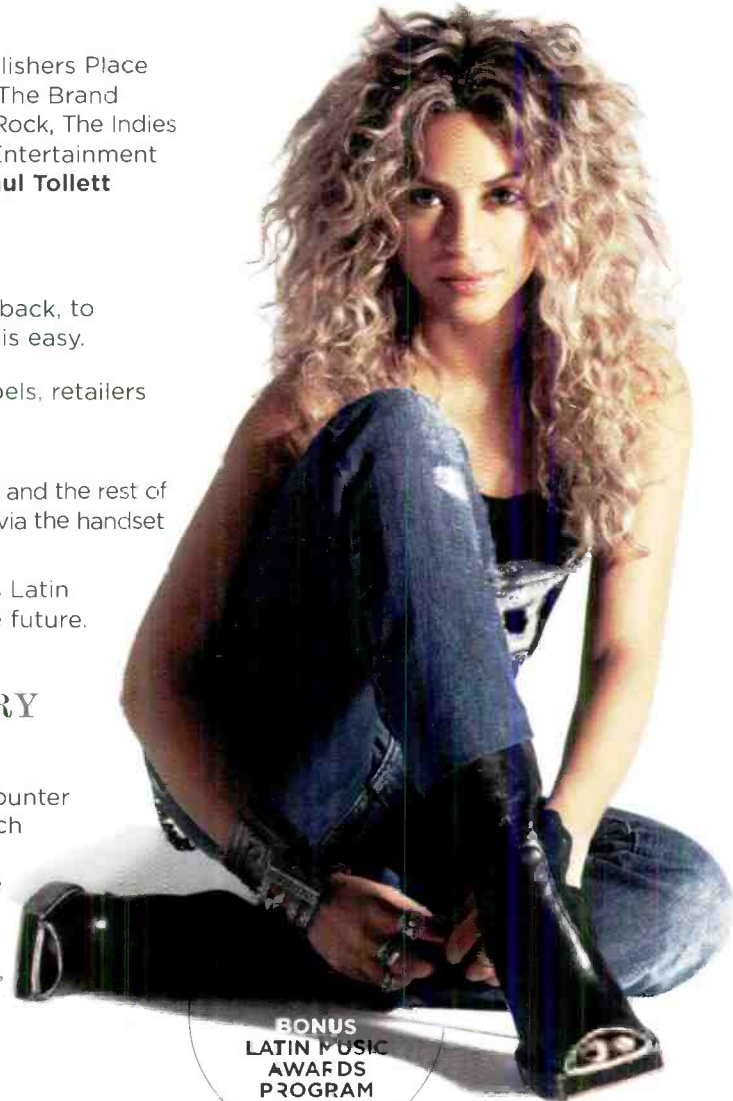
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ON THE COVER: Calle 13 photographed by Pascal Fontana. PHOTO ART DIRECTION: JESUS GOMEZ; STYLING: ABADHA; T-SHIRT DESIGN: OMAR ALICEA

360 DEGREES OF BILLBOARD

HOME FRONT

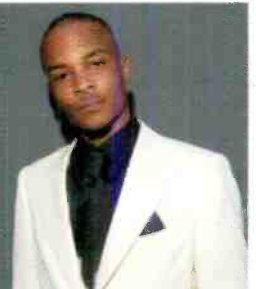
Events

R&B/HIP-HOP
Returning to Atlanta Sept. 5-7, Billboard's R&B/Hip-Hop Conference & Awards features savvy speakers, networking opportunities, educational sessions and exciting performances. For more online, go to billboardevents.com.

REGIONAL MEXICAN
Billboard's Regional Mexican Conference returns to Los Angeles Oct. 1-3. Now in its second year, the event will focus on the genre's latest radio, touring, digital and publishing trends. See billboardevents.com.

Video

FIND TIME TO WATCH
Go to billboard.com/sixty to watch Hillary Cross sit down with T.I. He speaks out on his upcoming Grand Hustle effort, his struggles with his own alter-ego and acting side-by-side with Denzel Washington.



Webcast Wars

Internet Radio Must Pay Fair Rates For Music

BY JOHN SIMSON

The recent flurry of articles and online chatter predicting the demise of Internet radio due to a ruling by the Copyright Royalty Board adjusting the rates paid to performing artists and record labels from webcasting during the next five years has as its starting assumption that anyone who wants to run a commercial Internet radio service is entitled to pay less than fair market value for the music on which

Internet radio is promotional—this idea was not only rejected by the original arbitrators in the first webcasting decision in 2002, but also by the current CRB's March ruling, finding that such claims were unsupported by evidence.

No station plays an artist because it "likes" the artist. Commercial webcasters and broadcasters play an artist because they think that artist will help them draw an audience that will help them sell advertising—the more listeners the more

they can earn. While noncommercial webcasters may not have the same type of "profit motive," great music is still the attraction, and they are hoping to benefit from the artists' labor, whether it's increased exposure of their brand, increased underwriting or greater listener support.

During the past five years we've seen a dramatic increase in the audience for Internet radio, and we've also seen a dramatic decrease in the sale of CDs. If webcasting were as promotional as alleged, we would have seen a jump in CD sales, not a marked decline. And it is not just the major labels. CD sales are way down for independent labels like Alliga-

'This something-for-nothing mentality has got to end. Every business pays for its inputs.'

—JOHN SIMSON

they build their businesses. This assumption seems to be based on the egregious belief that music can be ripped, streamed, bartered, broadcast or shared electronically for little or nothing.

It's not surprising that "old radio guys" in the habit of playing recordings for nothing (unlike virtually all other developed countries) fight long and hard the idea that they should have to pay performers for the music they use. But this something-for-nothing mentality has got to end. Every business pays for its inputs. The major inputs for radio, whether Internet or over-the-air, are the recordings they play. This notion that webcasters are doing artists a favor when they play their music is not only wrong, it allows broadcasters to live in this state of denial in which they make handsome profits off someone else's labor and creativity. We have long gotten past the notion that In-

ternet radio is promotional—this idea was not only rejected by the original arbitrators in the first webcasting decision in 2002, but also by the current CRB's March ruling, finding that such claims were unsupported by evidence.

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John Simson is executive director of SoundExchange.

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Must-See TV

When Ahmet Ertegun died this past December, it marked the passing of an industry giant—one of a small handful of individuals whose history is the history of modern music itself.

This is made clear in the upcoming PBS documentary "Atlantic Records: The House That Ahmet Built." It was our good fortune that filming wrapped shortly before Ahmet's fateful fall at a Rolling Stones con-



cert. And it was my good fortune to see an early screening.

The documentary traces Ahmet's life—and the rise of Atlantic from fledgling R&B label to rock'n'roll powerhouse—via talks between Ahmet and his artists. To call the footage an embarrassment of riches is to sell it short. You'll be touched to see Ahmet and Ray Charles describe the creation of "Mess Around." You'll

laugh at Mick Jagger chiding Ahmet's request for Jimmy Page to name his band the New Yardbirds. And you'll get chills—really—watching footage of young Otis, Aretha, et al.

In a day of declining sales and protracted legal disputes, it was nothing short of inspiring to see a time when music royalty rose to power, and Ahmet—sometimes king, sometimes jester, and thrilled to remember it all—held court. Set your DVR now and thank me later.

"Atlantic Records: The House That Ahmet Built" premieres at 9 p.m. May 2 on PBS.

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YOUR COUNTRY
CMT Awards for the user generation



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Hip-hop biz addresses lyric controversy



VINYL EXAM
An old physical format, back on the upswing



SXSW SUCCESS?
Global bands grade Austin's effectiveness



FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH
Mandy Moore enlists high school help

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>>>TICKET-MASTER SUES STUBHUB

Ticketmaster has filed a suit in Los Angeles Superior Court against Stubhub and its parent eBay, citing intentional interference with contractual rights and other charges. The suit centers around, but is not limited to, the Lynrd Skynyrd/Hank Williams Jr. Rowdy Frynds tour. Stubhub has been offering "official premium tickets" to the tour, which Ticketmaster claims violates its exclusivity contracts with venues.

>>>CLEAR CHANNEL AGREES TO BUYOUT BID

Clear Channel Communications' board has agreed to an increased offer of \$39 per share (total value \$19.35 billion) from a private equity group trying to buy the company, after weeks of opposition to an earlier \$37.60-per-share deal. The increased bid, from buyout firms Thomas H. Lee and Bain Capital, comes one day before shareholders were originally scheduled to vote on the original deal, which many predicted would fail to get the votes needed to pass.

>>>EMI MUSIC REVENUE SHRINKS 15%

Against a backdrop of "very challenging" market trends, EMI Group is forecasting a 15% contraction in revenue from its recorded-music division. Despite the harsh revenue forecast for EMI Music, the group says constant currency sales for its record division in the year to March 31 were in line with guidance published in February.

UP FRONT

BRANDING BY MICHAEL PAOLETTA

S'more Than A Feeling

Brad Paisley Inks A Sweet Deal With Hershey's

Chocolate. Marshmallows. Graham crackers. Brad Paisley. In what may be the sweetest deal of the country artist's eight-year career, Paisley has partnered with Hershey's for a national media and retail campaign that highlights the artist's new album, "5th Gear" (due June 19 from Arista Nashville), the classic Hershey's milk chocolate bar and essential summer/campfire food s'mores.

The multimillion-dollar campaign launches in mid-May with TV spots featuring Paisley. At the same time, Paisley's image will begin appearing on 100 million-plus Hershey's product bags and candy wrappers. Both will reference Paisley's Bonfires & Amplifiers 2007 tour, which kicks off April 26 at the UTC McKenzie Arena in Chattanooga, Tenn. The trek is sponsored by Hershey's (billboard.biz, Jan. 19).

The deal is indicative of companies' new eagerness to partner with country artists to reach a mass audience. Other recent examples include Brooks & Dunn with Toyota and Pat Green with Dodge.

Kathy Armistead, VP of artist and brand alliance at the William Morris Agency in Nashville, brought Paisley and Hershey's together. Country music fans "are incredibly loyal to their favorite artists and brands," she says. "And [because] country music is so diverse in flavor, brands can reach almost any targeted consumer group by partnering with [country] artists."

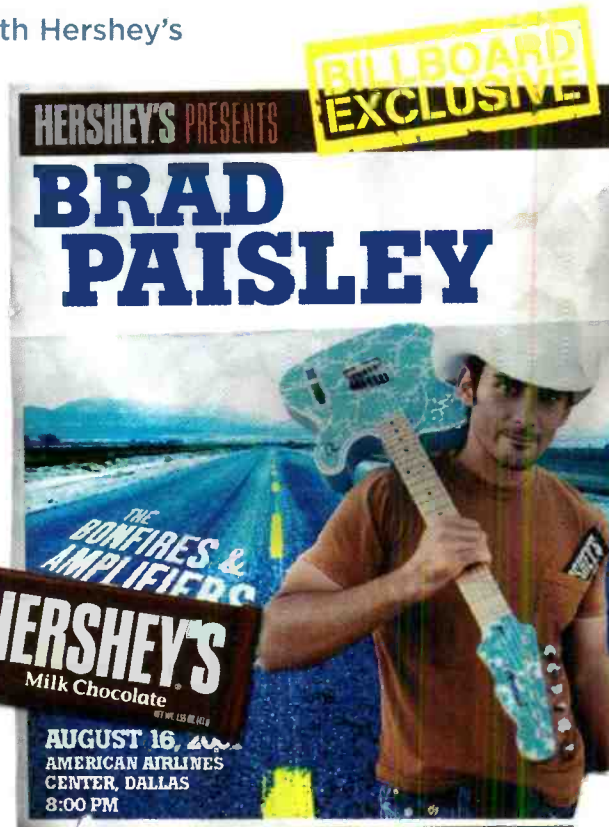
While the Paisley/Hershey's partnership runs through the end of the year, its major push is during s'more season: Memorial Day through Labor Day.

"Brad's live show and music are about fun and energy," Sony BMG Nashville chairman Joe Galante says. "Hershey's and the s'mores campaign are about having fun and families. It's the perfect fit."

Paisley's manager Bill Simmons, of Fitzgerald Hartley Management, goes one step further. "We were looking for a partnership that could expose Brad and his music to a wider audience," he says.

Hershey's, meanwhile, desired an artist whose values were in sync with its own. An artist who appreciates the roots of country music, yet remains contemporary were top of the company's want list, says Ernie Savo, director of marketing excellence at Hershey's. "Also, we looked at someone who was on their way up, not on their way out," he adds.

In this issue, the lead single from "5th Gear"—



BRAD PAISLEY'S image will begin appearing on over 100 million Hershey's product bags and candy wrappers in mid-May.

"Ticks"—ascends Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart, climbing two positions to No. 11. On the album, Paisley will venture "into places he hasn't gone subjectwise and lyrically" says Jim Catino, senior director of A&R for Sony BMG Nashville. "Ticks," for example, appeals to a younger audience, says Catino, who notes that Paisley wrote or co-wrote most of the album's songs. Paisley is currently in recording-studio lockdown—mixing and overdubbing the collection of songs that will become "5th Gear"—and was unavailable for comment.

Discussions between Paisley and Hershey's began about a year ago. "We talked many times before lawyers were brought in," Simmons says. "I like to feel good about something before it goes to contract."

During Armistead's initial meetings with Arista Nashville, topics included the new album's release date, the timing of the single and tour plans. On the Hershey's side, Armistead listened to the company's

retail plans for summer 2007. "To ensure maximum promotion levels in the stores, timing—on both sides—was key," she says. Throughout, it became apparent that Arista Nashville would need to adjust its release schedules for the album and the lead single to maximize the potential of the campaign.

"For this deal to work, the artist and label needed to understand the goals and needs of Hershey's and their retailers—they needed to think beyond tour sponsorship," Armistead says. "Brad completely got that and [wanted to] help Hershey's develop their campaign."

This includes launching a separate promotion for each of the company's major retail customers. Instead of a primary brand sweepstakes and promotion in which all retail accounts participate, Hershey's is supplying each retailer with a different campaign featuring Paisley. Armistead points to Walgreens, Target, Wal-Mart and others, each of which has different prizes, contests and incentives to encourage sales of Hershey's products and Paisley's CD.

In a nearly unprecedented linkup, Paisley will also participate in campaigns for retail accounts that don't sell music, including convenience stores and supermarkets. Such accounts don't directly affect album sales, Armistead notes, but they do provide "huge and unique exposure for Brad" while giving Hershey's a cool campaign for some of its accounts.

Additionally, a "S'more Access to Brad Paisley" promotion (launching in May at hersheys.com/paisley) gives five fans the chance to be temporary members of Paisley's road crew. Hundreds of other prizes—including autographed guitars and exclusive music downloads—will also be awarded. Within the S'more Access platform is exclusive audio and video content. Ultimately, Savo says, it's about enhancing the consumer experience. "Brad Paisley and s'mores are helping us do just that."

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PUBLISHING BY SUSAN BUTLER

BILLBOARD EXCLUSIVE

Famous Price Could Hit Half A Billion

Will Viacom Also Sell Paramount's Songs?

With phase two of Viacom's sale of Famous Music, the publishing division of Paramount Pictures, now under way, word in the publishing industry is that one of the most contested aspects of the sale—Viacom not selling Paramount's film songs—may now be a negotiable deal point. While some bidders reportedly valued the catalog in the \$300 million range, including Paramount songs in the sale could drive bids for the publisher far beyond the \$400 million mark, perhaps even to half a billion dollars. But publishing experts say it will only be worth this much to a few bidders because Famous is anything but a typical publishing catalog.

Paramount's songs are one of the most lucrative segments for Famous. The studio's film scores and theme songs during the last few years accounted for around 30% of Famous' net publisher's share (or NPS, the amount of money retained by the publisher after paying songwriter and other third-party royalties), according to information obtained by Billboard. At first, Viacom indicated to bidders that the studio's catalog would "revert" to Paramount at or before the time of the sale, but the buyer could continue administering the catalog for the next 10 years for the same percentage of revenue that Paramount currently shares with Famous. Then the buyer would receive only a typical administration fee, which would be far less the current percentage of revenue. Exact figures were not available.

Now, a source says, Viacom may be rethinking that point after the bidders' strong, negative reactions to the reversion requirement. This could significantly drive up the selling price. The Paramount film songs "Moon River" ("Breakfast at Tiffany's"), "Axel F" ("Beverly Hills Cop"), "Silver Bells" (the Christmas classic from "The Lemon Drop Kid") and the "Mission Impossible Theme" have together contributed more than \$4.6 million to Famous' NPS in the last three years, and Paramount songs make up more than 35% of the publisher's top 200 earners, according to the information obtained.

But administering a catalog filled with film cues is not a job for just anyone. Registering

every cue and tracking revenue worldwide is extremely labor-intensive and often complex, requiring the right infrastructure. "The most logical buyer is an existing player—a trade buyer," says David Hockman, former Sony/ATV Music Publishing chairman/CEO.

Although second-round bidders haven't been confirmed, this reasoning points to Warner/Chappell Music and Sony/ATV, now helmed by chairman/CEO Marty Bandier. The other two majors are also candidates, though EMI Group may be focusing more on using its publishing assets to secure financing for the group, as announced April 18, rather than spending so much on an acquisition.

Still, private equity linked



"Moon River," written by **JOHNNY MERCER**, left, and **HENRY MANCINI**, is one of Paramount's most lucrative film songs.

with former record execs like Charles Koppelman and Strauss Zelnick will likely stay in the running. "There seems to be such an enormous appetite in the private equity world for publishing assets at the moment, that the buyer may not turn out to be an existing [publisher]," says Hockman, who did not participate in any bid for Famous.

Famous' production music unit, Extreme Music, is a type of catalog that few publishers

own. The prerecorded music later licensed for film, TV and commercial uses has contributed more than 25% to Famous' annual NPS, according to the information obtained.

Contemporary music is the third-highest contributor to NPS, with substantial earnings from songwriter/producer Linda Perry's hits "Beautiful," performed by Christina Aguilera, and "Get the Party Started" performed by Pink; Jet's "Are You Gonna Be My Girl"; and Akon's "Soul Survivors," performed with Young Jeezy.

Next in earnings is Famous catalog music, including Marc Cohn's "Walking in Memphis" and Survivor's "Eye of the Tiger," both among the top 15 earners in the last few years. Additionally, Famous pulls in earnings from administering the catalogs of CBS TV and MTV Networks.

During this second phase, several of the highest bidders from the first round now have access to more detailed financial and catalog information so they can make firm offers. Sources say this process should move quickly, perhaps over a few weeks.

STAND BY MARTY

Did John Branca's Sony/ATV Connection Ensure Leiber & Stoller Deal?

The Leiber & Stoller catalog landing at Sony/ATV Music Publishing just as Marty Bandier took the company's reins is likely more than a coincidence. Sony/ATV, which acquired all rights in the catalog this month, was the highest bidder, with an estimated price tag between \$40 million-\$50 million, a publishing source says. But even though Bandier says he feels like it was a gift from heaven for the music of such prolific writers to arrive when he started his new role as chairman/CEO, that gift may have come in part from lawyer John Branca.

Sony Music Publishing became Sony/ATV after Branca, who then represented Michael Jackson and his ATV Music Publishing, brokered the deal to form the joint venture in 1995. Bandier and Branca, two of the most influen-

tial players in their respective fields, are good friends who do business together whenever possible. So, some publishing executives conclude, Bandier was the incentive for Branca to bring the catalog to Sony.

Now the publisher will have to find new ways to generate earnings from classic American songs that have been around for nearly half a century. They include "Stand by Me," "Jailhouse Rock" and "Is That All There Is?"

Bandier says he recently spent a couple of hours one evening listening to the songs, imagining current artists who could cover them. The Sony/ATV team, he adds, is charged up about placing the songs into today's world of music. Some employees with Leiber & Stoller's publishing company are expected to continue working with the catalog.

Leiber & Stoller, who will still receive their writers' share of royalties from the songs, were not available to comment at press time.



LEIBER & STOLLER

—SB

>>> AAIM ENDORSES NET NEUTRALITY

The American Assn. of Independent Music has leant its voice to the Future of Music Coalition's Rock the Net campaign in favor of net neutrality. A host of indie labels and artists, including Bloodshot, Merge, Ted Leo and El-P, have already aligned with the cause. The AAIM counts more than 200 members, including Epitaph, Sub Pop and Concord.

>>> SPRINT SECOND LIFE

Wireless operator Sprint Nextel is opening a virtual concert venue in Second Life exclusively for Latin music fans. Called the Sprint Center, the space will be used to stream prerecorded performances from the Sprint-sponsored Telemundo reality TV series "Concierto Clandestino." Performances will come from such artists as Paulina Rubio, Obie Bermudez, Tego Calderon, Fonseca and Belinda. The company will also host meet-and-greet sessions (in avatar form) with Latin artists in the near future.

>>> AMAZON LAUNCHES INDIE CAMPAIGN

Online retailer Amazon has launched a massive indie-music promotion in which approximately 150 titles will be sold for \$9.99 for a limited time. As part of the "Go Indie" promo, Amazon has launched a minisite that links from its indie-music section. More than 30 labels are participating in the sale and are featured on the Go Indie site, including Epitaph's Anti-imprint, Astralwerks, Barsuk, Beggars Group, Domino Records, Koch Records, Rykodisc and Sub Pop. Not all releases showcased on the microsite are discounted, however, as the section highlights approximately 700 titles.



Machete artist **EL POTRO DE SINALOA** will now move to Machete Regional.

LATIN BY LEILA COBO

BILLBOARD EXCLUSIVE

From Reggaetón To Regional Mexican

Machete's New Imprint Targets Another Youth Demographic

An unlikely suitor is reaching out to the young regional Mexican consumer. Machete Music, the 2-year-old Latin urban music label owned by Universal, is de-

buting Machete Regional. Like its urban counterpart, which focuses on youth-driven music, the new imprint will target a young demographic—but one that consumes regional Mexican music, the largest-selling Latin subgenre in the country.

The label's specific target is in sync with Universal's overall ap-

proach, says Jesus Lopez, chairman of Universal Music Latin America/Iberian Peninsula.

"The solution to the music industry crisis lies in finding and developing new talent," Lopez says. "In the United States, the power of Mexican music is very big, and we feel Machete has a growth oppor-

tunity in this sector."

Machete Regional's launch would not affect the regional Mexican operations of other Universal Latin labels, notably Universal Music Latino, whose roster includes Diana Reyes and the late Valentín Elizalde.

"What makes Machete a different label is we believe in

MySpace Generation

CMT Awards Mine User-Generated Sites For Country Youth Appeal

"This is for my MySpace people and everybody who voted."

With those words, CMT Music Awards breakthrough artist of the year Taylor Swift may have helped usher in a new era in country music. While a growing number of country artists have MySpace pages and even more have significantly boosted their online presence in recent years, Swift's comments after receiving her first major award at the tender age of 17 may be a sign of things to come.

CMT's 2007 Music Awards, the only fan-voted country awards show, were held April 16 at Belmont University's Curb Event Center in Nashville. More than 1.8 million votes were cast leading up to the live telecast, according to CMT.

"I try to spend at least a half an hour a day on MySpace trying to track down the people who are helping me out and saying 'thank you' personally," Swift said backstage after her win. "I'm a junior in high school, this is how we campaign. I basically told anyone I could about the award."

CMT.com VP of digital media/GM Martin Clayton says artists with youth appeal such as Carrie Underwood, Kellie Pickler and Swift benefit from having fans that have grown up with computers. "That's what they do, that's where they go, that's where they are," he says.

Swift's Big Machine Records labelmate Jack Ingram, who has recently found national success after years of dominating the Texas country scene, also scored a CMT "buckle," as the award is known, in the Wide Open Country category. In an audio message on his Web site, Ingram asked his fans to go to CMT.com and vote. "I appreciate you getting me in the thing in the first place, now let's go make some noise," Ingram told his fans.

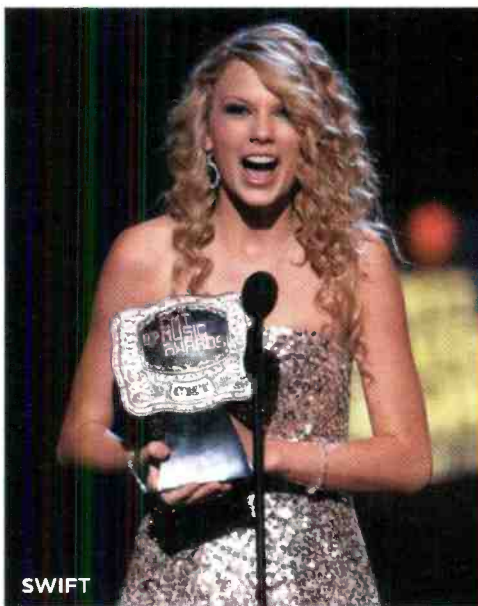
"It never has felt comfortable, but shameless self-promotion is part of being in this business," Ingram told reporters after the show.

"Both of them really wanted it and took a focused approach to getting out the vote," Big Machine director of national promotion and new media John Zarling says of Swift and Ingram.

Rising country duo Sugarland posted a series of vote solicitations on YouTube. The light-hearted videos have Sugarland's Jennifer Net-

ties and Kristian Bush visiting the CMT Web site and handicapping their chances in the various categories for which they were nominated. While the videos weren't originally slated for YouTube, "they were so different and funny and self-deprecating" that it made sense to place them on the site, says Ben Kline, Universal Music Group Nashville executive VP of sales, marketing and new media. "It's one of those times where the artists make us look like geniuses."

Underwood, the 2005 winner of "American Idol," was the night's big winner, taking home video of the year and female honors for "Before He Cheats." Roman White, who directed



SWIFT

the video, was named director of the year. In winning video of the year, Underwood bested superstars Kenny Chesney, Toby Keith and Rascal Flatts. Slightly less than a million votes were cast during the show at CMT.com as well as via mobile phone to determine the winner.

"I started out on a fan-based show, and you guys have continued to support me throughout everything," Underwood said in thanking fans.

Fans were also able to choose which of three Rascal Flatts songs they would like to see the band open the show with. "Life Is a Highway," from the "Cars" soundtrack, won out.

The show's other winners also have a younger-leaning audience. Rascal Flatts took group honors for "What Hurts the Most" and Chesney was the top male with "You Save Me." ...

music for the youth, and we take every tact to get to the youth," says Machete Music president Gustavo Lopez, who will also run Machete Regional.

Although Lopez is based in Miami, Machete Regional's offices will be in Burbank, Calif., with Nelson Mendoza acting as director.

Lopez, who launched Machete, has focused mainly on reggaeton, hip-hop and urban regional acts including Wisin & Yandel and Don Omar. While

Machete Regional would appear to be diametrically opposite to that, "I see them as the same consumer," Lopez says. "The ones who buy edgy corrido music are the same consumers who on the West Coast are buying reggaeton."

Indeed, in cities like Los Angeles, youth-driven Mexican stations like KBUE (La Buena) share a high percentage of listenership with rhythmic top 40 stations KPWR (Power 106).

Last month, Machete released

two albums by El Potro de Sinaloa, who will now move to Machete Regional. Among other groups, the label is also in conversations with Los Nuevos Rebeldes, whose corrido "Masacre en el Cajoncito" is a finalist for a Billboard Latin Music Award.

Although Machete is looking to sign acts directly, it is also open to licensing or joint venture deals. "We want to put out the word that we are out there, actively looking for talent," Mendoza says. ...



BEYONCÉ'S 'Get Me Bodied' video, included on her 'B'Day Anthology Video Album.'

DIGITAL BY BRIAN GARRITY

RIPPING CLIPS

New Music Blogs Traffic In MP4 Videos

By now the practice has become old hat: a hotly anticipated album gets distributed and devoured by MP3 bloggers before it ever hits stores. But when Columbia Records released Beyoncé's "B'Day Anthology Video Album" on April 3, it marked a rare instance of a similar phenomenon happening with a music DVD.

A new breed of music bloggers, focused as much on downloadable music videos as on audio files, had gotten ahead of clips ripped from an advance of the "album" and were posting them in the iPod Video-friendly MPEG-4, or MP4, format.

The trend appears to be a new looming headache for the recording industry as it continues to attempt to convert music videos into a revenue stream, whether it's through sales of videos via iTunes or through new ad-supported models from YouTube.

Among the sites posting clips were the blogs New Music Now, Ali's Blog and Music for All, which were offering the videos via file-transfer sites like rapidshare.com, evilshare.com and megaupload.com.

Reps from all three blogs could not be reached for comment. Columbia execs also did not return calls.

MP4 blogs, while still very much in the minority, may represent the next chapter in music blogging—one where bloggers and readers view video as collectible as MP3s.

"It's becoming a much more standard practice to throw in a link to [download]

a video file," says Mark Ghuneim, CEO of Wiredset, a New York-based digital marketing consulting firm. "It's a byproduct of today's culture. People feel much better having ownership thoughts and having the ability to watch videos on a 'my terms, my way' basis."

Call it an outgrowth of the rising distribution of video-enabled iPods. One such blog, offering downloads of videos from Christina Aguilera, Madonna and Natasha Bedingfield, even calls itself iPod Videos and More. Another, iPod Videos and MP3s, has Avril Lavigne's "Girlfriend" video; Fire Videos First—For All Your iPod Videos! has new clips from Ne-Yo and My Chemical Romance.

Just where MP4 bloggers get their content is unclear. While labels often service music to popular MP3 blogs, much of the content on the MP4 blogs at this point appears to be rips from MTV, BET and other third parties.

"This is a distinct segment of the blogosphere," Ghuneim says. "They are more focused on attention and traffic than the usual suspects of bloggers who have started to play well with media practices."

Unlike most popular MP3 blogs, which tend to skew toward indie rock and hip-hop, MP4 blogs are decidedly pop-oriented.

Editor of music news blog Cooler.com Glenn Peoples says, "These sites show music blogging is going more mainstream in taste. It's not just for indie-rock fans." ...

>>> JUDGES REJECT WEBCASTERS

The Copyright Royalty Board judges have delivered a setback to webcasters by denying all motions to reconsider last month's ruling to hike royalties they're required to pay for sound-recording performances. But the judges did allow webcasters the option to calculate fees for 2006-07 as they have previously, by average listeners per hour, as opposed to the new system where royalties are paid each time a recording is streamed to an online listener.

>>> MUSIC KIOSKS HIT THE GYM

Mediaport Entertainment and Power Music, a provider of made-for-workouts soundtracks and playlists, will begin placing its digital music kiosks in fitness centers nationwide. The first ones will appear in Utah-area gyms beginning this May and expand to other states throughout the year. Mediaport will sell each song for 99 cents and 30-minute workout mixes for \$8.

>>> RUBIO PREPS U.S. TREK

Pop star Paulina Rubio will kick off the first leg of her most extensive stateside trek to date May 17 in Houston. The Amor, Luz y Sonido (Love, Light and Sound) tour includes 27 shows over seven weeks and will hit mostly theater and casino dates before wrapping July 8 at the El Paso (Texas) Coliseum. More dates are expected to be announced. Rubio will return to the United States in September after touring internationally.

Compiled by Chris M. Walsh. Reporting by Ayala Ben-Yehuda, Lars Brandle, Antony Bruno, Susan Butler, Todd Martens, Ken Tucker and Ray Waddell.

Rapper-Cussions?

Hip-Hop Responds To The Post-Imus Lyric Uproar

Hip-hop lyrics are in the cross-fire again. What started with Don Imus' on-air invective against the Rutgers University women's basketball team has gradually shifted into a conversation about rap lyrics, and whether they should be held to the same broadcast standards as, well, Imus.

The dialogue has prompted at least a couple of radio stations to act. At New York's Clear Channel-owned WWPR (Power 105.1), PD Helen Little declared April 18 during "The Ed Lover Show" that she no longer plans to play any songs that promote degrading images. Elsewhere, African-American-owned radio company Roberts Broadcasting, which owns WRJH (Hot 97.7) Jackson, Miss., has also announced that it's banning degrading lyrics.

"It's not just about the music, and it's not just about the situation with Imus," Little says. "It is about our listeners." In response, WQHT (Hot 97) New York, which declined to comment, has changed its promotional slogan from "the official No. 1 station for hip-hop and R&B" to "where hip-hop lives," apparently

pledging allegiance to hip-hop's status quo. Other urban stations contacted by Billboard aren't talking.

In a cutthroat business climate, no station is likely to pull popular music off the air. "There will always be someone else willing and ready to provide the consumer with this type of music, as long as it's in demand," Cumulus Media VP of urban programming Ken Johnson says. "If a black-owned broadcast company makes the decision to take the stand, that's fine. But what happens when the company across the street that is not black-owned continues to play it and your station loses ratings, then revenue, then goes out of business?"

This latest lyrics controversy comes at a time when hip-hop is not the mainstream juggernaut it once was. In 2006, according to Nielsen SoundScan, rap's 59.5 million album sales represented a 20.7% slip from the 75 million units the genre moved in 2005. In first-quarter 2007, rap saw the largest decline of any genre. Sales fell 33.6% to 10.9

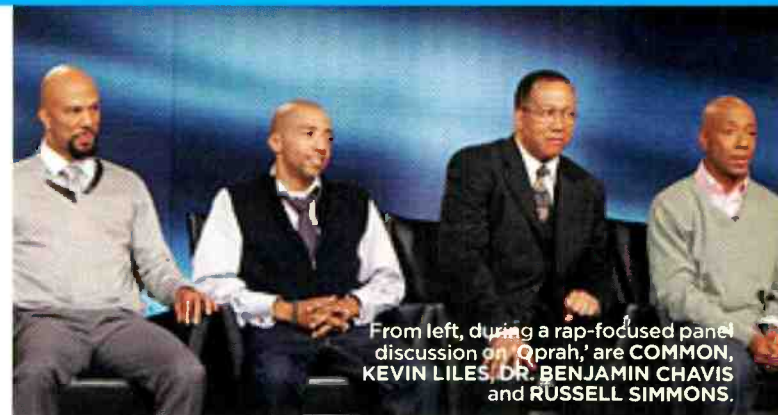
million scans from the 16.5 million units the genre tallied in first-quarter 2006.

Certainly, media has latched on to the issue.

■ Syndicated columnist Michelle Malkin created a buzz online with her April 11 column. Earlier in the week, Malkin had appeared on Fox News' "The O'Reilly Factor," denigrating Imus and Washington, D.C., politics for enabling him. But she didn't stop with Imus. "Is the [Rev. Al] Sharpton

hated on the radio."

■ Oprah Winfrey hosted a two-part episode discussing rap lyrics. In the first segment, a panel consisting of former Essence editor-in-chief Diane Weathers, singer India.Arie, New York's Daily News columnist Stanley Crouch, Kansas City Star columnist Jason Whitlock, psychologist Robin Smith and author Asha Bandele discussed how misogynistic and violent



From left, during a rap-focused panel discussion on 'Oprah,' are COMMON, KEVIN LILES, DR. BENJAMIN CHAVIS and RUSSELL SIMMONS.

teleconferenced from Atlanta.

■ At his National Action Network's annual convention, the Rev. Al Sharpton pulled out on presenting Def Jam chairman Antonio "L.A." Reid with the James Brown Memorial Cultural Impact Award. Vowing to go after hip-hop lyrics by targeting their record companies, Sharpton told the New York Post that he didn't want to "send mixed signals."

Meanwhile, on April 18, hip-hop heavyweights held a closed-door meeting to discuss the genre's lyrics. The group included Simmons, Chavis, Reid, Liles, Warner Music Group chairman/CEO of U.S. Recorded Music Lyor Cohen, RIAA chairman/CEO Mitch Bainwol, Atlantic Records co-chairman Craig Kallman, Atlantic Records president Julie Greenwald and Motown Records president/Universal Music Group executive VP Sylvia Rhone. A press conference was also scheduled, which the group later postponed indefinitely, explaining that discussions were still under way.

Reactions from the artist

community seemed generally skeptical. In one high-profile response, Snoop Dogg took to MTV to ridicule the notion that he should somehow be likened to Imus.

"Hip-hop is being used as a scapegoat," T.I. says. "Every time something happens in our community, hip-hop is seen as the root of the problem. But hip-hop's just a reflection of what's going on in the inner city."

"I feel like Oprah's panel was really biased," Remy Ma says. "It was crazy that the whole topic was based on females and hip-hop, but they didn't have a female rapper or an executive to represent us in the hip-hop community. But they never do. People tend to forget it's entertainment and no different than someone going to a movie theater for two-and-a-half hours watching rape, domestic and gun violence, and girls being called bitches and ho's. If you don't like it, change the station or don't buy the CD." ...

Additional reporting by Mariel Concepcion and Dana Hall.

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The lyrics controversy comes at a time when hip-hop is not the mainstream juggernaut it once was.

and [the Rev. Jesse] Jackson Circus truly committed to cleaning up cultural pollution that degrades women and perpetuates racial epithets?" Malkin wrote in the column, "Have you seen the Billboard Hot Rap Tracks chart this week?" She went on to single out lyrics she deemed offensive in each of the top five charting songs, eventually concluding that "one dumb radio/television shock jock's insult is a drop in the ocean of barbaric filth and anti-female

lyrics in hip-hop affect the African-American community. Weathers charged that, for their lyrics, rappers like Snoop Dogg should "lose their contracts" like Imus lost his. In the follow-up, Warner Music Group VP Kevin Liles, rapper Common and Hip-Hop Summit Action Network leaders Dr. Benjamin Chavis and Russell Simmons essentially defended hip-hop to Winfrey's audience and a group of Spellman University students

INDIES ON SALE

Fontana Launches Midline Catalog Pricing Campaign

Fontana, the indie arm of Universal Music Group Distribution (UMGD), is launching a branded marketing initiative with a number of its third-party labels in the hopes of spurring catalog sales. The midline campaign, dubbed Indie Music, Killer Price, will offer retailers a 25%-30% discount on a select number of catalog titles, each affixed with a sticker highlighting the program.

Additionally, during four select promotional periods throughout the year, Fontana will heavily discount the titles in exchange for retail positioning for a period of four weeks or greater, similar to Universal's JumpStart pro-

motion. Fontana senior VP of sales and marketing Ken Gullic says 17 retail accounts have thus far pledged to support the campaign, including indie chain Newbury Comics; Louisville, Ky.-based Ear-X-Tacy; Waterloo Records in Austin; and Best Buy.

"The member labels come to us and ask if they can launch their own midlines," Gullic says. "We happily indulge that, but we're trying to give them more leverage by making them part of something bigger."

Among the initial 27 titles are releases from Vagrant's Get Up Kids, Trustkill's Hopesfall and AntAcidAudio's Nomeans-no. A number of Fontana-

distributed catalog titles from UMG labels will also be represented, including Insane Clown Posse and Bloodhound Gang.

Retailers confirm their everyday cost for the titles will be \$7.35. During the specified promotional periods, the Indie Music, Killer Price titles could dip as low as \$4.75. Gullic says Fontana is looking for albums that generally move between 500 and 2,000 units per month and hopes to introduce newer and developing acts into the series as it grows.

Vagrant Records GM Dan Gill says the label has heard from fans that CDs should sell for around \$10, and is opti-



GET UP KIDS

mistic the discount will bump sales for the Get Up Kids' "Something to Write Home About." But he adds it may take a while before Fontana's Indie Music, Killer Price brand resonates with consumers.

"It's a start," he says.

"The titles will make the brand, and I applaud them for doing this. We have to try new things. With iTunes, the front-line price is \$9.99 every day, and we have to compete with that in the physical world." ...

While some indies may prefer to run their own midline campaigns without Fontana's branding efforts, UMGD president Jim Urie points to the major's successful 20th Century Masters catalog series, which repackaged hits from Universal artists. He notes that the Indie Music, Killer Price campaign will allow Fontana to have branded endcaps and displays at retailers, bringing far greater visibility to the midline selections.

"The problem with the one-off midline is that people take slower-moving titles and reduce the price," he says. "A slower-moving title at a lower price buried in the browser doesn't equate to a greater velocity... It has a price, but it lacks a promotional hook." ...



Retail Track

ED CHRISTMAN echristman@billboard.com

Vinyl Solution?

One Physical Format Is Doing Better This Year

Hey, I know everyone is preoccupied with the slide of the CD and whether anyone is going to come up with a replacement format—or, failing that, some way to slow its decline. And whoever isn't worried about the CD is speculating either about when digital sales will surpass physical sales or when mobile sales will trump computer downloads.

Some of us, though, have time to focus on things that don't matter to the big picture, but should. Would you believe that for the first time since 1982, vinyl album sales are on track to pass cassette album sales? 'Tis true.

So far this year, vinyl album sales top cassette album sales by 107%. Sure, the numbers are microscopic for either format. As of April 8, vinyl albums accounted for 232,000 scans while cassette album sales totaled

112,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In vinyl's case, that represents an 11% increase over the 209,000 unit that the format accounted for in the corresponding period during the prior year. Cassettes, meanwhile, are down 73% from the 417,000 units the format generated in the prior period.

In 1982, before the dawn of SoundScan, vinyl LPs and EPs accounted for nearly 244 million units while the cassette album totaled about 182 million, according to the RIAA. By 1983, cassette album sales totaled nearly 237 million, surpassing the 209 million units that vinyl accounted for. That was also the year that the CD was introduced in the United States. But it wouldn't be until 1992 that CDs would surpass the cassette.

All that occurred during a

time when the music industry knew how to manage a format transition. Now that things are getting dire, maybe we will see a little of the industry's old-fashioned know-how kick in.

Without a new physical format on the horizon, the industry increasingly looks like it will need to pursue a multifaceted approach to bolster sales until digital takes off. As one distribution executive said to me recently, "A lot of sales are being lost because we have forgotten how to block and tackle." In salesman speak, that means sharpening up your game to chase any and all sales.

For example, labels might listen to those who are floating a variety of CD/DVD/interactive discs—DVD Album, DVD Plus, the DFS Disc and DVCD—as a way to prolong



Victory Records is releasing limited-edition color vinyl versions of some of its best-selling titles by such acts as Atreyu, Bad Brains and Bayside.

are strong. What's more, some of them recently got upset when ADA's parent, WEA, raised prices on vinyl. For example, its \$8.98 vinyl, which used to cost \$4.21 wholesale, increased to \$6.31. And its \$12.98 vinyl, which cost \$6.10, now wholesales for \$8.37, according to a WEA account letter obtained by Retail Track.

But a WEA executive says that the prices reflect the move to higher-grade vinyl and are on par with what the merchants pay when they get vinyl from ADA. He says the move was also made because the company is issuing more vinyl nowadays. Again, this is all relative, since WEA now has only about 80 active vinyl titles. But in a transition as tough as the one the industry is going through now, no matter how small the niche may seem, every sale counts.

the life of CDs. Each souped-up disc targets different niche audiences, all in an attempt to create more desire to buy finished goods. Who knows if any of them will capture the imagination of label executives, let alone consumers, but let's not repeat the DualDisc experience. That went down in flames because only one major supported it, and there was little marketing effort to explain the format to consumers.

Or someone might even listen to Little Steven, who not only is issuing the Wicked Cool catalog on vinyl as well as CD, but who also claims that vinyl can save the industry (Billboard, March 10). Sure, that's a delusional notion, but it isn't

totally ridiculous. After all, college students might not be buying CDs, but they sure as heck are buying vinyl. A senior distribution executive recently told me that he had visited one of his kids at school, and "every other room in the dorm seem to have a turntable."

If any label has its finger on the pulse of youth trends, it is Victory Records. Practically its entire catalog is available on vinyl, and now the Chicago-based label is also issuing limited-edition color vinyl versions of its best-selling titles.

The Alternative Distribution Alliance is proud of its claim that it is the largest seller of vinyl in the United States. And indie merchants say vinyl sales

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	GROSS/ TICKET PRICE(S)	ARTIST(S) Venue, Date	Attendance Capacity	Promoter
1	\$7,976,089 (£4,115,608) \$94.96/\$48.45	KYLIE MINOGUE MEN Arena, Manchester, England, Jan. 12-13, 15-16, 18-19, 22	100,072 seven sellouts	3A Entertainment
2	\$7,578,217 (£3,868,154) \$96/\$48.98	KYLIE MINOGUE Wembley Arena, London, Dec. 31, Jan. 2-3, 5-6, 8-9	78,526 seven sellouts	3A Entertainment
3	\$2,962,169 \$125/\$39.50	CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S 'DELIRIUM' American Airlines Arena, Miami, April 4-7	31,240 35,299 five shows	Live Nation, Cirque du Soleil
4	\$2,313,087 \$125/\$55	ROD STEWART Staples Center, Los Angeles, March 20, 22	25,216 two sellouts	Concerts West/AEG Live
5	\$1,958,334 (\$2,702,205 Australian) \$113.15/\$80.10	RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS, HAR MAR SUPERSTAR Entertainment Centre, Brisbane, Australia, April 13-14	20,994 21,352 two shows	Michael Coppel Presents
6	\$1,520,128 \$67.50	BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND, UNCLE KRACKER Cobo Arena, Detroit, March 15, 17	22,534 two sellouts	Live Nation, Blackbird Productions
7	\$1,500,209 (£765,050) \$49.02/\$24.51	THE X FACTOR LIVE MEN Arena, Manchester, England, March 1-3	31,542 31,830 three shows	3A Entertainment
8	\$1,227,797 (£636,550) \$48.22/\$24.11	THE X FACTOR LIVE Wembley Arena, London, March 15-17	27,590 28,260 three shows	3A Entertainment
9	\$1,039,158 \$67.50	BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND, UNCLE KRACKER Joe Louis Arena, Detroit, March 13	15,629 sellout	Live Nation, Blackbird Productions
10	\$1,038,313 \$126.75/\$55	ROD STEWART ARCO Arena, Sacramento, Calif., March 31	12,162 sellout	Concerts West/AEG Live, Another Planet Entertainment
11	\$974,879 \$68/\$58	KENNY CHESNEY, SUGARLAND, PAT GREEN Fargodome, Fargo, N.D., April 14	16,631 sellout	Police Productions, the Messina Group/AEG Live
12	\$954,179 \$65	BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND, STEVE AZAR St. Pete Times Forum, Tampa, Fla., Jan. 13	14,703 sellout	Live Nation, AEG Live
13	\$932,571 \$94.02/\$30.50	BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND, ERIC CHURCH Nashville Arena, Nashville, Dec. 9	15,186 sellout	Live Nation
14	\$921,635 \$68.50/\$58.50	KENNY CHESNEY, SUGARLAND, PAT GREEN Qwest Center, Omaha, Neb., April 12	14,063 sellout	TBA Entertainment, the Messina Group/AEG Live
15	\$890,411 (£461,150) \$48.27/\$24.14	THE X FACTOR LIVE International Arena, Cardiff, Wales, March 10-13	18,800 four sellouts	3A Entertainment
16	\$873,712 (£444,900) \$49.10/\$24.55	THE X FACTOR LIVE NEC, Birmingham, England, Feb. 25-26	18,542 19,516 two shows	3A Entertainment
17	\$866,591 (£445,775) \$48.60/\$24.30	THE X FACTOR LIVE SECC, Glasgow, Scotland, March 4-5	18,154 two sellouts	3A Entertainment
18	\$847,783 (£434,075) \$48.83/\$24.41	THE X FACTOR LIVE Hallam FM Arena, Sheffield, England, Feb. 23-24	17,568 17,720 two shows	3A Entertainment
19	\$791,564 \$67.50	KENNY CHESNEY, SUGARLAND, PAT GREEN Wells Fargo Arena, Des Moines, Iowa, April 13	12,783 sellout	Mischell Productions, the Messina Group/AEG Live
20	\$661,006 (£332,200) \$49.01/\$24.50	THE X FACTOR LIVE Metro Radio Arena, Newcastle, England, Feb. 16-17	13,988 15,200 two shows	3A Entertainment
21	\$639,791 (£332,250) \$48.14/\$24.07	THE X FACTOR LIVE Brighton Centre, Brighton, England, March 7-9, 18	13,860 four sellouts	3A Entertainment
22	\$637,313 \$96.75/\$55	ROD STEWART Save Mart Center, Fresno, Calif., March 28	9,752 sellout	Concerts West/AEG Live, Another Planet Entertainment
23	\$585,325 \$65/\$39	BOB SEGER & THE SILVER BULLET BAND, STEVE AZAR Wachovia Spectrum, Philadelphia, Jan. 18	9,397 sellout	Live Nation
24	\$574,617 (\$658,270 Canadian) \$109.12/\$43.65	IL DIVO, WILLIAM JOSEPH John Labatt Centre, London, Ontario, April 12	7,468 7,851	Live Nation
25	\$566,259 \$110/\$39.50	CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S 'DELIRIUM' RBC Center, Raleigh, N.C., April 1-2	7,132 12,196 two shows	Live Nation, Cirque du Soleil
26	\$541,752 \$45/\$29	THE KILLERS, HOWLING BELLS, SOLARCADE Staples Center, Los Angeles, April 9	13,030 sellout	Goldenvoice/AEG Live
27	\$506,158 (£259,225) \$48.81/\$24.41	THE X FACTOR LIVE Nottingham Arena, Nottingham, England, Feb. 21-22	10,669 12,000 two shows	3A Entertainment
28	\$434,080 \$65/\$55/\$45	ANDRE RIEU Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City, N.J., April 15	8,637 11,679	Andre Rieu Productions
29	\$433,927 \$93/\$49.75	MARTINA MCBRIDE, LITTLE BIG TOWN, RODNEY ATKINS Rosemont Theatre, Rosemont, Ill., April 13, 15	7,025 8,165 two shows one sellout	Police Productions
30	\$428,455 (£219,700) \$48.75/\$24.38	THE X FACTOR LIVE Aberdeen ECC, Aberdeen, Scotland, Feb. 18-19	8,920 two sellouts	3A Entertainment
31	\$401,417 (£203,474) \$83.84/\$29.59	MICHAEL BOLTON, ASTRID WILLIAMSON Royal Albert Hall, London, April 3-4	5,668 two sellouts	3A Entertainment
32	\$371,825 \$79.50/\$69.50/ \$49.50/\$39.50	GIpsy KINGS Radio City Music Hall, New York, Feb. 24	5,974 sellout	MSG Entertainment
33	\$363,037 \$110/\$39.50	CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S 'DELIRIUM' CenturyTel Center, Bossier City, La., March 27	4,510 5,398	Live Nation, Cirque du Soleil
34	\$359,726 \$99.50/\$39.50	CIRQUE DU SOLEIL'S 'DELIRIUM' BJCC Arena, Birmingham, Ala., March 24-25	5,224 9,144 two shows	Live Nation, Cirque du Soleil
35	\$354,955 \$69.50/\$59.50/ \$49.50	HEAVEN AND HELL, BLACK SABBATH Radio City Music Hall, New York, March 30	5,924 sellout	MSG Entertainment, Live Nation



On The Road

RAY WADDELL rwaddell@billboard.com

No More No-Shows

Tourfilter Site Providing Valuable Service For Concertgoers

Despite the best efforts (one hopes) of promoters and venues, people miss shows they would have seen had they known about them.

Chris Marstall, a Cambridge, Mass., software engineer, hates it when that happens. And through his Tourfilter.com Web site he launched about a year ago, he wants to keep it from happening to any music fan.

"I just wanted to create a site that worked for me—something that would solve the problem I had, which was I was missing a lot of shows," Marstall says. "I did it because this is what I want. This is a site that I would want to use."

Tourfilter is basically a search engine for venue Web sites that tracks who's coming to town. Fans sign up, put in the 100 or so bands they love the most, and Tourfilter gives them an e-mail heads-up when that band is in the area.

"The whole thing is engineered to make it really easy to find out about your favorite bands," Marstall says.

Fans of live music are digging the concept, having entered a stunning 17,000 band names into the database. One devotee, lindsayjean18 in Los Angeles, entered more than 1,000.

"When a hit comes up, I take a look at it and send an e-mail out to all the people tracking that band," Marstall says.

Going to the source has proved a more workable method than tracking thousands of band Web sites. "The club Web sites are authoritative, there are a limited number of them and they're easy to find," Marstall says. "And you always know where the show is."

Now the clubs are coming to Marstall if a show—or their venue—is missing. And fans are coming. Tourfilter is growing at a pace of about 30% per month, anticipating 120,000 unique visitors in April.

For the fans, Tourfilter is "totally free. Just come to the site and start typing in your favorite bands," Marstall says. "Once you put in your name and password, you can go away and basically 'set it and forget it.' You can come back and check the calendar listings or just never come back, and we're still going to send you an e-mail if Sparklehorse comes to town or whatever your favorite band is."

Currently, 24 cities are on the Tourfilter map, and Marstall will add another 10 in the United States this spring. It's also international, with Dublin, Melbourne, London, Toronto and Vancouver on the list.

What's truly fascinating about Tourfilter, though, is the depth of the bands. Anyone who knows every act listed on Tourfilter needs to get a life. "I like to say that we're the deepest

of the concert services out there," Marstall says. "To come up with a list of 17,000 band names is not something any organization could do."

The reason Tourfilter is so thorough is because its users are telling it who these bands



Tourfilter lets fans know when such artists as PINK NASTY come to town.

are, Marstall says. "We're not trying to create a 'top-down' database of bands. Tourfilter's system is more of a 'bottom-up,' user-driven, grass-roots approach. Which is, I think, better-suited to get really broad coverage, especially on local and regional bands or bands that haven't toured in a while."

Marstall uses the word "clubs" a lot, but he's really talking about any kind of venue—60-100 rooms in every city. "If they're playing live music I want them in the database, and they usually are," he says. "Most of the audience I'm talking to is going to shows in clubs, and people probably already know about the big arena shows, but I cover those, too. I sent out notifications for Justin Timberlake at All-State Arena [in Chicago], and I sent out notifications for Sonny Rollins at a jazz club as well, or Beethoven at a symphony hall."

A look at the Nashville page for April shows, for example, yields Southern Culture on the Skids at the Mercy Lounge, Bill Lloyd at the Bluebird Cafe, Ghostfinger at Grimey's, Alison Krauss at the Grand Ole Opry, Birdmonster at the Pilot Light, Clap Your Hands Say Yeah at the Cannery Ballroom, Pink Nasty at the Basement, the Decemberists at City Hall, Susan Tedeschi at the Belcourt Theatre, Kenny Loggins at the Wildhorse Saloon and the Killers at the Ryman Auditorium, to name a few. I pay attention, but no way would I know about all these shows. Until now.

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Opening night at the Lotto Arena

TOURING BY MARC MAES

Jackpot!

Belgium's New Lotto Arena Fills A Midsize Niche

ANTWERP—The Lotto Arena, a newly opened midsize venue built adjacent to the Antwerp Sportpaleis under the umbrella of a public-private partnership, is set to boost Belgium's visibility as a destination for international tours.

"People [have] more and more leisure time and want to see shows," says Live Nation promoter Herman Schueremans, who staged 31 shows at the Sportpaleis last year. "There was a vacuum in between the 2,000-capacity theaters and the 8,000-seat venues. The Lotto Arena is the perfect solution here and makes Belgium more competitive with the rest of the world."

At press time, the Lotto Arena's calendar shows 25 dates, including musicals, family entertainment and concerts by Natalia, Deep Purple, Zornik, Evanescence, the Pointer Sisters and the Antwerp Blues Festival.

"The main thing is that it is the only hall in Belgium offering a medium-size capacity," says Jan Van Esbroeck, co-director of management company Antwerps Sportpaleis.

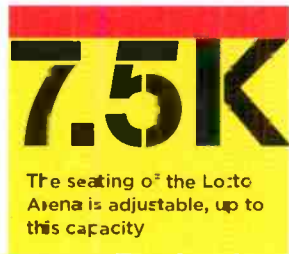
The Lotto Arena offers an adjustable capacity of up to 7,500 for live music. Sports events have 5,500 seats on two levels. The hall also houses the Sanex Antwerp Giants basketball team.

In 1996, Van Esbroeck and his colleague Jan Vereecke were granted the rights by the Antwerp Province to re-launch the bankrupt Sportpaleis. They decided to up-

grade the venue and make it economically viable for promoters and events, but plans for a second hall were never too distant.

In 2004, the duo started looking for public-private partners, and in September 2005 when the City of Antwerp decided to invest in new sports infrastructure, the Lotto Arena became reality. The Belgian national lottery secured a 10-year deal for the naming rights.

In addition to a 75% stake



for Vereecke and Van Esbroeck, other Sportpaleis shareholders include Rotterdam, Holland's Ahoy venue, concert promoter Mojo (now Live Nation Holland) and promoters Schueremans and Kris Verleyen. The city of Antwerp agreed to invest €6 million (about \$8 million) in the project.

"The merger of both budgets allows us to construct a better infrastructure," Van Esbroeck says. "Over the past 10 years, this adds up our investments in the Sportpaleis events site to close to €25 million [about \$33.2 million], offering a combined capacity of 22,500 visitors."

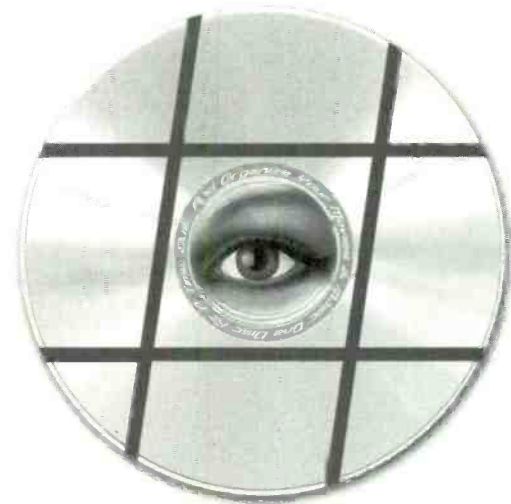
For the city of Antwerp, "this is a 'win-win' situation, where we get a fully regula-

tory 5,500-seater sports hall and benefit from the management expertise the Sportpaleis already has," says Ludo Van Campenhout, sports alderman in Antwerp. "In a first step, we guarantee 15 events per year, gradually building up to 55."

Although Lotto was conceived as a sports hall, a great deal of attention was paid to the acoustic design by architect Ferre Verbaenen. Ceilings and walls are covered with special Heraklith acoustic liner plates offering good but not "lethal" acoustic values, the balance between workable reverberation and acoustics.

The removable sports floor can house an additional 3,500 standing visitors. Two VIP suites, with a total capacity of 300 each, give direct access to the venue. "We deliberately opted for a hall without VIP seats or skyboxes. At the Lotto Arena we go for equal treatment in the venue," Van Esbroeck says.

On opening night, March 10, some 4,000 young visitors witnessed a junior version of the classical crossover extravaganza Night of the Proms. Dubbed My First Night, the show featured local artists Gene Thomas and Belle Perez, Chico & the Gypsies and Proms veterans John Miles and the Novecento orchestra directed by Robert Groslot. Management and builders of the new venue pulled off a difficult feat—just two days before the opening, cranes and forklifts had still been working round the clock. ...



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Bindex.com is a community based website where music and movie lovers can manage their titles and organize their collections. Some features include Virtual Library, Library Tracker, Wanted List and much more. As physical sales decline, the industry's goal is to find creative ways to get people to purchase physical product. Collection-based marketing is definitely important, but it cannot be solely relied on. We believe promo-driven content should be implemented as well. Bindex Media Inc. has creative marketing solutions to achieve this goal. Bindex Media Inc. promotes *Build Your Collection at Bindex Builder Stores*, our retailer directory. Retailers can post up additional advertisement within their listing. We also provide distributors and record labels the opportunity to promote public awareness of artists and releases.

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HARRIS TWEED



HOODOO GURUS



POWERSOLO

SXSW: HOW WAS IT FOR

International Acts Assess What They Gained From Visiting Austin

In 20 years, the South by Southwest (SXSW) music conference and festival has gone from being a small event showcasing Austin musicians to a huge confab seen as increasingly essential by the international music business.

The 2007 edition showcased a record 410 international artists from 33 countries, up from 340 in 2006. Meanwhile, 2,098 international industry executives attended from 47 countries, up from 1,823 in 2006. No wonder some international music centers were virtual ghost towns the week of March 9-18, as huge swaths of execs decamped to Austin.

No doubt they all enjoyed the schmooze, but does the festival actually work as a showcase for international talent? Billboard's global team of correspondents asked six acts—all from different countries, at different stages of their careers, traveling to SXSW for different reasons—how the festival measured up to their expectations.

HARRIS TWEED

FROM: Johannesburg

SXSW SHOWS: Hilton Garden Inn (March 14), Café Caffeine (17), Flipnotics (18)

TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \$26,000

PRE-SXSW GOALS: Karl Anderson, owner of leading South African indie Just Music, has high hopes for Harris Tweed's quirky alt-pop internationally, after considerable success at home. He saw SXSW as a golden opportunity to launch the band in the United States, even after its visa applications were initially rejected. "We wanted to explore potential international licensing opportunities for Harris Tweed's debut album, 'The Younger,'" he says. "As well as seek possible opportunities for touring, publishing, synch deals and more in the States and around the world."

POST-SXSW ACHIEVEMENTS: The band still doesn't have an American release scheduled, but Anderson says it is now looking at potential "U.S. and international licensing and distribution opportunities" with several companies that saw the band in Austin. The act had been in discussions with Universal Music Publishing prior to SXSW but is now about to sign a worldwide publishing deal with Universal, after cementing the relationship at the festival. The band also met with performing rights body SESAC and hopes to ink a deal with it shortly. Anderson also says the gigs raised the band's stateside profile. "Our U.S. publicist arranged interviews with the likes of MET Television, Current TV, COOP Radio and Dallas News, and the band got exposure on News 8 Austin, which generated great interest with SXSW delegates and the local Austin community," he says, adding that the only negative was that visa rejection. "This didn't give us enough time to arrange the shows and media we would have liked," he says, "but we've learned enough to make our planned trip next year even more successful."

RATING (FROM ANDERSON): 9/10

"It was very successful for us in terms of laying a foundation for the band's international aspirations," Anderson says. Singer/songwriter

Cherilyn McNeil adds, "One week at SXSW has fast-forwarded us growthwise as a band [more than] a whole year of fumbling around on South Africa's touring circuit." —Diane Coetzer

HUMMERSQUEAL

FROM: Mexico City

SXSW SHOWS: BMI Indie Heat Showcase, Club de Ville (March 15)

TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \$4,000

PRE-SXSW GOALS: The emo-rocking quartet and its indie imprint SourPop Records traveled in search of a U.S. distributor, label partners for future split EPs and stateside tour opportunities. "We always play for a Latin audience," guitarist/vocalist Christian Guijosa says, "and this was an occasion to play for people who aren't used to hearing music in Spanish, much less rock in Spanish."

POST-SXSW ACHIEVEMENTS: A prior flirtation with Sony BMG Mexico got more serious after the festival, with talks now under way for Mexican distribution or a possible joint venture with SourPop. "Maybe it would've happened anyway but not this quickly," label VP Rene Gomez says. "It's not that easy for an independent band in Mexico to leave the country. Maybe [Sony BMG] said, 'If they can do this on an indie, if we support them they can do even more.'" Management also held SXSW meetings with a Gibson Guitar rep about sponsorship and with Red Eye Distribution—conversations are still ongoing. Another meeting with the Independent Online Distrib-

ution Alliance led Hummersqueal to submit music for a proposed Cinco de Mayo compilation on iTunes Latino—a decision is expected imminently. SourPop also discussed a cross-border exchange of shows with U.S. indie label Militia Group, with whom it recently released a split EP. Saddle Creek was approached for a similar project. Hummersqueal also scored coverage on bilingual U.S. channels mun2 and LATV, in Batanga magazine and was a featured pick in the Austin Chronicle. On the downside, the band got bumped from a second showcase and a webcast performance fell through. "And we didn't meet Kevin Lyman from the Warped tour, which we really wanted to do," Guijosa says. Any lessons learned? "Be on time for your appointments."

RATING (FROM GOMEZ): 8/10

"We saw a willingness from people at other businesses to do important things to support us and grow together," Gomez says. "It's a very democratic festival. Everyone has the same opportunities, and everyone is viewed equally." —Ayala Ben-Yehuda

HOODOO GURUS

FROM: Sydney

SXSW SHOWS: Australian BBQ Showcase, Brush Park; Pop Culture Press party, Dog and Duck; Blender bar, the Ritz (all March 16)

TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \$37,000

PRE-SXSW GOALS: SXSW saw the reunited garage rockers play their first U.S. dates in 13 years—the band has toured the States 12 times and, according to management, racked up 500,000 U.S. album sales before breaking up in 1999. Manager Michael McMartin of Sydney-based Melody Management says the trip was designed to build on their October 2006 Rykodisc catalog distribution deal. "Our plan was to reintroduce the band to America and use it as a launching pad for the dates that followed. The Gurus are primarily a great live band, and that has always been their selling point. I knew they'd deliver at SXSW."

POST-SXSW

ACHIEVEMENTS: McMartin says the buzz generated in Austin has helped the band line up several projects to relaunch it in the U.S. marketplace.



HUMMERSQUEAL



LONELY CHINA DAY



RAZORLIGHT

YOU?

"The Gurus have been offered a late-August tour by two major U.S. acts, and their own two-week tour in October," he says. "We've also been offered soundtrack work on a major surf movie, which will reintroduce the band to the teen market." Because of these projects, the recording of a comeback album is now delayed until mid-2008, but that does not perturb singer/guitarist Dave Faulkner. "We have a lot of work ahead to create a grassroots following through touring first," he says. European tour promoters also showed strong interest, and press coverage in newspapers like the Washington Post, San Diego Beat, San Bernardino Sun and Austin Chronicle, as well as radio interviews with stations in Austin and San Diego, boosted the band's profile for the subsequent tour.

RATING (FROM McMARTIN): 10/10

"The band knew the importance of SXSW, and they went for it," McMartin says. "The level of interest from the media and from the public reinforced to the band how relevant they are. The response throughout was not, 'Hey these guys can still play,' but 'Holy fuck, they're awesome.'"

—Christie Eliezer

POWERSOLO

FROM: Aarhus, Denmark

SXSW SHOWS: Ryko showcase, Friends Bar (March 15); Musebox Bubbling Up, Habana Calle (March 17)

TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \$11,000

PRE-SXSW GOALS: Quirky alternative rock act PowerSolo is flying the Danish flag in Austin not just for itself, but for the whole Crunchy Frog roster, which recently signed a distribution/marketing/promotional deal with Ryko for the United States. PowerSolo's "It's Race Day . . . And Your Pussy Is Gut" (out April 24) is the first U.S. release under the new arrangement. "We took PowerSolo to SXSW to get a U.S. booking agent and to debut the trio's live show for Ryko," Crunchy Frog managing director Jesper Reginal says. "Contacts from Japan and Australia were also invited to attend the two shows in hopes of breaking the band in those territories."

POST-SXSW ACHIEVEMENTS: "We've confirmed a U.S. deal with Curbside Booking," band manager Mogens Kjeldsen says. "And important contacts from Japanese label Sideout Records were overwhelmed by them." Reginal says the band is also in talks over licensing and booking deals in Canada and with several other Japanese labels. "Ian James, [managing director] of Mushroom Publishing, with whom we have a subpublishing deal, was blown away and will look for a local label in Australia." PowerSolo frontman Kim Kix says, "As one of 2,000 bands, you got to come up with something people will remember. It felt good to see we had

dedicated people working with us at Ryko, so good we'd do anything to bring the house down—and we did." The band's U.S. publicist, Ryko's Amber Haeckel, calls the band's performance "extraordinary" but says many journalists at the Friends Bar show were alt-country specialists there to see Kelly Willis. Haeckel adds, however, that she has received more than 70 e-mails requesting more information on the band since the festival.

RATING (FROM KJELDSSEN): 7/10

"Now Ryko understands the band as we'd hoped," Kjeldsen says. "And we've proved America [and] PowerSolo is a match made in heaven, so I can't wait until the album hits U.S. stores." —Charles Ferro

RAZORLIGHT

FROM: London

SXSW SHOWS: NME barbecue, Stubb's (March 14); BBC Radio 2 showcase, Zona Rosa (16)

TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \$20,000

PRE-SXSW GOALS: Razorlight singer Johnny Borrell is a superstar in the United Kingdom, where the band's sophomore set "Razorlight" (Vertigo) is certified quadruple-platinum (1.2 million units). So why bother rubbing shoulders with all the wannabes in Austin? "We wanted to compensate for the fact that we couldn't get to the States at the start of the campaign," says band manager Roger Morton, of London-based Black Book Management. "We were due to support Keane on its U.S. tour in September and do our own headline shows, when Tom Chaplin went into rehab. We had to pull the trip. But SXSW gave us an opportunity to be in front of a huge amount of people from the U.S. industry in one go and get across the fact that this is a band with two consecutive million-sellers back home." With the album moving just 20,000 copies so far in the States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, Morton says he was also looking to book festival slots and raise the band's profile in the U.S. media.

POST-SXSW ACHIEVEMENTS: "We got lots of key TV, radio and festival people along to the shows," Morton says, "which will hopefully bear fruit when 'America' goes to radio at the end of April." The band also filmed a live set for cable channel DirecTV, although U.S. press was hard to come by. "We did Mexican and English press there," bassist Carl Dalermo says, "but press in America seems like a hard nut to crack, at least for us." The band's profile was boosted, however, when celebrity journalists picked up on Borrell's romance with "Spider-Man" actress Kirsten Dunst, which went public in Austin. "That got us coverage in a lot of places that previously would have had no idea who Razorlight were," Morton says.

Razorlight's U.S. publicist Keith Hagen, VP/GM of PFA Media,

says he's setting up a "second wave" of U.S. press for the band. "Their appearance at SXSW helped us to raise interest on the band. Razorlight should begin seeing the benefits shortly."

RATING (FROM MORTON): 8/10

"It was much better than when we played in 2004 as unknowns, which felt a bit pointless," Dalermo says. "Then we played to 50 people, this time it was 2,000."

—Mark Sutherland

LONELY CHINA DAY

FROM: Beijing

SXSW SHOW: Tag Team Records showcase, Spiro's (March 14)

TOTAL COST OF TRIP: \$14,000

PRE-SXSW GOALS: Atmospheric alternative rock band Lonely China Day traveled to Austin with Tag Team Records labelmates and compatriots the Re-TROS as part of their U.S. tour, hoping to raise awareness ahead of its U.S. album release "Sorrow" (out June 26). "Playing SXSW legitimizes labels and bands in the minds of international press," Tag Team label president Mathew Kagler says. "The showcase was a big 'coming out' party for our brand and Chinese indie music in general."

POST-SXSW ACHIEVEMENTS: Kagler says SXSW brought his bands the most press attention of the entire tour. "All the big stuff came out of doing the SXSW thing. We got a massive amount of exposure that we wouldn't have had otherwise." The band received positive reviews in The New York Times and Chicago Tribune, which Kagler says had an immediate impact. "Our distribution company [Eenie Meanie] is elated," he says. "Playing the conference made helping release virtually unknown Chinese bands a more realistic proposition for them." He also says the Times article brought offers from several companies, including Converse, which wants the band to design a limited-edition sneaker. "It's not as though contacts were sending mails that said, 'Because of the NYT article we now take this band seriously,' but that is definitely the jist." As a result of its SXSW performances, Lonely China Day is also tentatively booked for an early fall West Coast U.S. tour with an Eenie Meanie Records band.

RATING (FROM KAGLER): 7/10

"I was impressed by how free and open the festival was," Lonely China Day singer/guitarist Dong Pei says. "We all learned a lot from looking for the strengths in each band we saw perform." However, the band and management were disappointed with a number of last-minute day-party cancellations. "That was a huge bummer," Kagler says, "but since the trip was for promotional purposes, our goals were realized and then some." —Will Freeman

Additional reporting by Tom Ferguson in London.

GLOBAL NEWSLINE

>>> JAPANESE MARKET DOWN IN Q1

Physical trade deliveries of recorded music in Japan fell in volume and value during the first quarter of 2007, according to labels body the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan.

Shipments of music software across all physical formats totaled 85.2 million units, down 7% from the same period in 2006. Wholesale value fell 6% to 99.8 billion yen (\$835.7 million). Digital figures are not included. The RIAJ is due to issue those in late May.

Prerecorded audio software from the RIAJ's 44 member companies in the first three months of 2007 totaled 69.2 million units, down 10%, with wholesale value down 7% to 84.9 billion yen (\$710.5 million). Shipments of music DVD/video rose 9% in unit terms to 15.9 million units in the first quarter, although value was down 2% to 15 billion yen (\$125.2 million).

Overall, domestic repertoire fell 6% to 52.9 million units with value down 4% to 66.7 billion yen (\$557.9 million). International repertoire dropped 21% in volume to 16.4 million units and 15% in value to 18.2 billion yen (\$152.6 million). —Steve McClure

>>> PPL STRIKES RUSSIAN INDIE DEAL

U.K. collecting society Phonographic Performance Ltd. has struck a new bilateral agreement with its Russian counterpart that will see British independent labels represented internationally by PPL receive money from the broadcast and public performance of their recordings in Russia for the first time.

London-based PPL licenses recorded music on behalf of more than 3,500 record companies and 40,000 performers. Under the terms of the new deal, PPL will also collect performance royalties in the United Kingdom on behalf of Russian independents represented by the Russian Phonographic Assn.

"While we are all aware of the problems associated with working in Russia," PPL head of international Laurence Oxenbury says, "RPA is doing a tremendous job at driving up its collection levels, which have more than doubled in the last two years."

—Andre Paine

>>> SAMA FOURSOME FOR DANA

Afro-soul singer/songwriter Simphiwe Dana was the big winner at the 13th annual South African Music Awards, collecting four trophies April 14 at the event in the Sun City resort/entertainment complex. Dana was named best female artist and her current Gallo Record Co. album "The One Love Movement on Bantu Biko Street" was album of the year. The set also topped the contemporary jazz album and vocal jazz album categories.

Another Afro-soul vocalist, Siphokazi, was a double winner, being named best newcomer title and having her 2006 album "Ubuntu Bam" (Native Rhythms Records) voted best African adult contemporary album.

Sony BMG singer/songwriter Vusi Mahlasela was named best male artist, while Lloyd Ross, Mahlasela's producer/engineer on the 2006 album "Naledi Ya Tsela" (Sony BMG), took the best engineer award.

A total of 43 awards were handed out, the majority based on the votes of a 150-strong industry panel. Technical awards were issued April 13, the night before the main ceremony, which was televised live nationally by state broadcaster SABC.

—Diane Coetzer

>>> SPEED DATING FOR U.K. INDIES

British trade body AIM will offer independent labels the chance to "date" international counterparts at this year's London Calling trade fair at the Earls Court exhibition center (June 28-29).

The indie labels' body is sponsoring the U.K. Pavilion at the trade fair for the second consecutive year. Delegates registered at the pavilion, including independent labels, publishers and managers, will be able to take part in AIM-organized one-on-one five-minute "speed dating" meetings with companies attending from Continental Europe, North America, Australasia and Southeast Asia.

AIM will also hold its annual general meeting on-site June 28 at Earls Court. London Calling is organized by U.K.-based Ithaca Media. —Lars Brandle

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GLOBAL BY AYMERIC PICHEVIN

HITS OF THE WEB

Artists Flocking To NRJ Online Talent Search

PARIS—One of Europe's largest independent broadcasting conglomerates is going online to find new music talent.

Paris-based broadcaster NRJ Group's Internet division e-NRJ has launched a new streaming "talent search" service, NRJ Studio. It invites unsigned artists to create a Web presence through the nrjstudio.fr site, on which they can upload their own audio or video content. Registered visitors can comment and vote for favorite songs on a designated area of an artist's page.

Sounds a bit like MySpace? Not according to NRJ Group PD Yves Malbrancke.

"NRJ Studio is not a community service," Malbrancke says. "Our goal is to unearth new talent—and to use NRJ's resources to give them exposure."

What could make that goal achievable is the sheer scale of the NRJ operation. The group's top 40 network



MALBRANCKE

NRJ is the most listened-to network in France, according to ratings company Mediamétrie.

The broadcaster has three other French networks, plus stations under the NRJ banner in 12 European countries.

In France, it also has two digital/cable/satellite music TV channels and its own mobile virtual network operator, NRJ Mobile, with a claimed 390,000 subscribers.

In addition, the group has its own label, through which it issues compilation albums in



conjunction with various labels and distributors.

Malbrancke says a team of three NRJ music programmers in Paris will listen to "every new song posted" on NRJ Studio. The most promising new talent will be identified by combining the programmers' instincts for hit music with popularity monitored through site visitors' votes.

A 40-strong NRJ Studio

playlist will then be drawn up weekly to feed a Web radio station launching shortly on nrjstudio.fr and the French NRJ station's nrj.fr site.

Malbrancke says that if a buzz builds on a song, NRJ has a wide range of options for further exposure.

For acts that upload videos there is now a weekly "NRJ Studio" on the group's music TV channel NRJ 12. Malbrancke suggests that some



The Publishers Place

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Publisher Price Competition

Are Promotional Deals Fair?

A mysterious envelope landed in my mailbox recently. Inside was a major publisher's limited-time offer to license songs for use on TV and in films at discounted prices. The indie publisher who sent me the document was quite angry about this promotion, and I wondered why.

After all, there are literally millions of songs that could potentially be used for TV programs and movies. The competition is tough for any publisher to clinch a synch license. But perhaps we should explore both sides, so that publishers—big and small—can better understand the

current marketplace. The indie requested its name not be disclosed. Names and prices in the document are also being withheld.

"In the old days, a license for TV had one cost and for home video another cost," the indie says. When TV shows were made 10-15 years ago, the studios didn't license the songs for use in any media other than TV and sometimes home video. Even two years ago they

weren't clearing rights of other media, the indie adds.

More recently, major studios realized the uses for old TV shows and began clearing new media rights. So publishers have been receiving fees for use with new technologies, typically in the range of \$3,000-\$10,000.

From the indie's perspective, one of the most troubling aspects of the major's offer is that the prices start with half

of the market rate for TV and home video rights, but also include rights to use the music for all future technology.

The promotion offers specific fees for a variety of TV uses: all media including Internet distribution and wireless devices; all TV including the Internet; and all TV excluding the Internet. For film, the promotion offers rights for background vocal use at rates that vary depending on the film's budget. It also offers a variety of options at specific additional prices, like rights in perpetuity or rights for a limited time period.

"It hurts the overall [publishing] business because it establishes, overall, a lower bar," the indie says. "It erodes the value of music. We're no longer competing against fair market value."

To meet the competition, other publishers would have to offer these "fire-sale prices" to land a synch license, the indie says. While publishers who hold rights in the gems of the music world could certainly refuse to discount fees

'It establishes a lower bar. We're no longer competing against fair market value.'

—AN INDIE PUBLISHER

videos could even break into regular programming slots on NRJ 12 or sister channel NRJ Hits. In "rare cases," he says tracks could also air on the NRJ station itself, despite the artists not having a label deal.

Although keen to emphasize that the company sees NRJ Studio simply as a conduit for new talent, Malbrancke says the group will "also help artists find a record deal with a major label."

NRJ would not own rights to the uploads, although Malbrancke adds that, long term, its NRJ Music imprint could become involved in an artist's recording career through co-production or licensing deals.

He adds that more than 2,400 projects were posted within the first three weeks of NRJ Studio's Feb. 26 launch; 150 more are being added daily.

French labels have cautiously welcomed the project.

"We are fine with such initiatives," Sony BMG France media and communications director Nathalie Vivier says. "This is just another resource to discover music—there has been a TV era, now

we have entered the Internet era, and mobile is already on its way."

Warner Music France new-media director Julie Demarigny suggests that incorporating users' votes should balance the top 40 leanings of the NRJ radio programmers when selecting talent. "It's the community that legitimizes artists," she says.

Warner Music France and Sony BMG France recently signed artists after French Internet users discovered them through blogs or YouTube-type services.

In May, Warner will release R&B singer Kenza Farah's debut album, "Trésor Du 13," after the singer had two self-produced songs streamed more than 1 million times each from her blog.

And Sony BMG says it has shipped more than 500,000 copies (physical and downloads) of rap artist Kamini's single "Marly-Gomont" since its Nov. 13 release. Kamini was signed after the song attracted huge attention on YouTube and similar leading French service Dailymotion. "Marketing is almost done by itself with Internet-born acts," Vivier says. ●●●

for those songs, this type of promotion could force all other songs to be licensed at substantially lower prices to stay in the game.

That might be OK if the "product" was, well, a product. But this type of promotion can really hurt songwriters as well, the indie argues.

While the major publisher may pull in more revenue in the short term by licensing, say, three times the number of songs from its catalog during that promotion period than it normally would, not all those songs were written by the same songwriter. So each songwriter would be receiving roughly half of what he or she would otherwise receive, the indie says.

As for those songwriters who have the contractual right to approve any synch licenses, the indie notes that most songwriters and their managers are "not sophisticated enough to realize the prices commanded for their work are submarket and to build that into their decision." They should be told, the indie says.

On the other hand, everyone

clearing rights for TV and motion picture producers are under tight deadlines. Since they don't require negotiation, deals like this can make a particular song catalog very attractive. Though major publishers contacted didn't respond by press time, most would likely argue that increasing their overall revenue helps them offer better services for all their songwriters.

Also, there are likely few publishing deals where a songwriter has held onto an unconditional right to reject a synch license. More often, songwriters retain the right to reject a synch license only for a few reasons stated in the contract, for example, if the film includes excessive violence. Giving a songwriter the contractual right to approve prices could get complicated, especially since the songwriter wouldn't know market prices.

The issue is sure to spark discussion at indie publisher groups, if only to address new ways to compete in today's market. ●●●

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Making The Brand

MICHAEL PAOLETTA mpaoletta@billboard.com

Tapping The Teens

Mandy Moore's User-Generation Video

There is something to be said for a former teen pop star who has not lost her mind or shaved her head. Enter Mandy Moore, who is staying connected with her younger fans—and one step ahead of the user-generated content curve—via a new partnership with Photobucket.

Moore's new single, "Extraordinary" (from the album "Wild Hope," due June 19 via Firm Music), forms the centerpiece of a new promotion on the photo- and video-sharing Web site. High school students have the opportunity to create a video mash-up for the song, intertwining their own personal content and images, video clips and music from Moore. Photobucket will then deliver completed "Extraordinary" videos to high school social networking site MyYearbook.com, where users will vote for their favorites. (The company was unavailable for comment.)

Following the contest's April 30 cutoff date, Moore will select a winner and perform at his or her high school graduation.

For Moore, the partnership offers her a way to reach out to high schools and be a part of something that involves music. Additionally, a contest like this fosters creativity—something Moore encourages and supports.

After all, she opted to sign with the EMI-distributed Firm Music after parting ways with Epic, which released her first four albums. A subsequent deal with Sire dissolved without any music being released.

"People are discovering music on MySpace, they're watching videos on YouTube," she told Billboard earlier this year. "I don't think you need that whole big machine behind you."

While "Wild Hope" is a definite departure from what most people might expect from a Moore album, the artist's manager, Jon Leshay of the Firm Management, says it is still first and foremost a pop record. "Mandy would never want to leave young fans behind," he says. "To be a part of kids' lives in high school is something that she is still excited about doing."

"In today's multiplatform and multi-channel world, [artists] must try harder to connect and engage with younger consumers, which is where sites like Photobucket and MyYearbook come into play," says Tina Wells, CEO of teen marketing/consulting firm Buzz Marketing Group.

For some high school students,



MANDY MOORE has partnered with Photobucket.

who first discovered Moore while in junior high or even elementary school, the

artist remains as relevant as ever.

"She was very popular during that whole Britney [Spears] and Christina [Aguilera] pop scene a few years ago," says Huda Farunia, a senior at Lakewood High School in Lakewood, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland. "But she's moved away from that. She's become more unique [and] less poppy. Me and my friends like her more now."

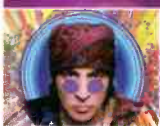
But Samantha French, a ninth grader at Bard High School & Early College in New York, thinks differently. "Nobody

really talks about Moore," she says. "If my friends and I watch 'The Princess Diaries,' then we talk about her. Otherwise, not a word."

Still, Wells believes there is something to be said for an artist who can grow beyond the teen-pop stereotype and reach new fans. "Mandy has come into her own without drinking some Hollywood formula drink," Wells says. "She looks fresh—not used up. She makes movies with Diane Keaton. She discusses her depression. She's a star, yet she remains more like you and me." ●●●

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LITTLE STEVEN'S UNDERGROUND GARAGE



GARAGE ROCK

Neil Aspinall, lifelong friend of the Beatles and CEO of their company Apple Corps, has left the job. He really has been the "fifth" Beatle for 40 years, supervising all aspects of their music, merchandise and licensing—and he goes back further than that.

Born in North Wales and growing up in Liverpool, Aspinall was Paul McCartney's classmate at the Liverpool Institute grammar school. George Harrison was one year below them.

Aspinall became their road manager/driver/roadie, recruited by Pete Best, whose mother he happened to be having an affair with. When the band replaced Best with Ringo Starr, he wanted to quit out of loyalty to his friend, but Best talked him into staying. Eventually, he'd become their personal assistant.

In Aspinall's case, PA duties meant finding photos for the "Sgt. Pepper's" cover, playing

tamboura on "Within You Without You," hanging out all night with the Beatles and making sure they got home safely after recording sessions. After manager Brian Epstein's death, Aspinall reluctantly temporarily took over administering their affairs until they could find somebody "more qualified." They never did.

Aspinall had the vision to trademark "Apple" worldwide, so when Apple Computer stole the name, he sued the company. His genius was keeping the commerce going, keeping the name alive for new generations, while being careful not to overexpose the precious catalog. "Live at the BBC" was live, "The Beatles Anthology" was demos and outtakes, "LOVE" bits and pieces. Only the "One" album used the actual catalog. And it wound up one of the biggest albums in the past 20 years.

See you on the radio. ●●●●

COOLEST GARAGE SONGS

TITLE/LABEL	ARTIST
1 <small>COOLEST SONG IN THE WORLD THIS WEEK</small> HERO OF NINETEEN EIGHTY THREE <small>Teenacide</small>	PEACHFUZZ
2 WEAPON OF CHOICE <small>Sony</small>	BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB
3 MY HEART IS BEATING <small>Norton</small>	MARY WEISS
4 FREE AND FREAKY <small>Virgin</small>	THE STOOGES
5 DANCING ON THE LIP OF A VOLCANO <small>Roadrunner</small>	NEW YORK DOLLS
6 IN THE MODERN WORLD <small>Adeline</small>	JESSE MALIN
7 OPEN EYES <small>Simian</small>	THE APPLES IN STEREO
8 BECAUSE I'M AWESOME <small>Olde Haat</small>	THE DOLLYROTS
9 RUBY <small>Universal</small>	KAISER CHIEFS
10 INTERVENTION <small>Merge</small>	ARCADE FIRE

COOLEST GARAGE ALBUMS

1 THE WEIRDNESS <small>Virgin</small>	THE STOOGES
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Little Steven's Underground Garage column is produced exclusively for Billboard. For more information go to UNDERGROUNDGARAGE.COM. The opinions expressed are his own, and not necessarily those of the magazine.



The Indies

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Label Me Not

Au Revoir Simone Goes An Increasingly Common Route

The first time Au Revoir Simone was approached by a label, it didn't matter that the imprint was based in Japan. The keyboard trio was happy for the interest.

But as the Brooklyn, N.Y.-based band saw its Internet profile increase and honed its DIY chops, the idea of being on a label lost a little of its appeal. The act's Erika Forster says that the tools at a band's disposal today are supplanting some of what a label can offer, even for a band that hasn't sold much more than 1,000 units in the United States, according to

traditional label arrangement, Redeye group marketing director Josh Wittman sees such a route becoming more common for artists without a proven sales history.

"When we couldn't get them on the terms we wanted to get them, we still knew there'd be an engine behind this record," Wittman says, pointing to the act's booking deal with the Kork Agency and its hiring of Presshere for publicity. "In today's market there are so many indies out there, but aren't a whole lot of label jobs. But there are a whole lot of people

who still want to participate in the music industry. There's tons of radio indie promoters and tons of indie publicists—you can find someone to do everything."

"The Bird of Music" sees Au Revoir Simone enveloping its simple pop structures with greater psychedelic textures and has already sold close to 400 copies via iTunes. The fact that the band has a separate deal in place for its digital distribution was almost a deal breaker for Redeye, as Au Revoir Simone is a band that has received plenty of blog love.

"That in itself is a bummer," Wittman says. "That's going to have a big impact. This is a primed-for-digital release. It's rare that we'll only do a physical deal. I know other distributors may say, 'Give us the digital or get out,' but we don't take it to that extreme. Yet that is the way the industry is going. Amazon, InSound and Other Music sell physical and digital, and they're not going to want to be dealing with multiple distributors to coordinate both products."

Yet Wittman was enough of a fan of the record to work with the band regard-



AU REVOIR SIMONE

Nielsen SoundScan.

"Before CD burners and all that stuff became accessible, you needed a label to manufacture and have some kind of product," she says. "It must have been such an amazing feeling to be in a band and see your album come out. But now, you can just burn it, and I can print out our CDs at home, so it's not quite as exciting."

Au Revoir Simone will self-release its sophomore album, "The Bird of Music," May 15 in the United States. The act has a deal with Haw River, N.C.-based Redeye Distribution to handle its physical product and is working with San Francisco-based the Orchard for digital distribution. In the United Kingdom, the act is signed to Moshi Moshi (Bloc Party, Hot Chip).

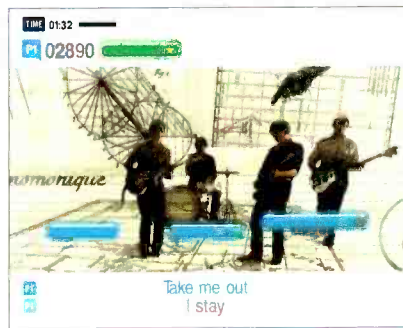
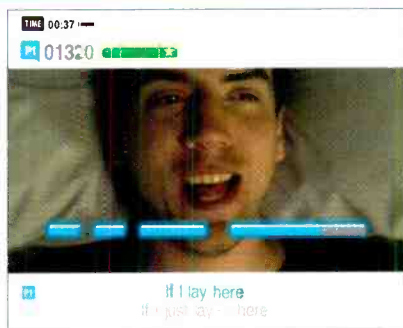
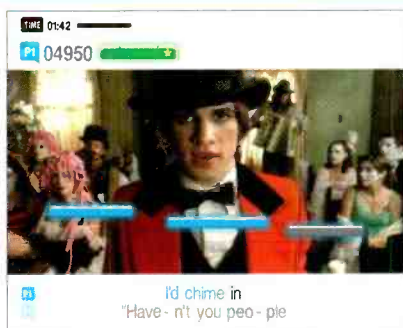
Redeye, which has an in-house label in Yep Roc, pursued Au Revoir Simone for a label deal, but the act was not interested. While such established acts as Simply Red or such in-demand buzz bands as Clap Your Hands Say Yeah have managed to thrive without a

less, and he notes that its connection to Moshi Moshi will help the band's hip factor, especially when it comes to getting the band on retail shelves. For her part, Forster, who only recently quit her gig as a textile designer, isn't ruling out a more traditional label deal in the future, but as the act is about to embark on a tour with Peter Bjorn and John, she admits to being vague on what a label could bring to the table at this point.

"Because we've just been doing the best we can as we go, sometimes I feel like there's stuff that we don't know about that we should be doing," she says. "That's probably the role a label can play. We don't have a lot of money, and it is hard when it comes to touring. A lot of labels may give their bands a vehicle, and maybe some money, and those are things we don't have, so that might be the reason to join up with someone. We don't have a trust fund."

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AU REVOIR SIMONE: SARAH WILNER



Screen shots from 'SingStar Pop'

GAMING BY ANTONY BRUNO

Get In The Game

Music Biz Wakes Up To Music-Based Game Boom

Kerstin Murphy won't be quitting her day job.

Microphone in hand, she tries her best to belt out a karaoke rendition of Hoobastank's "The Reason" while her friends at a dinner party in Denver cringe in glee at the cheesy lyrics and her unsuccessful efforts to hit the high notes.

"OK, your turn," she says defiantly, handing the mic to her fiancé once the song is over.

The group is playing "SingStar Pop," a karaoke game from Sony's PlayStation division through which players can score points by hitting the right notes, at the right time, while singing along to one of 36 songs—complete with music videos.

"SingStar Pop" is just the latest release in the music-centric videogame genre, a fad currently at the height of its popularity. And the music industry is taking notice.

"We've always had a lot of enthusiasm for the category, and are seeing it rightfully getting its due in this market," says George White, senior VP of strategy and product development at Warner Music Group (WMG). "It's the begin-

ning of this being a channel for the distribution of music and an important one. It's one of the few place we've seen in the sweet spot of what consumers want to do with music today, which is interact with it."

Since the original "PaRappa the Rapper" in Japan, music-based games have carved out a unique niche in the videogame industry. But until lately, the genre has not enjoyed mainstream success.

"Guitar Hero" changed everything. Created by pioneering music game developer Harmonix, "Guitar Hero" was published by the unknown Red Octane with virtually no budget for marketing or music licensing, and required a custom game controller shaped like a guitar that resulted in a bulky, expensive package.

"Any rational analysis told us there was no way this game could be successful," says Alex Rigopulos, co-founder and CEO of Harmonix.

Yet "Guitar Hero" has sold more than 1 million units since its November 2005 launch, considered a massive hit for a music-based game. The November 2006 sequel,

"Guitar Hero II," has done even better, with 2 million sales so far. The bundled package of both games was the fifth best-selling game of 2006 across all platforms, according to NPD data.

The "Guitar Hero" phenomenon shows that a well-developed music game featuring mainstream songs could have a mass-market appeal, and the music industry wants in.

Of particular interest is the new generation of game consoles, which through their Internet access capabilities and downloadable content services will allow gamers to buy new songs to add to these music games.

"It becomes much more interesting when you're not tied down to the 20 songs selected for you by the developer and instead you have a library to choose from," WMG's White says. "That's going to be the fundamental transformational thing."

Already, the Xbox 360 version of "Guitar Hero II" allows users to buy and download three-track bundles of new songs for the game. The upcoming PlayStation 3 version of "SingStar Pop" will launch this fall with an online library of hundreds of tracks called the SingStore, where gamers can buy and download the music of their choice.

But there are already concerns over how this capability will be executed. Take the "Guitar Hero II" downloads for the Xbox 360. Each three-song bundle costs \$6.25, and consists of the same songs that appeared in the original "Guitar Hero." (For example, one of them has Queen's "Killer Queen," the Donnas' "Take It Off" and the Edgar Winter Group's "Frankenstein.") It would cost \$90 to purchase the entire soundtrack in this fashion, whereas one could just

buy the older game for \$20 and get the same songs.

There are also concerns over what kind of music will be available. Labels are already working with game developers to place their "high priority" artists in these games, but the developers still have ultimate control over the soundtrack. Gamers stress that labels should remain as hands off in the future.

"Music and games has a real potential to go wrong," says Jeff Gerstmann, editorial director for game community GameSpot. "These games could be awesome if they go out and get the right music. Or they could turn it into some filthy marketing machine where they're shoving bands that no one cares about on you."

These concerns aside, the genre of music games is marching forward. Like "SingStar Pop," and the upcoming "Rock Band" from Harmonix/MTV, these games are now incorporating original masters, not karaoke cover versions of songs, adding a greater level of authenticity. The connectivity and processing power of the new consoles are creating new possibilities in terms of game play.

And real money is being dedicated to the genre. Activision has since bought Red Octane for \$99 million, and MTV acquired Harmonix for \$175 million, giving both the resources needed to develop even more sophisticated music-based games.

"As hugely successful as 'Guitar Hero' has been, it's just the beginning of what this genre is going to become," Harmonix's Rigopulos says. "We've now got the creative freedom and the resources to make the games we've been dreaming of making." ■■■

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BITS & BRIEFS

DOWNLOADS CLIMB UPWARD

Market research firm In-Stat reports that online sales of digital music represented 6% of the worldwide music market in 2006, up from 4% in 2005. By 2011, the firm expects online sales to represent 26% of all music purchased worldwide.

In terms of activity, 74% of those responding to its recent survey downloaded music in 2006, up from 48% the previous year.

DANCING MACHINE

Warner Music Group announced a partnership with Acclaim Games to develop an Internet-based dance game called DANCE! Online. The free PC game allows users to create custom avatars that dance with up to six other players in a virtual environment. Players can control their characters' movements via a dance pad connected to their computer—essentially performing the moves in real life—or simply using the computer keyboard.

WMG is providing music licensing and artist appearances to the service. The first

is Atlantic Records artist Cupid, who will appear in the game performing his single "Cupid Shuffle." DANCE! Online is available now in beta mode, with a full launch expected later this year.

GOOMBH BOOMBASTIC

Music recommendation service Goombah has launched a new streaming radio outlet called Radio Free Goombah. The new service allows users to download and keep free music from a catalog of select tracks, generally organized into a variety of set playlists. These playlists can be downloaded and then embedded into blog posts, Web pages or e-mailed to others.

The company also has added to its library through a deal with the Independent Online Distribution Alliance, adding more than 20,000 tracks from 3,000 member labels to the service. Other labels and distributing contributing to the Goombah service include the Orchard, Adrenaline Music, Iris Distribution and Indie 911.

HOT RINGTONES™ APR 28 2007 Billboard

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	WEEKS ON CHART	TITLE	ORIGINAL ARTIST
1	2	18	POPPIN'	CHRIS BROWN FEATURING JAY BIZ
2	1	55	WHAT HURTS THE MOST	RASCAL FLATTS
3	3	30	CRAZY BITCH	BUCKCHERRY
4	4	10	CUPID'S CHOKEHOLD	GYM CLASS HEROES FEATURING PATRICK STUMP
5	6	26	ROCKSTAR	NICKELBACK
6	5	114	CANDY SHOP	50 CENT FEATURING OLIVIA
7	9	101	BECAUSE I GOT HIGH	AFROMAN
8	8	83	MY HUMPS	THE BLACK EYED PEAS
9	7	131	SUPER MARIO BROTHERS THEME	KOJI KONDŌ
10	16	2	BUY U A DRANK (SHAWTY SNAPPIN')	T-PAIN FEATURING YUNG JOC
11	10	56	BEST FRIEND	50 CENT & OLIVIA
12	11	128	SWEET HOME ALABAMA	LYNYRD SKYNYRD
13	14	70	DON'T CHA	THE PUSSYCAT DOGS FEATURING BLISTA RHYMES
14	15	129	PINK PANTHER	HENRY MANCINI
15	13	23	STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN	LED ZEPPELIN
16	23	74	LOVERS AND FRIENDS	LIL JON & THE EAST SIDE BOYZ FEATURING L'SHER & LUDACRIS
17	12	117	MISSION-IMPOSSIBLE	LALO SCHIFRIN
18	17	57	NUTHIN' BUT A 'G' THANG	DR. DRE
19	24	12	WHEN WE RIDE ON OUR ENEMIES	ZPAC
20	20	86	LOCKED UP	AKON FEATURING STYLES P.

Based on Polyphonic ringtones sales data reported by Nielsen Ringtones, a service of Nielsen Mobile. Chart endorsed by CTIA - The Wireless Association and Mobile Entertainment Forum.



CARRY THE LOAD

For those who want to transfer their CD collection to an iPod but don't want to rip it onto a computer first, the iLoad has been introduced to handle the task. Insert your CD into the shoebox-sized device and it will rip the tracks right into your iPod, along with all album and track information.

The iLoad can also be used to delete songs from an iPod and can be hooked up to speakers through its output jack. It can transfer music from one iPod to another, and back up music files by attaching an external hard drive. The company plans to add a DVD-to-iPod transfer capability soon.

The iLoad is available at iload.com for \$500.

—Antony Bruno



GOLDENVOICE
PRESIDENT

Paul Tollett

Coachella is doing just fine, thank you. Now, its founder is branching out into country, with Stagecoach. He talks about these and his other touring projects with Billboard.



Paul Tollett has always been a concert promoter with vision. After taking an \$800,000 hit on the inaugural Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in 1999, the president of Los Angeles-based Goldenvoice never lost hope. "It seemed like \$8 million, but even though I lost all that money, I knew we did something great," 41-year-old Tollett says from his office in AEG Live headquarters.

The financial loss forced Tollett and his business partner Rick Van Santen (who, in 2004, died from complications of the flu) to sell Goldenvoice to Anschutz Entertainment Group in 2001. Now, Tollett's vision for Coachella has paid off. For the first time in its eight-year history, the festival has sold out far in advance and expanded to three days, with headliners Rage Against the Machine, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Björk. Goldenvoice will also produce the inaugural Stagecoach country music festival, set for May 5-6 at Indio, Calif.'s Empire Polo Field (also home to Coachella).

While overseeing Goldenvoice's 20-person staff that helps organize more than 300 shows per year throughout California, Nevada, Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii, Tollett also assists AEG Live with the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and Seattle's Bumbershoot festival, among others. Goldenvoice also recently announced the launch of Art Show, a national alternative touring division to be headed by industry vet Elyse Rogers.

Though Coachella and Stagecoach are right around the corner, Tollett found time to sit down with Billboard to discuss, among other things, the two music festivals and Goldenvoice's entrance into the national touring game.

What was the first show you booked?

My brother and I booked a ska band, a mod band and a punk band at a restaurant in Pomona [Calif.] in November of 1982. I did that for a couple years before meeting Gary Tovar, who used to own Goldenvoice. We hit it off, and I started working with him out of a living room. I booked shows and passed out fliers.

Do you have any regrets about selling Goldenvoice?

I never wanted to own Goldenvoice. I enjoyed working for Gary. Those were some of the best times. When Rick [Van Santen] and I took over, it was hard. We never ran businesses, and I didn't enjoy that end of it. I wanted to promote concerts. It's always great to say you're in charge, but I found the creative side of things to be more fulfilling.

Since selling the company to AEG, have you been able to keep your independence?

[AEG] basically lets us do anything we want. They watched us struggle [with] Coachella when we did it with them the second year and

didn't make money. They were patient. I told them the problem could be solved with sponsors, but asked them to trust me to take it another route by keeping sponsorship down. I wanted the festival to remain pure. And they said, "Cool." It was amazing to get that response from a company with so many sponsorship connections.

Coachella has played host to a number of reunited acts that rarely tour, including the Pixies, Rage Against the Machine, the Stooges, Kraftwerk, and the Jesus and Mary Chain. How did you get those bands?

I feel bad divulging this, but when you're talking to a band, you can't lead off with money. You'll be shot down almost every time. They know what kind of money they can get. You have to approach them with why they should get back together. We'll say, "There are thousands of people wanting to see you. You're still relevant, and you're the third most-asked-for band on the Coachella message board." I've had bands, including one this year that I won't name, confirmed before we even talked money.

Were you surprised that this year's Coachella sold out in advance?

We weren't even prepared for it. We have this system of putting it on sale, then handing out fliers and putting up posters. And when it sold out, we didn't know what to do with the month we typically use for promotion. So we've used the time to focus more on Stagecoach.

How did Stagecoach come together?

I had seen a small country show at Empire Polo Field in the '90s. It seemed like a fun local event. There were rumors last year that the polo fields were going to be sold, so I talked to the owners and said, "If I commit to two big festivals, will that be enough incentive for you to not develop for now?" They said, "Yes," so we developed the country idea.

Did AEG Live assist in booking talent?

I went to Louis Messina [senior VP of the Messina Group/AEG Live] and Steve Moore [senior VP of AEG Live Nashville] and told them I needed their help. They

took me to Nashville and introduced me to all the agents there, some of which I already knew from different rock things. I pitched the idea, saying we wanted to do a country festival with a few elements from Coachella. And they were cool with it. Louis helped get Kenny Chesney and George Strait as headliners.

What tactics have you used to promote Stagecoach?

For the marketing, I hired Bonnie Marquez, who worked at country KZLA Los Angeles. When we announced the show, KZLA went out of business. I thought, "OK, I guess we're doing a show without a country radio station." But it was great timing to hire Bonnie because she's so dialed in with all the country people. And recently, we gathered all the country radio station folks in the Western region and did a walk-through at the Stagecoach site. It gave us a chance to explain what the show is. Now they understand and can go to the listener and tell them about it. There's also a new country station [KKGQ] that recently popped up in L.A., so that's good news.

In general, do you think U.S. festivals hold a candle to European festivals?

Europe still has us all beat, but that's OK. We've got our thing and they have theirs. I love the festivals over there. Glastonbury is still my favorite, mud and all.

Art Show recently made its debut with the current My Chemical Romance tour. What's the plan beyond that?

You'd have to ask Elyse—she's the vision. But we want to start working with bands early and stay with them forever. We're not calling hundreds of bands trying to promote their tours.

What other projects are you working on?

I recently got back from London to see the O2 arena, which is a couple months away from opening. I'm helping out a bit by telling bands over here about the venue. AEG has a lot of things for me to do right now besides the festivals. And while I'd never want to walk away from Coachella because I love it so much, I think we have it built to where it can run without me.

I feel bad divulging this, but when you're talking to a band, you can't lead off with money. You'll be shot down almost every time.



Sophomore Jump MAROON5 IS BACK,
TO RADIO'S WARM EMBRACE.
IT WASN'T ALWAYS THIS EASY

BY SUSAN VISAKOWITZ
PHOTOGRAPH BY WENDY SUE LAMM

Maroon5 sure knows how to make an entrance. Or in this case, a re-entrance. ¶ More than two years after its last single appeared, the band has returned with what appears to be a bona fide out-of-the-gate smash called "Makes Me Wonder," which debuted on the Mainstream Top 40 and Adult Top 40 charts at Nos. 34 and 21, respectively. By the week ending April 15, the song was in the top 10 at Adult Top 40, and took the Most Increased Plays trophy for a third straight week on the mainstream list, rising 20-14 on the chart. >>>

"Makes Me Wonder"—a rhythmic-oriented, late-'70s-vibed track—is just the third song this decade to reach the Adult Top 40 chart's top 15 in two weeks or less. It's a promising start for the band's second album, "It Won't Be Soon Before Too Long," due May 22.

But as James Diener, president/CEO of the band's new label home, A&M/Octone (see story, below), is quick to point out, "Everything the band has lining up for it now, it's earned."

Indeed, it's worth considering how long it took to get the first single from "Songs About Jane," the band's last album and first under the Maroon5 moniker, to make an impact at radio.

Almost seven months, to be precise: "Songs" was released June 25, 2002, on Octone Records and first single "Harder to Breathe" debuted Jan. 18, 2003, on the Modern Rock chart, peaking at No. 31 about a month later.

"Everything happened for them gradually," A&M/Octone executive VP/head of promotions Ben Berkman says. "Maroon5 didn't become stars overnight."

In fact, the campaign for "Songs" lasted an unusually protracted four years, stretching through summer 2005. Throughout the process, the band endured a grueling global schedule of radio tours, promo events and regular gigging, sometimes cramming more than 250 shows into a year.

The work was necessary. "Songs" had first-week sales of less than 2,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It would take almost two years, and lots more traveling, for it to pass the 1 million-unit mark.

In The Beginning

It took nearly a decade for the band to even become Maroon5. In the early '90s, Adam Levine, Jesse Carmichael and Michael "Mickey" Madden made friends in their hometown of Brentwood, Calif., at the private Brentwood School.

Hooking up with Ryan Dusick—another, slightly older schoolmate—in 1994, they formed a grunge-influenced alternative rock band known as Kara's Flowers. The group signed to Reprise Records and released the album "The Fourth World" in 1997.

The Reprise effort went nowhere, Kara's Flowers was

'I understand why critics don't like us—We make accessible pop music, and girls like us.'

—ADAM LEVINE

dropped, and the band members soon went their (mostly) separate ways, uncertain about what the future might hold.

Levine and Carmichael tried to make a go of it studying on the East Coast. College degrees didn't exactly pan out, but a new appreciation for hip-hop, soul, gospel and R&B inspired a reunion with their former bandmates in Los Angeles.

After the addition of Lincoln, Neb., transplant James Valentine to the lineup in 2000 and a name change, the newly anointed Maroon5 was granted a second chance, by an upstart label known as Octone Records.

The band was already at year seven when it cut "Songs About Jane" in 2001. And that's when the real work began. From the time "Songs" hit stores in June 2002, Maroon5 was on the move.

"Initially, I spent a year and a half on the road riding around in a van bringing them to radio," Berkman says. "We still laugh about how much that sucked."

But the effort did help spread the gospel.

While getting "Harder to Breathe" to click at modern rock took time, it laid the groundwork for smoother and greater success at adult top 40, where the song finally peaked in the top 20 in July 2003. In between, the band worked its way into The Billboard 200 for the first time, entering that chart the week ending May 31, 2003.

Finally it was on to mainstream top 40, where it cracked the top five in October 2003.

Diener thinks it was just this kind of slow build that made all the difference in the band's ultimate success.

"When a career develops over many, many months and no opportunity is too big to pass up, what happens is that everyone involved—the manager, the label and the artist—everyone is conditioned for real hard work."

It wasn't until the band's second single, the now-classic "This Love," that the band's momentum settled into a groove. In the spring of 2004, the track became the band's first No. 1 single (on the Adult Top 40 chart) and the album crossed the million-sales threshold.

The traveling continued apace, and as the band became superstars at home, ever greater attention was turned to the international market.

"That's really why the 'Songs About Jane' cycle lasted four years," A&M/Octone GM David Boxenbaum says.



"We didn't start rolling them out overseas until they were gold in the U.S., and so there was some lag time between their success at home and their success abroad. Essentially, we had to catch everyone else up."

By summer 2004, third single "She Will Be Loved" proved itself another No. 1 smash in the United States and the band surpassed 2 million in sales.

From that point forward, Maroon5 was a bona fide juggernaut, hitting the 3 million mark in December 2004 and then 4 million in July 2005. Total domestic sales of "Songs" stand at 4.3 million copies. According

QUESTIONS

James Diener A&M/OCTONE PRESIDENT/CEO

In February, Octone Records entered a joint venture with Interscope Geffen A&M (IGA) that begat a new label called A&M/Octone. The partnership was the result of a multilayered transaction that brought the formerly Sony BMG-affiliated Octone into the Universal Music Group (UMG) fold. James Diener, who founded Octone in 2000 and now leads A&M/Octone as its president/CEO, sat down with Billboard to explain some of the finer points of the deal.

What was the structure of Octone's original relationship with Sony BMG?

Actually, the arrangement preceded the Sony-BMG merger. Octone began with BMG and was always oriented on the BMG side of Sony BMG. I founded the label in 2000, as an independent label to be distributed through BMG, but at the same time I became the senior VP of A&R and marketing for J Records and the RCA Music Group. Maroon5 was Octone's first signing. We made the record and put it out on Octone through BMG, and then we had an arrangement facilitated by my second job where we could partner or upstream artists. At a certain point in time we joint-ventured the record with J. That's the moment when you see Octone/J Records [formally called OctJay] arise.

How did the idea of a partnership with IGA develop?

It's an idea for which I have to give great credit to [IGA chairman] Jimmy Iovine and [UMG chairman/CEO] Doug Morris. And like most great ideas it was a fruitful collaboration. It started with Jimmy and I talking over the course of many meetings and

him finally saying, "Why don't we relaunch Octone as A&M/Octone?" I believe he saw in Octone the spirit of what the original A&M idea was about: long, hard work for great acts. And at that point, A&M was relatively dormant, more an imprint than a working label.

What was the process of the transition from Sony BMG to Universal?

First, it was moving myself and the whole Octone staff over to Universal, but there was still the question of the bands we had with Sony BMG. As part of our move, Universal was able to replace where Sony BMG stood in our joint venture.

Is it accurate to say that Octone bought Sony BMG's 50% interest in the joint venture and then sold it to Universal?

The way our lawyers like to put it, A&M/Octone acquired Sony BMG's interest in the old joint venture and A&M/Octone itself is a joint venture with Universal. But you basically filled in the blanks.



DIENER

So was there a risk that Universal wouldn't buy back that 50%?

A&M/Octone was a foregone conclusion. The question was, What was going to happen to the bands that were part of our joint venture with Sony BMG? A&M/Octone and the transition of Octone to Universal preceded the conclusion of the Sony-BMG joint venture situation, and the risk, which was a big risk, was simply that the conclusion of that joint venture disposition was uncertain. The bands were the question mark.

Ultimately, how was that question resolved?

Well, it has a happy ending. All of the acts that were in the joint venture with Octone and the RCA Music Group have come with us. The acts I signed to J/RCA in an employee capacity were not part of the joint venture, and those acts stayed, the primary one being Gavin DeGraw. But between the Octone acts that came with us and the acts that came from our venture with Sony BMG and new Interscope-contributed acts, you are left with something pretty significant. And it's a bold statement on the part of IGA and Universal—it's an expansionary move in an environment that is contracting. The whole reason I made such an effort to transact this thing from Sony BMG to Universal was because I had such belief in Iovine and Morris, as well as [IGA head of promotions] Brenda Romano and their whole team, and in turn, I had such a vote of confidence from them.

—SV



to the label, "Songs" has done about 6 million in international sales, or 60% of its current sales total.

"The band earned it by just touring nonstop overseas," Boxenbaum says. "They went to every country, playing shows, doing promotion—just giving love to all these territories. And when bands reach out personally like that, that's when they find an audience that connects and stays."

Starting Anew

By August 2005, as the band at last wrapped its support work for the album, the perpetual motion of the "Songs" cycle had taken its toll.

"We were fried," lead vocalist and primary songwriter Levine says. "We had to throw in the towel, because we were becoming ghosts of the people we once were. Everything was so dialed in and so automatic. It didn't feel right. It felt like it was time to move on."

Meanwhile, drummer Dusick had aggravated an old sports injury due to the repetitive stress of drumming. Matt Flynn took on the role of fill-in drummer at that point, but Dusick never really recovered, leaving the band for good in September 2006.

"It was traumatic," Levine says. "We were losing a soldier."

The band took off for only about a month. By October 2005, the members were together at Rick Rubin's Southern California "Houdini" mansion to write and demo new material.

"Jesse and Adam actually lived up there," Madden says, "and all told I think we spent about three months there working out material. The bulk of the new album was written by the time we left."

The group segued into regular studio sessions in February 2006, choosing to work on material in three distinct parts. Starting out with Mike Elizondo (Dr. Dre, 50 Cent) and Mark "Spike" Stent (Gwen Stefani, Madonna), the band also turned to Eric Valentine (Queens of the Stone Age, Third Eye Blind) for two of the album's more rock-leaning tracks, and cut another two-and-a-half songs with Mike Endert (Anna Nalick, Gavin DeGraw).

The band's manager Jordan Feldstein says, "Ma-

roon5's music is a medley of styles, and alone, none of the producers had a discography that reflected all of the band's influences."

Feldstein also notes that the band "was able to do things they couldn't do the first time, like cut songs more than once. They got to be a little more free, experimenting with new sounds, different instruments."

Indeed, based on the handful of tracks played for Billboard, "It Won't Be Soon Before Too Long" covers a lot of stylistic ground, moving from the Latin rhythms and synth swirls of front-and-center opener "If I Never See Your Face" to the "Every Breath You Take"-styled balladry of "Won't Go Home Without You." Elsewhere, the soulful, uptempo piano-based groove of "Wake Up Call" conjures everything from Prince and Justin Timberlake to "Off the Wall"-era Michael Jackson, but still sounds fresh and assured.

But for all the new touches, the album isn't a drastic departure from "Songs About Jane."

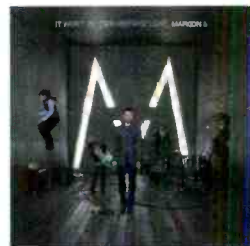
Flynn says, "I think it would be stupid if it was a departure, to be honest."

The record wrapped before Octone jumped from Sony BMG to Universal to become A&M/Octone, and everyone interviewed for the story says the transition did not delay the album.

But it did give the band the spooks for a bit. "We kept our fingers crossed," Madden says. "We felt like we wanted to stay with Octone, because they had nurtured us for so long, and we're glad that worked out. But we were definitely feeling like we were in limbo there for a week or two. It was interesting."

Safely reunited with the staff of the former Octone Records at Universal, a new round of hard work be-

MAROON5 performs 'Makes Me Wonder' at Nickelodeon's 20th annual Kids' Choice Awards in March. Below, art for the band's new album, 'It Won't Be Soon Before Too Long.'



Maroon's 5

The Band's Billboard Hot 100 History SOURCE: Nielsen SoundScan

TITLE	DEBUT	DEBUT DATE	PEAK	PEAK DATE	WEEKS ON CHART
Harder to Breathe	76	8/23/2003	18	11/1/2003	22
This Love	66	2/14/2004	5	4/24/2004	43
She Will Be Loved	50	7/24/2004	5	9/25/2004	41
Sunday Morning	75	1/8/2005	31	2/26/2005	20
Makes Me Wonder	84	4/21/2007	78*	4/28/2007	2

*Still charting as of the April 28 chart.

gins for Maroon5 as the group transitions back into the marketplace.

"We're not taking anything for granted," Berkman says, and this view is expressed by everyone at A&M/Octone. "We're approaching all the outlets with a lot of respect. In the case of radio, we played them the record early. It didn't just show up on programmers' desks a day before the add date."

Diener adds, "We're firing on all engines: radio, retail, promotions, international."

Time will tell if music critics—never cheerleaders for the band—warm up this time around. "I understand why they don't like us," Levine says. "We're very hard to like—we make accessible pop music, and girls like us. These elements do not make for critical success. But there are 50 critics and 80 billion people, so I don't really care."

Later, though, Levine acknowledges that the critical indifference hurts at times. "I hope they get the new one, and I think they will," the singer says.

A&M/Octone head of sales and artist development Rome Thomas says his team is working closely with the team IGA has in place. "From the get-go, we've realized the importance of having the retail community and our marketing partners see this as a joint effort between both entities."

Thomas says the plan for retail is to have "bonus content to leverage with every key partner that has asked, whether it be mass retailers, indies or the non-traditional communities. We're trying to make sure that every retailer feels they can play their own special part in this release."

Thomas adds that mobile offerings and licensing will play a "huge part in how this record will proliferate over the next two to three years. We want to use every vehicle we can to get this music out there."

On the international side, Boxenbaum says that one of the key differences between Sony BMG's structure and Universal's is "bench depth. Sony BMG had one or two people dedicated to international, and they would talk to the territories mostly in a phone and e-mail situation. They'd send the band over alone and hope that the international plan was being executed."

In contrast, Boxenbaum says IGA has a "much more top-down and centralized" approach to international, with head of international Martin Kierszenbaum and head of international marketing Jurgen Grebner in place in L.A. with "an entire staff of people who actually go with the band to the territories. There's a structure in place to prioritize global plans. Without one, everything's left to the whims of the individual territories."

The plan is to hit overseas markets "much the way we did the first time around—hard. We'll approach this with a ground-up attitude again."

The band has already begun a promo tour of Europe that will continue to Australia and Asia during the next month or so and includes a long string of "underplays," or small-venue shows, maxing out at capacities around 700.

This approach will also carry over to the States, where the band will do a spate of underplays prior to a full-scale arena tour slated to begin in the fall and run toward the holiday season.

"We want to give core fans the same experience they had the first time around with this band," Feldstein says. "They really built a reputation as a great live band during the four years they spent on the road, and we want to remind people of that and get them back out there."

Of course, a new chapter at radio is already being written, and Berkman likes the signs. "Thus far, we're off to an amazing start, thanks in large part to IGA's efforts. It feels like radio is excited to have the group back. And if ["Makes Me Wonder"] connects and the album meets our expectations, the group will really have proven themselves. The sky will be the limit."

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NARM Faces The Music

Labels, Retailers Confront Key Issues At Annual Conference

By Ed Christman

With physical music sales dropping faster than anyone would have predicted, the stakes have never been so high for those flocking to Chicago April 29-May 2 for the NARM annual convention.

While no magic remedy can stop the 20% CD sales decline measured by Nielsen SoundScan so far this year, industry executives on both sides of the table are bringing a plethora of ideas to NARM on how to slow the tide. But the big question is: Will the industry rally around initiatives that can counter declining sales and the new hybrid formats that some are championing to prolong the life of the CD? Or will infighting over different agendas create a paralysis that leaves an ineffective hodgepodge response?

"The decline of the physical CD sales and what the industry's response to that should be will be a key topic for discussion at the convention," EMI Music Marketing president Ronn Werre says. "For a while, retailers were putting the burden on the labels, asking, 'What are you guys going to do about it?' Now they are asking, 'What can we do together?' The willingness to try and do things differently has never been so high on both sides."

Indeed, in early April, EMI Music showed that willingness when it decided to abandon digital rights management (DRM) and sell unprotected MP3 versions of its songs, a move that promises to be heavily debated at the convention. That announcement makes the debate about how to respond to declining physical sales even more crucial—or moot, depending on whom you talk to.

Werre, for one, predicts everyone—retail and labels' sales and distribution—will pull together to deal with things on the physical side. But other executives aren't so sure. In fact, the finger-pointing may not be finished.

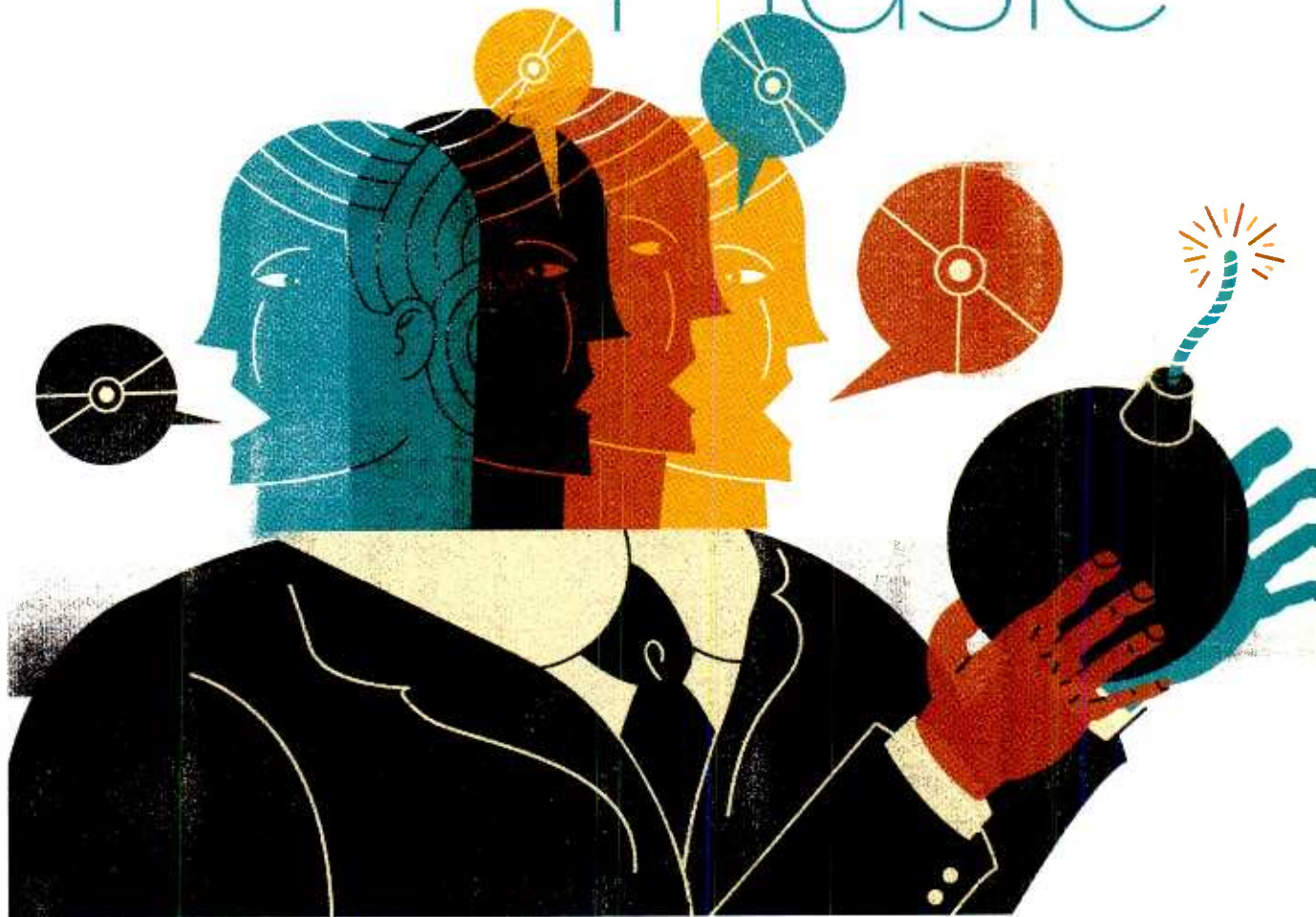
One retailer complains that the labels don't take the plight of the CD seriously enough. "The labels are just sitting around and waiting for digital to make up for the loss of physical sales," that merchant says. "Digital is wonderful and will pay dividends down the road, but that will be a long wait. In the meantime, if physical is going to lose, I want to die with my boots on."

That merchant says he wants to try anything and everything. But all he gets from music labels are phone calls filled with "bellyaching and crying in the soup." In contrast, video labels are coming up with plenty of creative ideas, he adds.

"The music industry has cancer, it's not dying of a train wreck," Value Music president Rob Perkins says. "We talked a year ago about a reinvigorated physical format, but nothing has happened. The lack of innovation is what is hurting the industry."

But not everyone is sympathetic to brick-and-mortar's plight. "Everyone is talking about a new physical format and/or existing format enhancements," one senior major label executive says. "The industry has a new format. It's called digital."

There is despair on the label side, too, with some executives questioning the effectiveness of the organization.



When NARM launched its Definitive 200 promotion, a ranked list of 200 albums every music lover should own, "several retailers stepped up to the plate and did the right thing," one distribution executive says. "We would have expected it would have been all of them." But in many cases, the executive suggests, retailers used the promotion to extract more co-op advertising support from labels for prime endcap exposure for those 200 titles in their stores.

But another distribution executive in a different camp says the labels can't afford to throw in the towel on the CD. "If the big boxes don't see us making the attempt and have confidence that the industry is committed to stemming the tide, they will simply start cutting space for music."

On the other hand, retailers complain that so far all they have seen from labels is cost-cutting to protect the bottom line (on income statements) and nothing to stimulate the top line. The physical world needs to be reinvigorated, either through a new physical format, enhancement to existing physical formats and/or pricing experiments, merchants say.

Currently, at least four different versions of a CD/DVD format, each with an Internet

component, are being championed to the majors, but those efforts might cancel each other out like the MiniDisc and the digital cassette did 10 years ago. Nevertheless, WEA will go to NARM with plans for its DVD Album. The DVD Album, unlike the so-far failed DVD Audio disc, allocates only about 10% of its disc space for music. The balance of memory on the DVD Album remains for video, ringtones, digital booklets and other computer-ready features.

A company called Tranzbyte Technology and Buddah Records co-founder Artie Ripp is touting a DVD that would contain a best-selling movie or a concert and a WAV file with songs or music from the soundtrack that could be burned to CD. He says that his disc is another way labels can generate incremental revenue. What's more, once the disc is put in a computer, it will go to Web sites for more value-added features and bonuses that could even generate more revenue.

Meanwhile, the Because Group is said to be in talks with Universal Music Group about the latter issuing music titles in its DFS Disc format. In addition to providing prerecorded music in a read-only content area, the DFS Disc contains an embedded link that allows consumers to download new content to a writable area of the disc.

Also, longtime industry manager David Krebs and veteran industry format guru Bob Sherwood are working on behalf of DVD Plus International and hope to convince labels to adopt the DVD Plus technology created by Dieter Dierks. The DVD Plus can have a CD version of an album on one side that plays

continued on >>p26

FACT FILE

NARM 2007

What: Billed as InSights & Sounds '07, this is the annual convention of NARM

Who: Executives from music retailers, wholesalers, record companies and more.

Where: The Hilton Chicago

When: April 29-May 2

Web site: narm.com

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in all CD players and a surround sound version of the music on the DVD side. That side of the disc also can contain video and, if labels want, provide the option to use the DFS technology.

Sherwood says 42 million homes in the United States have surround-sound systems, and he envisions reissuing deluxe packages of the industry's best-selling albums to generate incremental sales from those customers.

"For something to work, it will have to be a value-add, and everyone will have to embrace it," Baker & Taylor VP Steve Harkins says. "It can't be like the DualDisc," which failed because only one major, Song BMG, actively championed it.

Others say too many issues are stacked up against the new format. Some retailers say WEA's DVD Album weakness is lack of compatibility with CD players, particularly those in cars. Critics also say that consumers previously have failed to embrace the type of surround-sound technology now offered again by the DVD

Album or the DVD Plus product that Sherwood and Krebs are promoting.

Meanwhile, other merchants say they are going to press a pricing agenda at NARM. "When are the majors going to finally wake up and realize that \$18.98 CDs are selling everywhere for \$10?" the head of one chain asks. "That's insane. If retailers can't get the damn things for \$9 on new releases and \$7.50 on catalog, music will continue to be replaced by other product lines."

Another merchandiser agrees. "No one wants to get in front of the train and say, 'Here is the new pricing model.' If they did, we know it may hurt in the first year, but it may prolong the life of the physical side until digital can take off."

Alan Tuchman, interim co-president of Al-

liance Entertainment Corp., says he would welcome a new value proposition. "Why don't the majors lower CD prices and make it one way," i.e., without return privileges, which wind up costing both sides plenty of money.

While the latter suggestion may not be on the table yet, major-label distribution executives say a wide variety of configurations and hybrid formats with new spins on pricing are in the works. Some will be unveiled before or at NARM.

Two different majors envision a redefinition of the deluxe album so that each album becomes a definitive source of product and information on an artist. Moreover, some of the majors are talking about both enhanced and streamlined packaging, which might not include the jewel box, sources say.

Finally, music marketing may become more prominent going forward, whether it's through more consistent catalog promotions or trying new advertising vehicles to bring awareness to the consumer.

"The industry is still relying on radio and press to drive consumer awareness," EMI's Werre says. "The industry needs to do more consumer research, too."

In fact, Werre says that if NARM produces too many different answers, the best option would be to do consumer research to see which ones the industry should push.

"Sometimes we shoot down each other's ideas because they are not ours," he says. "Instead of arguing over which idea to follow or throwing all of them against the wall to see what will stick, we should find out what the consumer really wants."

Of course, EMI already proved it is listening to the consumer by getting rid of DRM. That means the other big question at NARM will be: Will one of the other three majors follow EMI's lead?

Execs say a wide variety of new formats is in the works.

Full Slate At NARM Digital Gets Spotlight In Events Lineup

Digital distribution has been a hot button at the NARM annual meeting for the last 10 years, but this marks the first time the issue will have its own conference within the convention.

NARM president Jim Donio says digital will have its own two-day slate of programming during the convention, which is being held April 29-May 2 in Chicago.

"As part of that we have four of the top executives from each of the majors talking about digital music strategies—Thomas Hesse of Sony BMG Music Entertainment; Amanda Marks of Universal Music Group; Michael Nash of WEA Corp.; and Barney Wragg of EMI Music Marketing," he says. "It should be a standing-room-only session."

As for the brick-and-mortar part of the industry, "we are doing something different this year for the keynote," Donio says. "We will have each of the major distribution presidents accompanied by one of their [distributed] labels. The independents will be represented by Rich Bengloff, who heads [the American Assn. of In-

dependent Music], along with an indie label executive."

Musically, "Universal [Music Group] continues to really take center stage with their product presentation," Donio says. "They keep the performers under wraps, which builds anticipation so everyone looks forward to it."

In addition, Donio noted Sony BMG is hosting the Scholarship Award cruise, while WEA is hosting all the breakfasts, and EMI Music Marketing is hosting the red carpet. Club NARM will be hosted by Rocket Science on April 30 and indie label Astonish Entertainment May 1.

For the awards-night closing ceremony, the headliner will be Martina McBride, with Rodrigo y Gabriela and Elliott Yamin also appearing. Peter Cincotti will open the convention April 29 at the morning session.

Finally, Donio says NARM is "thrilled to recognize 'Soul Train' [host] Don Cornelius with the President's Lifetime Achievement Award while the Chairman's Award goes to Chicago."

—EC



MARTINA MCBRIDE



UPWARDLY

MOBILE



For **Calle 13** And The Rest
Of The Latin Music Biz,
Digital Growth Has
Come Via The Handset

BY LEILA COBO
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PASCAL FONTANA

WITH ITS DISTINCTIVE

and immediately catchy mix of hip-hop, reggaetón and tropical and electronica beats, Calle 13 was one of the biggest breakout stories in the Latin world last year. The duo's debut album has sold more than 200,000 copies in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and more than 350,000 worldwide.

That success came as a result of careful strategy. The act's incendiary, potty-mouthed lyrics have kept the Puerto Rican duo from gaining massive radio airplay or many major TV appearances. But the two have been happily embraced by alternative outlets and media, including the digital world, which played a crucial role in the success of their self-titled debut.

The single "Atrevete Te, Te!" spent some three months last year as the top-selling ringtone on Sony BMG Latin and fans flocked to the group's Web site to stream songs not commercially available. Overall, Calle 13 was one of the label's three top-selling acts in the mobile realm, with minimum promotion and effort.

As Calle 13 prepares to release its sophomore album, "Residente o Visitante," on April 23, Sony BMG is looking to maximize the group's mobile appeal via a May/June national campaign with a major wireless carrier.

Potential deals include a national TV spot featuring Calle 13's second single, "Cumbia de los Aburridos," a cut reminiscent of "Atrevete Te, Te!"

Sony BMG's efforts to capitalize on the group's mobile appeal underscore the growing importance of digital sales and promotion to Latin labels' bottom line. In the past few years, the music industry has begun to fully recognize a young, bilingual Latin population that consumes mobile entertainment services at a rate that outpaces the general U.S. population.

"For me Calle 13 is the epitome of a digital artist," says Seth Schachner, Sony BMG Entertainment VP of digital music for Latin America. "In terms of mobile media in the U.S. market, it's been a monster success."

As little as a year ago, having a Latin act be a "monster success" in the digital realm was negligible.

Today, even though the sales of physical product—CDs—comprise the bulk of Latin music revenue (see chart, page 30), the digital arena has grown to account for between 15% and 20% of sales for some labels. Growth is expected to accelerate as more Latinos gain economic power and Internet access.

"We're in a very strong growth trend and we're expecting another 100% growth in the digital department this year," Universal Music Latino new media director Skander Goucha says.

"Our main focus is digital and mobile growth," Machete Music president Gustavo López says, noting that all new contracts now include all mobile and digital obligations, including exclusive greetings, photographs and tracks for digital use.

Beyond sales or revenue alone, the digital arena—which includes everything from online media to music and mobile downloads—has become an integral part of the marketing and positioning of every Latin act in the market today.

"We are consolidating our new business model, increasingly integrating the digital world into our day-to-day," says Universal Music Latin America/Iberian Peninsula chairman Jesús López, whose artists include David Bisbal. The Spanish crooner received a plaque last month for worldwide sales of more than 1 million digital and mobile downloads from his most recent album, "Premonición."

"When [digital] has grown as quickly as it has, it has to become part of the core business," López says.

That core business is very much a mobile one. While there is a broad mix of Latin product to be found in online digital stores, especially with the launch of iTunes Latino late last year, online

Q&A WITH CALLE 13

So you thought Calle 13's self-titled debut was racy? Take a close listen to "Residente o Visitante," where clever rhymes (think Eminem at his best) go from witty to salacious to outright shocking. It's not just sexual content, juvenile posturing and verbal attacks, of which there is plenty. Calle 13, which won the Latin Grammy Award for best new artist in 2006, also delves deeply and specifically into subject matter meant to make you squirm, including social malaise, corruption, injustice and violence, all set over complex beats and arrangements that blend reggaetón with rap and alternative music.

"I'd say they are one of the bravest acts that we've ever had on our label in terms of their far-reaching political statements and just overall satire on the human condition," Sony BMG Latin president Kevin Lawrie says. Lawrie admits the new album's content makes it a marketing challenge. "It will be a very polarizing album, and some people will get it and some people won't," says Lawrie, who adds that he isn't agonizing over radio play. An aggressive retail plan includes an exclusive CD/DVD version of "Residente o Visitante" for Wal-Mart that includes a clean version of the album and a Wal-Mart "Soundcheck" DVD.

The members of Calle 13—stepbrothers René Pérez (aka Residente, rapper/lyricist) and Eduardo Cabra (aka Visitante, music writer/arranger)—stir up few looks when they enter Novecento, a trendy Miami restaurant, to discuss their new album with Billboard. Short, fair and slight, and sporting zero bling, the pair looks more like university alt-rockers than the enfant terribles of Latin music whose racy, graphic lyrics have unleashed many a controversy.

Your first single, "Tango del Pecado," is very satirical but has caused quite a stir because it exhorts people to listen to your "Satanic music." Did you expect such a reaction in this day and age?

Pérez: I never do something expecting something. I do things because I like them. The only track we recorded with a specific intent was [second single] "Cumbia de los Aburridos," which we conceived as

a radio-friendly track, because it's hard for our music to get played in radio. This album is full of vices to eat up your brain. Within that, "Cumbia de los Aburridos" is the chocolate cake with strawberries. So people can eat it, and later discover what else is in there. **Cabra:** What we knew was, this wasn't a "second" album. It was an album. What happens as far as topics, performance and irreverence is something completely different from our previous album.

CABRA

digital sales of Latin music continue to be minuscule. Only a handful of Latin artists—most of them crossover names like Enrique Iglesias and Shakira—are among the top-selling downloads. Indeed, for first-quarter 2007, Latin albums made up only 0.85% of all digital album sales in the United States, according to Nielsen SoundScan. In contrast, Latin albums made up 7% of all album sales. But digital Latin album sales, at 114,000 units, were only 1.2% of all Latin album sales (see sidebar, page 30).

Instead, the bulk of digital Latin sales in the States—by all accounts 60%-70%—comes from mobile stores. And within that mix, as is the case with the mobile music market at large, many of the best-performing tracks are usually urban and rap.

Aside from Calle 13, other major digital successes include Universal's Rakim & Ken-Y, Wisin & Yandel and Don Omar, who has one of the most successful digital development stories in the Latin marketplace.

Last year, Don Omar became one of the first Latin artists to get a massive mobile campaign, with Cingular Wireless. And his album "King of Kings" was the first entire album on urban label Machete Music to be cleared for mastertone release.

Don Omar's campaign included a Cingular "Sound Sessions," recorded at a Gibson Amphitheatre concert in Los Angeles, from which three songs were made available as video downloads and promoted via a TV and online campaign.

In the end, Don Omar's first single, "Angelito," sold close to 400,000 mastertones, more than any other Machete track.

BAD BOYS

Faced with new technology, acts with lyrics like Calle 13's (see sidebar, below), may face some old problems. While carriers are anxious to dip into the Latin marketplace, they balk at wrapping their brands around controversial acts, much as it happens in the mainstream. While acts like Shakira, Maná and Alejandro Sanz have all been faces of specific car-

riers, more provocative urban acts have not.

"We take a more grass-roots approach," one carrier representative says. "We can promote them on deck or promote a song. We don't want to offend people, but we want to allow our consumers to buy whatever they want to buy."

In Calle 13's case, the track that Sony BMG Latin is angling to feature in a mobile campaign—the duo was close to securing a branding deal with a carrier as this issue went to press—is "Cumbia de los Aburridos," a more commercial track than the first single, "Tango del Pecado." The latter's chorus, which speaks about "satanic music," has provoked controversy.

Not only can this make it difficult to secure a branding deal, but it can eat away at radio play. Machete's López says he sees a direct correlation between radio play and mastertone sales, which rise with radio chart position.

However, Don Omar also benefited from marquee placement: Many carriers placed him in their top decks, and location drives sales.

This is where the genre can still create greater opportunities for itself. Although all carriers have Latin tracks, they are several clicks away (see sidebar). If Latin tracks want to be on the main deck, they have to fight for the same space as major mainstream releases. As a result, as is the case with the iTunes main page, they rarely get play in the most visible arena (a recent exception was Daddy Yankee's new single, "Impacto").

López is vying to provide carriers with what they need to give that top placement to Latin artists.

"We're not really fighting for Latin space, we're fighting for mainstream space," he says. "When Don Omar's 'Angelito' came out [last year], for example, some carriers sent text messages saying, 'New music from Mariah, 50 Cent and Don Omar.' That's the type of level of exposure that we need to se-

Reggaetón Rock Stars On Their New Album, Recording And Writing In Spanish—And A Fixation With Poop

Why not pick "Cumbia de los Aburridos" as the first single?

Pérez: I was against that. It sends the wrong message, if our first single sounds like our previous hit ["Atrevete Te, Te!"]. The fact is, we've never been strong on the radio. And that doesn't mean I'm going to start to record stupid reggaetón songs. That's not our trip. And the idea was to come out with a track that was contrary to what was expected.

There are many explicit tracks here, but "Mala suerte con Calle 13," your duet with Spanish rapper La Mala Rodriguez, is particularly sexual, and openly talks about such things as scatological sex. Why so explicit?

Pérez: It's a style. Like George Bataille's "Story of the Eye" [a classic erotic novel of excess and sexual extremes]. I can use double-entendre but I can also be crude. La Mala herself suggested she was going to be crazy and sexual with me and wanted me to be aggressive too. So I put in a couple of things that play with that Latin macho attitude. I say things that are real, that people think about. There are thousands of guys who have a small one [Pérez alludes to the size of his penis] and thousands of people who want to do the dirtiest things. I personally don't like to have sex with feces, but the idea was to get to that grotesque level and I know it will touch one or two people.

You also include quite a bit of social commentary here, and you just came from two weeks in remote areas of Latin America, where you've

been filming a documentary about your experiences with different, isolated populations. Tell us about that.

Pérez: We wanted to spend time with different indigenous groups in Latin America and with people from the countryside. People no one visits. Our objective is to air the documentary and have people see what happens in these communities. I can help by presenting their problems and their situations. I would like to establish a connection between Puerto Ricans and Latin Americans, because we're an island, and we're isolated. And I'll use my image in some way so it's entertaining for young viewers.

How does your writing process work?

Cabra: The first album was built mostly over the lyrics. This had more of the beats first and then the lyrics. Many of these tracks were written while we were traveling in specific countries, and as things were happening. Many tracks are responses to specific comments or accusations.

Pérez: Lately, I use the Internet a lot. I look up topics, watch pictures and videos.

Have you considered recording in English?

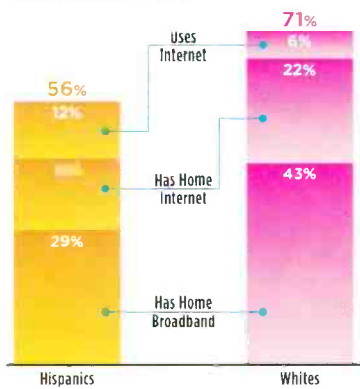
Pérez: It's hard to translate. If I can say the same stuff in English, I'll do it. Because you want to communicate, whether you sell albums or not. You want people to listen and understand. I can't change the world by teaching everybody to speak Spanish. But you're not going to see me doing bilingual stuff, or saying stupid things like "kick your ass" in English. —LC



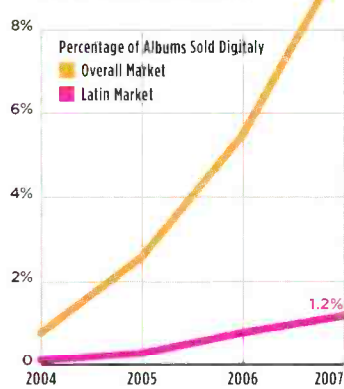
PÉREZ

LATIN DEMOS

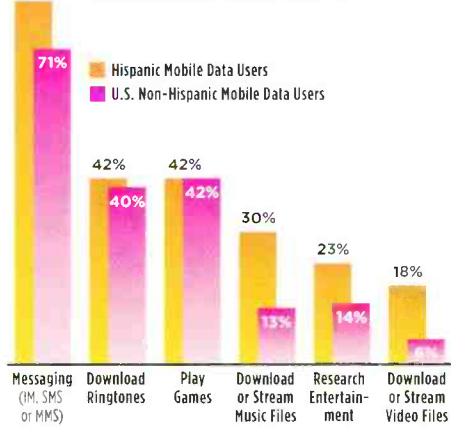
Latins have less Internet access . . .



Perhaps leading to slow digital sales . . .



But have embraced mobile entertainment . . .



cure with our artists when they are ready for that.”

To date, only one carrier, Cingular, has launched a Latin artist page. Tu Musica (Your Music), launched March 28, has key deck placement and goes beyond merely selling ringtones and includes news, tour information and photos.

“It’s the first time we’ve given Latinos nice deck placement,” AT&T Mobility director of Hispanic marketing operations Marcus Owenby says.

Tu Musica’s first partner in the site is EMI Televisa, although other labels are expected to join soon.

What Tu Musica does not offer are full track downloads, an area where labels see tremendous possibilities.

Universal’s Goucha estimates that full track downloads account for approximately 25% of all mobile Latin sales, despite that promotion to Latins in that arena has been negligible.

“The Hispanic demographic has a much higher access to music with mobile phones rather than access to online stores,” Goucha says.

The lag can be attributed to many factors, but key is the fact that Latins simply don’t go online as much as non-Latins, according to a study released March 14 by the Pew Hispanic Center and the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Latins make up 14% of the U.S. population, according to Census figures. A little more than half of them—56%—use the Internet, compared with 71% of non-Hispanic whites and 60% of non-Hispanic blacks, according to the study.

Roughly three-quarters of Latinos who are English-dominant or bilingual use the Internet. But only 32% of Spanish-dominant adults do so.

And while nearly four-fifths (79%) of Latinos have some kind of Internet connection—compared with 92% of non-Hispanic whites—fewer than one-third of Latinos have broadband connections at home.

This helps explain why the launch of iTunes Latino has not done much to galvanize the Latin download market. The Apple store dominates the overall digital online market, accounting for more than 75% of all sales; having a Latin-specific store is particularly important to the growth of digital Latin sales. Yet it appears that Latin digital album sales have actually dropped since the iTunes move.

According to Nielsen SoundScan, in 2004, Latin digital album sales were a paltry 42,000 copies, accounting for only 0.75% of all digital album sales. By the end of 2006, those numbers had jumped, to 293,000 copies and a mere 0.9% of the total. By first-quarter 2007, that percentage had dipped slightly, to 0.85%, despite that every major label now has most of its catalog and all its front-line releases digitized.

iTunes director of worldwide product and music marketing Chris Bell says the company is “very happy” with the reaction to iTunes Latino. However, he adds, the biggest challenge is “to effectively reach the Latino consumer in the U.S. who has not traditionally consumed music digitally for various reasons.”

The iTunes Latino catalog is broad and deep, and labels are actively using iTunes to promote new and upcoming talent. It helps that, unlike radio, iTunes has proved to be receptive to new sounds and names that go beyond the tried and true.

Meanwhile, Latin labels are getting better and better at finding—and capitalizing on—mobile opportunities.

In Latin America, where access to broadband is much more limited and physical piracy rates are huge—often accounting for more than half of all music sales—mobile is a major focus, given that there are between 265 million and 300 million mobile subscribers in the region.

Many carriers have done major campaigns with big Latin acts like Ricky Martin and Maná, whose albums and tours have been jointly promoted via mobile. But labels are also constantly attempting to mine the marketplace in other ways.

“Mobile is currently the main source of download revenue in the region,” says Alfonso Perez-Soto, Warner Music International director of new media for Latin America, who tailors deals with various carriers and aggregators for separate countries. “Through our inventive partnerships with companies such as Movistar, Sprint, TIM and Televisa, we are leading the way in creating compelling wireless experiences for consumers.”

Warner’s deals include an agreement with EsMas Movil in Mexico where fans can customize their mobile environment with Warner Music content. The company also recently launched the “Hits & Girls” video tones with Sierralta Entertainment, combining videos of top Latin models with Warner Music tracks.

That the U.S. market is in a process of maturation is clear in the numbers.

According to Nielsen RingScan, for the week ending March 25, only seven of the top 200 mastertones sold in the United States were in Spanish, including Shakira’s “Hips Don’t Lie.” But the polyphonic list included 20 titles in Spanish, of which half were regional Mexican tracks, notably absent from the mastertone list.

This points to an issue of content, as many regional Mexican tracks are not available as mastertones, and to carriers’ lack of knowledge of the Latin music market.

“At the beginning, the Latin carriers didn’t understand anything except reggaetón,” one label executive says. “But we’ve proven that we can have very good activity with other genres. Now, we’re in a phase where we’re diversifying our sales.”

Recently, for example, Cingular featured regional Mexican group Intocable on its handset deck and online during an eight-week campaign that may have marked the first time a regional Mexican act received that kind of mobile placement.

According to EMI Televisa, Cingular used Intocable as a case study to prove there was a market for regional Mexican mastertones. The result was that Intocable had nine mastertones among EMI’s list of its top 45 when the promotion ended in January.

According to a Forrester study released in February and titled “Hispanics Connect to Mobile Data,” in 2006 Hispanics made up 11% of U.S. mobile phone users, and 15%—4.7 million adult Hispanics—of mobile data users. Among those, 42% download ringtones and 30% stream or download music, more than twice the number for non-Hispanics.

In fact, the study found that 52% of Hispanics who download music are Spanish-dominant.

The data led study authors to conclude the following in their recommendations: Because a majority of Hispanics who download music are Spanish-dominant, “carriers or their partners should consider promotions tied to Spanish-language music.”

Additional reporting by Ayala Ben-Yehuda in Los Angeles.

DIALED IN

The bulk of mobile music sales come from the carriers. Here’s a quick breakdown.

SPRINT NEXTEL

CLICKS TO LATIN CONTENT: 2
SPANISH-LANGUAGE STORE: No
LATIN ARTIST PARTNERSHIPS/SPONSORSHIPS:

- Sponsors Maná’s U.S. tour
- Partnership with “Bad Boy Latino.” Debuted Christian Daniel’s single “Donde Quedaran,” the video and album on Sprint phones.
- Second Life venue exclusively streaming performances from the Sprint-sponsored Telemundo reality TV series “Concierto Clandestino.”

FEATURED ARTISTS:

- Maná
- Christian Daniel

VERIZON

CLICKS TO LATIN CONTENT: 2. Has both Latin and reggaetón genres.
SPANISH-LANGUAGE STORE: Sort of. Has a Spanish-language section of its Web site, which lets users buy and download Latino-relevant content.

LATIN ARTIST PARTNERSHIPS/SPONSORSHIPS:

- Sponsored the 2005 Juntos en Concierto tour with Chayanne, Alejandro Fernandez and Marc Anthony.
- Exclusive sponsor of Univision’s “Estrellas del Futuro/Reggaetón” talent competition.
- Sponsored Shakira tour and debuted “Hips Don’t Lie” video on VCast.

FEATURED ARTISTS:

- Joan Sebastian
- Calle 13
- Chayanne

CINGULAR

CLICKS TO LATIN CONTENT: 2. Ringtones only. Cingular has no full-song download service. Latin content dependent on partners Yahoo Music, Napster and eMusic.

SPANISH-LANGUAGE STORE: Yes
LATIN ARTIST PARTNERSHIPS: None

FEATURED ARTISTS:

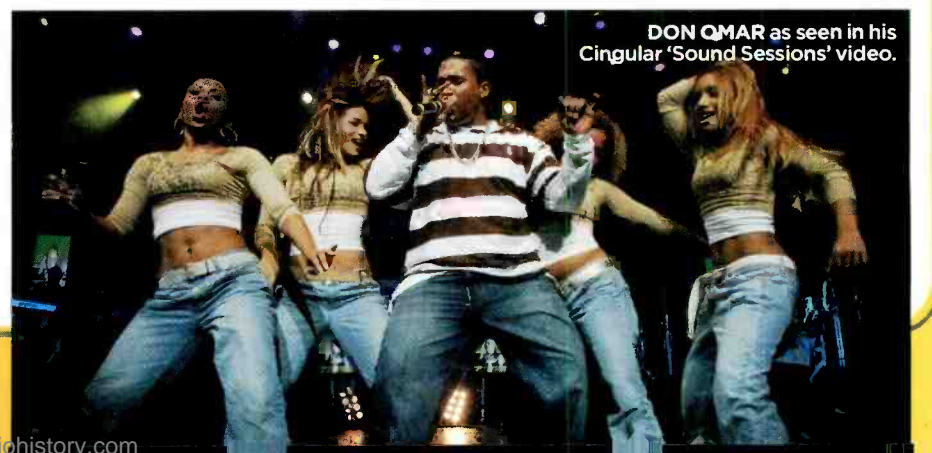
- Don Omar
- Juan Luis Guerra
- Daddy Yankee
- Intocable

T-MOBILE

CLICKS TO LATIN CONTENT: 2-4, depending on the content
SPANISH-LANGUAGE STORE: No
LATIN ARTIST SPONSORSHIPS: None

FEATURED ARTISTS:

- Don Omar
- Tony Haze
- Shaka Black
- Rodrigo y Gabriela



DON OMAR as seen in his Cingular ‘Sound Sessions’ video.

PROGRAM GUIDE

APRIL 23-26
2007

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LATIN MUSIC
CONFERENCE & AWARDS 2007

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Camila ♪ Chayanne ♪ Conjunto Primavera ♪ Daddy Yankee
El Gran Combo De Puerto Rico ♪ Frank Reyes
Gilberto Santa Rosa ♪ Gisselle ♪ Jaci Velásquez
Jeremias ♪ Joan Sebastian ♪ Juan Gabriel ♪ Limit-21
Los Bukis ♪ Mana ♪ Marc Anthony
Marco Antonio Solís ♪ Marlon ♪ Michael Stuart
Monchy & Alexandra ♪ Noelia ♪ Olga Tañón
Rakim & Ken-Y ♪ RBD ♪ Ricardo Arjona
Sin Bandera ♪ Tito "El Bambino" ♪ Toby Love
Victor Manuelle ♪ Wyclef Jean ♪ Xtreme ♪ Yuridia*

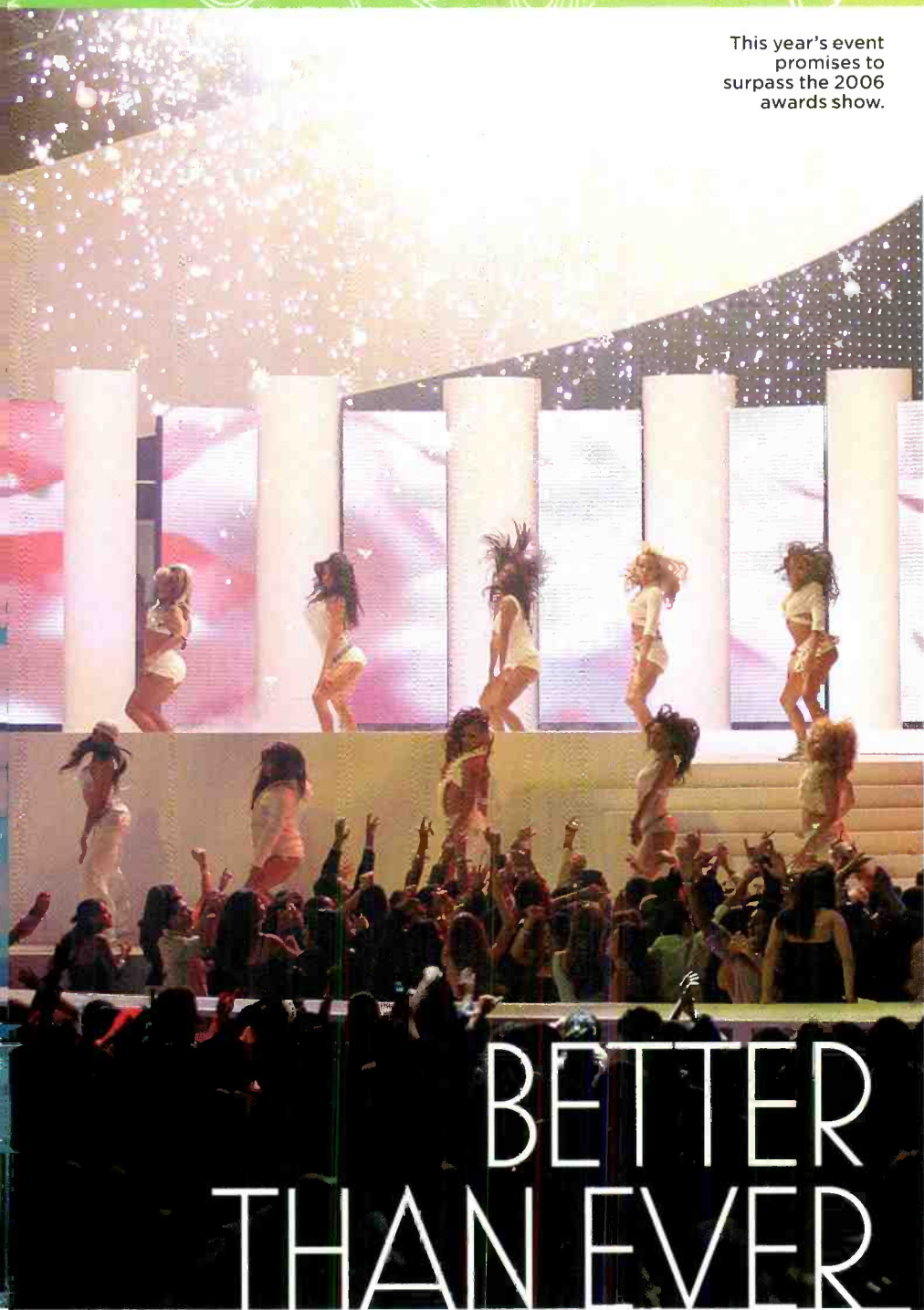
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This year's event promises to surpass the 2006 awards show.



BETTER THAN EVER

This Year's Latin Music Conference And Awards Look To The Future **BY LEILA COBO**

Welcome to the 2007 Billboard Latin Music Conference and Awards. Now in our 18th year as the world's leading and longest-running Latin music conference, we are proud to present our biggest, most event-packed conference ever, with three days of panels, showcases, exhibits and presentations that culminate in the annual Billboard Latin Music Awards.

The overriding theme of this year's event is the future of the business. Our panels will delve into cutting-edge business models and revenue streams and diverse avenues of marketing, distribution and promotion. Our panelists are visionaries committed to changing and making the business grow. After all, Latin music is the one genre that has registered growth in sales for the past three years in a row, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

Latin music is also the fastest-growing genre in many other arenas, including performance rights, digital sales, radio formats, advertising revenue and sponsorship dollars. Latins are avid users and consumers of mobile and digital content, and their relationship with music is intrinsic and vital.

Billboard believes in the Latin music industry's future and is committed to its development and excellence. The growing breadth and scope of our annual conference reflects that commitment. Read on for an overview of this year's programming and . . . bienvenidos!

THE FUTURE OF LATIN MUSIC

This Year's Conference Focuses On Taking The Exploding Genre To The Next Level

When queried late last year on the prospects of the Latin music industry, every single label head mentioned developments in new arenas—most specifically mobile and digital—as their top growth priority for 2007 and beyond.

As reported in our story this week on Latin digital music (see page 27), those areas are finally yielding tangible results for Latin music, with digital sales of Latin music growing at an accelerated pace, even in Latin America.

But it goes beyond that. While music sales in general are down, interest in Latin music is at an all-time high. The genre's CD sales are up for the third straight year, according to Nielsen SoundScan, as are performance royalties; placement of Latin music in films and TV is more prominent than ever; and bilingual media outlets like MTV Tr3s and mun2, along with Latin-dedicated sites, are growing in importance and influence.

In the purely musical realm, never has new Latin music gained as much prominence, exposure and sales, the happy result of receptive media and new outlets like satellite radio.

This year's Billboard Latin Music Conference is a salute to the new and to the future, with panels concentrating on new media, new business models, new opportunities and new ways of promoting, marketing and exposing Latin music. Mobile, digital, the Internet, media, touring and radio will be topics of discussion—and of course, so will music, via a series of artist-only panels, including our exclusive Q&A with Juanes.

Likewise, our partnerships and sponsors reflect a solid belief in Latin music, the Latin marketplace and innovation.

For the eighth consecutive year, the title sponsor of the conference and awards is Heineken, with Target and Dodge joining as in-association sponsors for the first time.

Heineken's presence will be felt not only during the conference, but also in a series of events and showcases set up around what is now known as Billboard Latin Music Week.

They include Billboard's very own "We Hear the Future" showcase for new acts. The mini-competition, inaugurated at the 2006 Billboard Latin Music Conference, gives new

acts a chance to compete for prizes and exposure in front of a panel of industry judges.

Target's involvement includes the promotion of this year's Billboard Latin Music Awards compilation CD, carried exclusively in Target stores, while Dodge has produced vignettes featuring Latin music finalists that will run on various TV outlets.

Other conference sponsors include Verizon, presenter of this year's Billboard Bash; MTV Tr3s, presenting the opening-night showcase for new acts and a return of our

IN THE PURELY MUSICAL REALM, NEVER HAS NEW LATIN MUSIC GAINED AS MUCH PROMINENCE.

über-popular, all-artist Rap, Rhythm & Reggaeton panel; mun2, presenting our enormously successful teen panel; ASCAP, presenting its traditional acoustic showcase as well as a discussion on placement of Latin music in film and TV; and BMI, with a new songwriter's panel featuring top writers at their instruments.

Billboard is proud to welcome iTunes Latino to Billboard Latin Music Week. The top online retailer will give away nearly 40,000 iTunes cards with 10 free downloads by top and developing Latin acts.

Also making a splash during Latin Music Week is Daddy Yankee, who will host his syndicated ABC radio show "On Fuego" as a prelude to the conference during a special broadcast presented by Billboard Latino.

Finally, conference registrants will get a chance to attend the Voz Latina conference, hosted by Adweek's Marketing y Medios, Adweek, Brandweek and Mediaweek.

For a schedule of events, visit billboard-events.com.

—Leila Cobo

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04-27	Laredo, TX	Laredo Entertainment Center	06-02	San Antonio, TX	AT&T Center
04-29	El Paso, TX	El Paso Coliseum	06-03	Dallas, TX	Nokia Theatre
05-03	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden Theatre	06-07	Santa Ynez, CA	Chumash Casino
05-04	New York, NY	Madison Square Garden Theatre	06-09	Phoenix, AZ	Dodge Theatre
05-05	Unicasville, CT	Mohegan Sun Arena	06-10	Las Vegas, NV	Aladdin Theatre
05-06	Washington, D.C.	Patriot Center	06-14	Anaheim, CA	Honda Center
05-18	Los Angeles, CA	Gibson Amphitheatre	06-15	Sacramento, CA	Arco Arena
05-19	Los Angeles, CA	Gibson Amphitheatre	06-16	Fresno, CA	SaveMart Center
05-20	Los Angeles, CA	Gibson Amphitheatre	06-20	Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Seminole Hard Rock
05-25	Indio, CA	Fantasy Springs	06-22	Chicago, IL	UIC Pavillion



CARDENAS MARKETING AND EVENTS

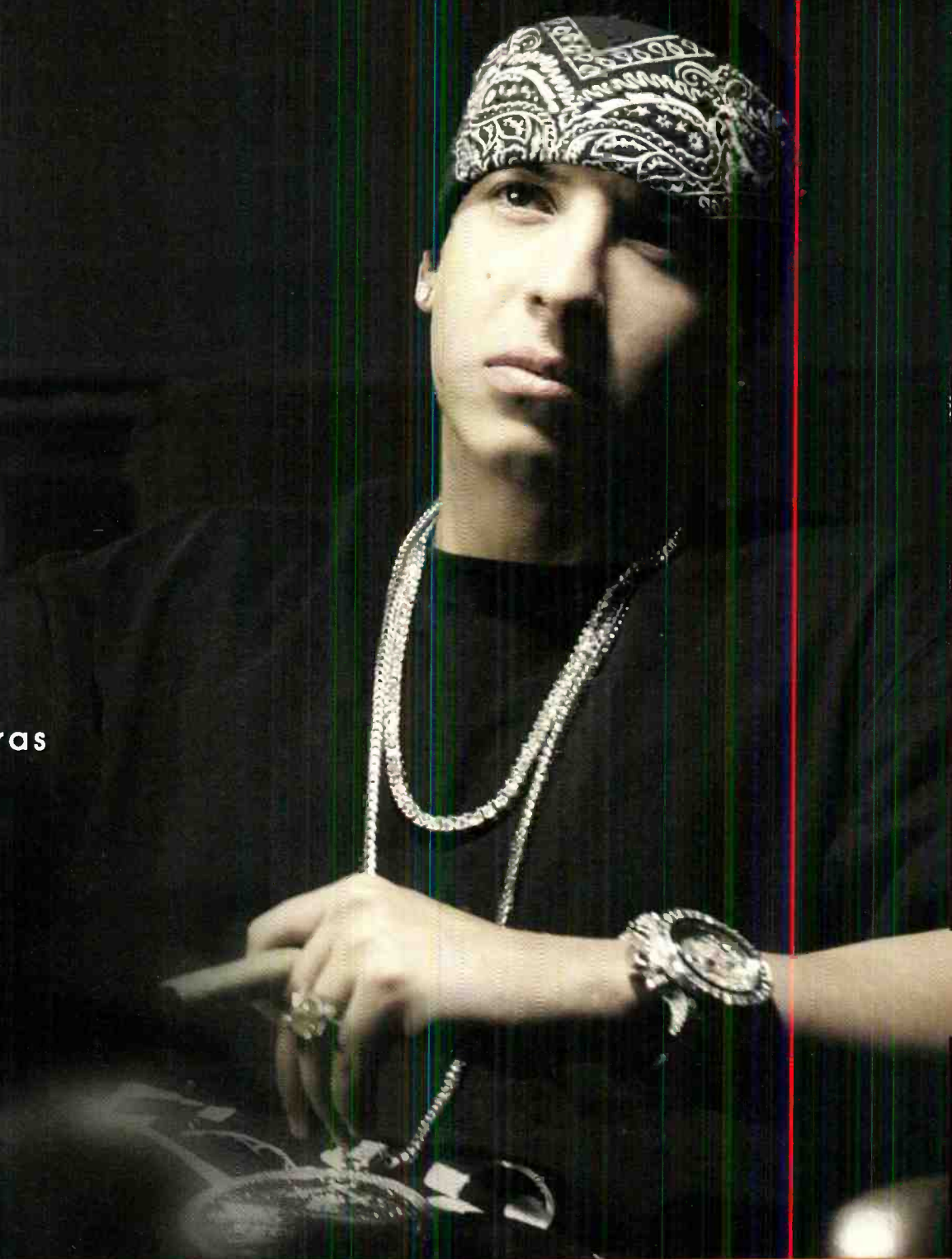
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09-29 Las Vegas, NV
09-30 Fresno, CA
10-05 San Francisco, CA
10-06 Los Angeles, CA
10-07 Los Angeles, CA
10-13 Dallas, TX
10-14 Houston, TX
10-20 Tijuana, Mexico
10-25 Guadalajara, Mexico
10-26 Monterrey, Mexico
10-27 Mexico City, Mexico
10-31 Guatemala
11-02 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
11-04 San Pedro Sula, Honduras
11-07 El Salvador
11-09 Nicaragua
11-11 Costa Rica
11-16 Caracas, Venezuela
11-18 Maracaibo, Venezuela
11-20 Panama
11-22 Bogota, Colombia
11-23 Cali, Colombia
11-25 Quito, Ecuador
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LATIN MUSIC'S FINEST HOUR

Awards Ceremony Honors, Showcases Top Stars

The Billboard Latin Music Awards will pay homage to regional Mexican stars, a Spanish pop idol and a Latin-American singer/songwriter for his altruistic work.

The 18th annual edition of the awards, taking place April 26 at the Bank United Center Center in Miami, will feature special performances dedicated to: the late Valentín Elizalde; a regional Mexican star whose career was on the rise when he was slain; Pedro Infante, the Mexican icon who is being celebrated on the 50th anniversary of his death; and salsa veteran El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico.

Among the scheduled performers is Miguel Bosé, the Spanish singer/songwriter/producer/actor who is this year's Lifetime Achievement Award honoree.

In addition, Ricardo Montaner will be honored for helping disabled children through his foundation, La Ventana de los Cielos.

Other confirmed performers include Latin pop star Paulina Rubio; Don Omar; Juan Luis Guerra; El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico, celebrating its 30th year together; Lupillo Rivera; Victor Manuelle; Gilberto Santa Rosa; reggaetón stars Wisin & Yandel; regional Mexican star Joan Sebastian, winner of last

year's Billboard Hall of Fame Award; Spanish star David Bisbal; top Billboard finalists Rakim & Ken-Y; newcomer Mariano Barba; and a handful of duranguense acts, including Los Creadores del Pasito Duranguense, Los Horoscopos de Durango and Diana Reyes.

The awards will air live on the Telemundo network from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. EST, where they have become the highest-rated special on the network.

Finalists and winners of the Billboard Latin Music Awards are determined solely by their performance on the Billboard charts. Awards will be given out in 51 categories. —Leila Cobo

RUBIO: © LEONHARD FÖRGER/REUTERS; WISIN & YANDEL: © GARY HERSHORN/REUTERS; MANUELLE: BILLY TOMPKINS/RETNA; DIZE: COURTESY MACHETE MUSIC; STEWART: COURTESY UNIVERSAL MUSIC

PARTY TIME

Celebration Kicks Into High Gear At Annual Bash

It's a half decade for the Billboard Bash, as the salute to Billboard Latin Music Awards finalists and winners enters its fifth successful year.

Sponsored by Verizon, this year's Bash takes place April 25 at ultra trendy nightclub the Fifth in South Beach, as a prelude to the Billboard Latin Music Awards on April 26. The awards, which include honors for top performing labels and publishers of the year, are determined by the weekly Billboard charts.

As is the way of the Bash, only finalists perform in this pre-award celebration where every genre of Latin music will be represented. This year's performers include romantic banda singer Mariano Barba, who catapulted to the top of the charts with his hit single "Aliado del Tiempo"; new pop singer/songwriter Jeremias, whose witty "Uno Más Uno Igual a Tres" is up for Latin pop airplay song of the year, new artist; Latin Grammy winner Fonseca, up for various awards for his single "Te Mando Flores"; Chelo, whose single "Cha Cha" is up for two awards; and young salsero Michael Stewart, who gave a new twist to reggaetón hits on his album "Back to Da' Barrio." Also performing are Franco El Gorilla and Tony Dize, members of Los Vaqueros, the new reggaetón troupe featured on the compilation album of the same name. The set was released on WY Records, the new imprint created by reggaetón star duo Wisin & Yandel.

Hosted by Telemundo personality Adriana Cataño, the Bash will feature its well-known red-carpet entrance, attended by multiple finalists. Red carpet arrivals and the Bash itself will be part of Telemundo's traditional post-awards special, "Reventón Billboard VIP," slated to air from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. April 28.

This year's "Reventón" will extend from one to two hours for the first time and will also feature highlights from the conference and awards themselves, after-parties, showcases and other exclusive footage.

Also onboard is "Billboard Latino," the weekly music-driven show that airs on network Azteca América, which will broadcast the Bash nationwide.

The Bash was launched in 2003 to reflect the increasing number and influence of the Billboard Latin Music Awards. This year winners will be recognized in a record 52 categories, including newly created categories Latin rhythm airplay label of the year and Latin rhythm albums label of the year.

—Leila Cobo



TONY DIZE



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COLOMBIAN CONSCIENCE

An Exclusive Q&A Preview: **Juanes**
On Latin Rock, Social Activism

In 1998, a singer/songwriter named Juanes sold his motorcycle and his amp, and used the cash to travel from his native Colombia to Los Angeles, armed with his guitar and a little tape recorder.

■ Alone in an apartment, he wrote more than 40 songs and sent them to producer Gustavo Santaolalla. Two years later, Juanes launched his international career with “Fíjate Bien,” an album that won critical acclaim and six Latin Grammy Awards and redefined the scope of Latin rock. ■ Just two more albums, 12 Latin Grammys and many hits later, Juanes is recognized worldwide as one of the most successful and influential artists in Latin music. With millions of copies sold, countless awards in the United States, Latin America and Europe and a score of hits that have topped charts in more than 32 countries, Juanes has achieved international stardom without singing a single word in English or compromising his sound or heritage.

As he puts final touches on his fourth solo studio album, due this fall from Universal Music Latino, Juanes will sit down for Billboard’s marquee Q&A presentation, his first interview in the United States in more than a year. He will reveal details of his new album, “La Vida Es un Ratico” (Life Is a Moment).

Juanes is once again co-producer of the album, along with two-time Academy Award winner Santaolalla. As on his previous discs, he sings in Spanish. But instead of recording in the U.S., Juanes worked at his home studio in the mountains of Medellín, Colombia.

He says the album will be eminently Colombian in sound and its title and content were inspired by a conversation he had with his mother, in which she reminded him that life is brief.

Beyond his heady career of hits—Juanes’ sophomore album, “Un Día Normal,” was the top-selling Spanish-language album in the United States in 2002, and his most recent, “Mi Sangre,” has sold more than 4 million copies worldwide—Juanes brings to the conversation a singular spirit of altruism and a newfound role as a developer of talent.

Juanes, whose stage name is his childhood nickname, a blend of Juan and Esteban, grew up in Medellín, in a home steeped in traditional Colombian music.

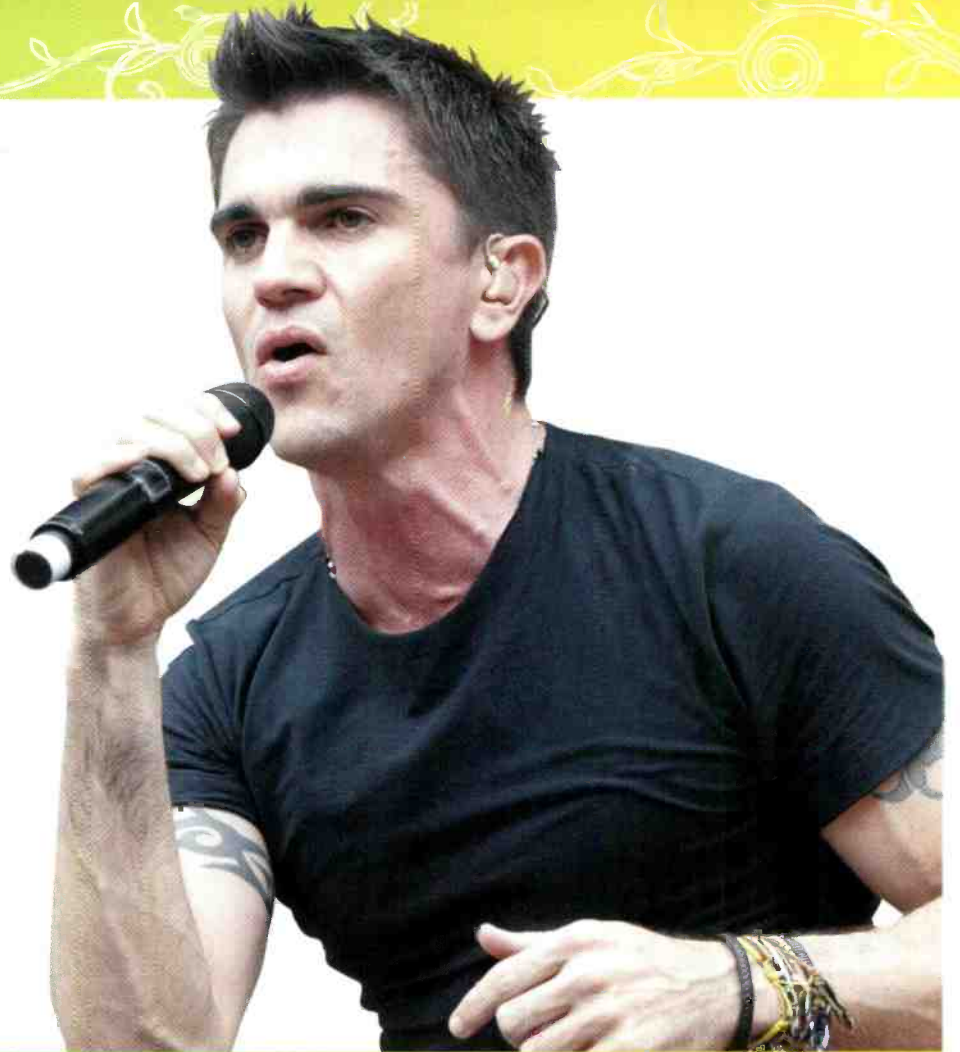
In a 2000 interview, Juanes told Billboard, “All my inspiration, everything I have, comes from Colombia.” That remains true. Juanes’ music is intensely regional and yet has struck a universal chord. His hit “La Camisa Negra,” which derives directly from traditional Colombian rhythms, became a No. 1 hit in its original, all-Spanish version in countries as diverse as Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Austria and Switzerland.

The former lead singer and guitarist of rock band Ekymosis, which he co-founded with college buddies, Juanes found his first success as a soloist with the single “Fíjate Bien.”

A cautionary tale about the dangers of land mines, “Fíjate Bien” not only defined Juanes as an artist unafraid to handle social issues, but also set the ground for the intense social work he is now in the midst of.

The preoccupation with land mines, one of Colombia’s most pressing issues—as it disproportionately affects children—led Juanes to create the foundation Colombia Sin Minas (Colombia Without Mines), which works to eradicate land mines. Beyond that, Juanes is an ambassador for YouthAids and works closely with the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees aside from assisting in many other causes.

—Leila Cobo



TOP: JUANES performs in July 2006 in Berlin. MIDDLE: Juanes greets fans in Ituango, Colombia. BOTTOM: J JAN LUIS GUERRA, left, and Juanes sing while actress SALMA HAYEK speaks at the Colombia sin Minas concert May 24, 2006, at the Gibson Amphitheater in Los Angeles.



TOP: © SCHERY/ FACE TO FACE/REINA LTD. MIDDLE: © FREDY AMARILES/REUTERS. BOTTOM: © LUCAS JACKSON/REUTERS



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2007

Joan Sebastian

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OF THE YEAR

🎵 REGIONAL MEXICAN
ALBUM OF THE YEAR
MALE SOLO ARTIST
MÁS ALLÁ DEL SOL

🎵 REGIONAL MEXICAN
AIRPLAY SONG OF THE
YEAR - MALE SOLO
MÁS ALLÁ DEL SOL

🎵 HOT LATIN SONG
OF THE YEAR
MÁS ALLÁ DEL SOL

🎵 REGIONAL MEXICAN
ALBUM OF THE YEAR
NEW ARTIST
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- Experiential Marketing: Brand Specific, Design + Implementation
- Major Sponsorship Activations
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- Brand Specific Music Strategy Development
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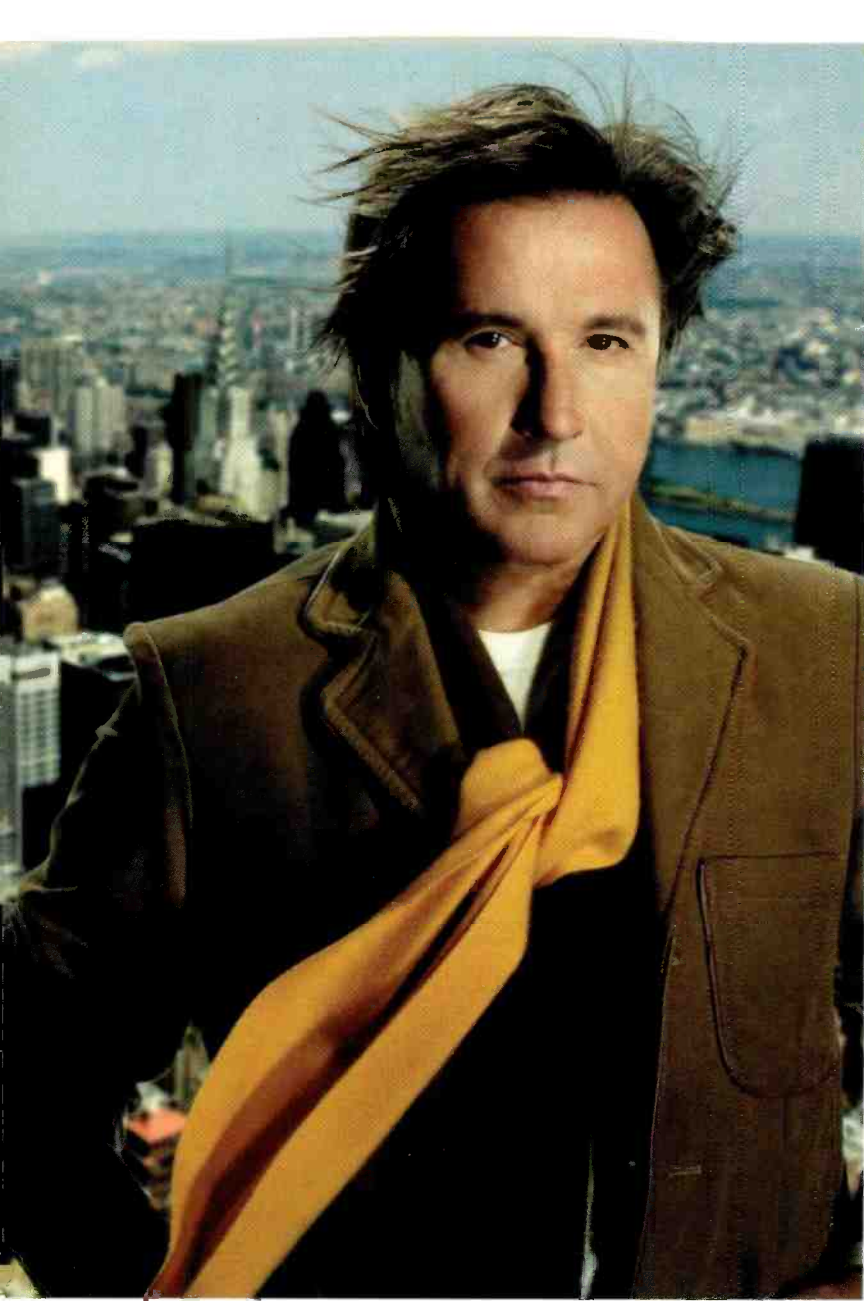
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SPIRIT OF HOPE

Revered Artist **Ricardo Montaner** Reaches Out To Children In Need

In 1992, Ricardo Montaner was an established star, a top-selling artist whose potent, emotive voice was known to radio listeners throughout the continent.

"I had begun to distance myself from everyday life and only good things were happening to me," Montaner recalls. One day, while stopped at a streetlight in Mexico City on his way to an interview, a little boy came up to his car and wiped his windshield clean.

"His face was made up like a clown's, and he was doing tricks, trying to make good tips," Montaner says. "It broke my heart. After that, I began to really notice all these other children in every country, and I decided to create an agency that would foster projects to benefit childhood."

Montaner's advocacy has been long and steady, spanning countless projects throughout the continent, coordinated through his own agency, Hijos del Sol (Children of the Sun), which operates out of Venezuela.

It culminated in the creation three years ago of La Ventana de los Cielos (Window to the Sky), a Miami-based foundation that works with children with Down syndrome, autism and cerebral palsy. The organization is funded almost entirely by Montaner and his wife Marlene and has become a family affair where everyone including Montaner's children (two of whom are also singers) are involved.

As a singer/songwriter, Montaner has had one of

Latin music's most prolific and successful recording and touring careers, with 17 studio albums to his name since his 1982 debut. His most recent album, "Las Mejores Canciones del Mundo," is in the top 20 of Billboard's Top Latin Albums chart and has hit No. 1 in Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and Argentina. And yet few fans know of Montaner's work for one of society's most segregated and forgotten groups.

Acknowledging Montaner's quiet yet tireless labor for the good of disadvantaged children, Billboard is proud to honor him with this year's Spirit of Hope Award.

Created in memory of the late Selena Quintanilla, the award is given by a Billboard editorial committee to an artist whose altruistic work and humanitarian contributions go far beyond artistic obligations.

The qualifications are particularly well-suited to the affable, easy-going Montaner, who, as a devout Christian, sees his foundation as a ministry that goes hand in hand with his music-making.

"God gives us missions in life," Montaner says. "He put me here to entertain, but overwhelmingly, to help others."

La Ventana (lavanadeloscielos.org) offers children musical therapy and equinotherapy, where mentally disabled children are treated through contact with horses. In addition, families also receive support therapy.

—Leila Cobo

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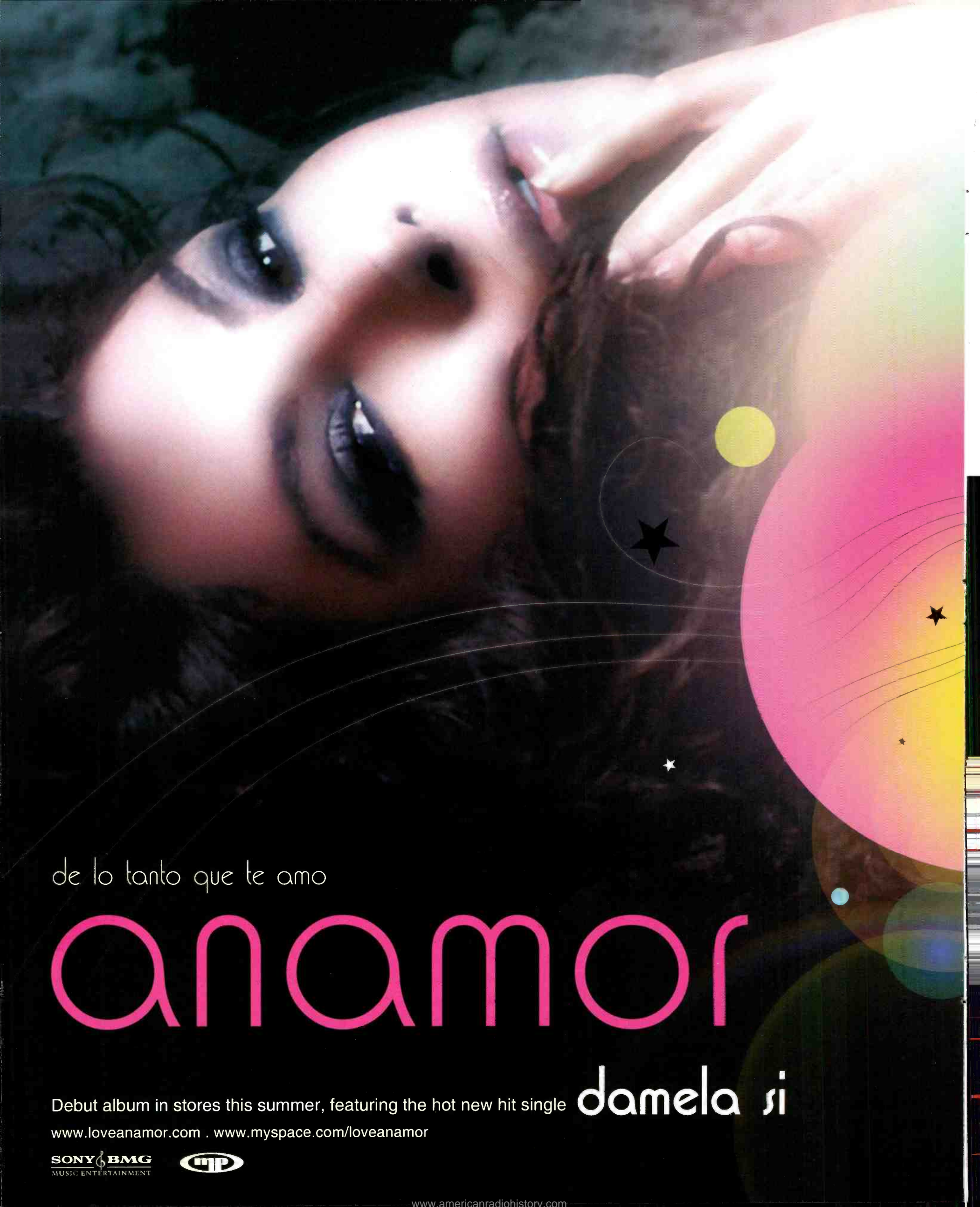
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quien es ANAMOR

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Su nuevo álbum en Español esta cautivando
el corazón de la América Latina.

ANAMOR's artistic career took off when she debuted as a supporting actress in the popular Sergio Leone classic film, "C'era una volta in América". Not long thereafter she was triumphant in "Castrocaro", the most important new talent contest in all of Italy, having been recognized and awarded for her most particular style and her undeniably unique voice.

ANAMOR later went on to participate twice in the well known "Festival de SanRemo" with much success, the results of which included wide circulation of her music and opportunities for video promotion through Italy's most popular TV music channels. Her first music video was produced and released in 1998 and featured the single "Vivo Un'altra Notte". In 1999 BMG releases her first album "L'Inferno o l'anima", featuring the hit single "Cosa Sono", which garnered frequent national air play on all major radio stations. For nearly each of the titles on the album a corresponding video was produced. The video for the single "Canto Gallo" was awarded "Best Video of the Year" in 2000 for both cinematography and creative direction. A total of seven videos in all were in rotation from 1999 through 2001.

In late 2002 ANAMOR performs in the well known festival "Disco per l'estate" a popular prime time Italian music program that is broadcast nationwide via RAI-Uno. Her participation in this event gave her the initiative to pursue her life long desire and passion, to write and perform music for Latin audiences in Spanish. Early in 2006 she is presented as the first Italian performer to participate in the famed "Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards" ceremony with much acclaim and success. Since then, she has kept quite busy on her new album and filming music videos. Two promotional videos have been completed, one for the single "Noche de Amor" filmed in Cuba, and the other for the single "Damela Si" filmed between Miami and Rome. Recently, she has performed in "Calle Ocho" at the Grand Telemundo stage and throughout Miami during the Winter Music Conference. ANAMOR is also scheduled to perform at the "Billboard Latin Music Conference & Awards" ceremony this April.

ANAMOR's forthcoming album, entirely in Spanish, is now nearing the final stages of production and is due in stores by the summer of 2007. ANAMOR's Spanish career is set to take off, we're delighted to be able to bring her unique voice and talent to the Hispanic markets in both the USA and Latin America.

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ANAMOR

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scrucos

AND THE FINALISTS ARE...

Contenders Include New
And Familiar Faces
BY AYALA BEN-YEHUDA

Seven could indeed be a lucky number for Rakim & Ken-Y. In their first year as contenders in the Billboard Latin Music Awards, the romantic reggaetón duo tops the list of finalists with nominations in seven categories, including artist of the year, two Hot Latin Songs of the year ("Down" and "Tengo Un Amor" with newcomer Toby Love) and reggaetón album of the year ("Masterpiece: Nuestra Obra Maestra" on Pina/Universal Latino). ■ Next up are romantic banda singer/songwriter Mariano Barba and tropical diva India, who are finalists in five categories each, and a mix of new faces and previous winners up for four awards each: Shakira, Maná, RBD, Joan Sebastian, Wisin & Yandel, pop-tropical troubadour Fonseca, multigenre pop star Anais and urban bachateros Aventura and Toby Love. ■ The awards ceremony will broadcast live on Telemundo on April 26 from Miami's Bank United Center. The selected finalists recapped below are determined by sales and radio airplay data used in Billboard's charts from the issue dated Feb. 11, 2006, through this year's Feb. 3 issue.



JOAN SEBASTIAN, left; RAKIM & KEN-Y, right

RAKIM & KEN-Y

Departing from the aggressive style that characterized earlier reggaetón, Rakim & Ken-Y strongly connected with young females and benefitted from comprehensive pop-caliber marketing. As a result, they scored three top 10 Hot Latin Songs singles: "Down," "Me Matas" and "Tengo Un Amor" with fellow fresh face Toby Love. "Down" spent 30 weeks on the Hot Latin Songs chart, was No. 1 for 17 weeks on the Latin rhythm airplay list and was one of the year's most popular Latin ringtones. Debut album "Masterpiece: Nuestra Obra Maestra" (Pina/Universal Latino) is up for reggaetón album of the year against Don Omar, Luny Tunes & Tainy and Calle 13.

MARIANO BARBA

Banda newcomer Mariano Barba's "Aliado del Tiempo" was a radio fixture this year, spending 49 weeks on the Hot Latin Songs chart and reaching No. 1 on the regional Mexican airplay chart. The tune propelled Barba's album of the same name on the Three Sound label to a finalist slot in both the regional Mexican album and songwriter of the year categories.

INDIA

A finalist in just one category last year, the salsa star makes her mark this year with five mentions in three categories. India's "Pura Salsa" (Universal Latino) and "Soy Diferente" (La Calle/Univision) are both vying for female tropical album of the year, while singles "Lagrimas" and "Solamente Una Noche" are both up for the female tropical airplay honor. A dance remix of the latter track was also a club hit.

RBD

Last year's pop album of the year winner is back with two blockbuster releases on EMI Televisa: "Celestial," which spent nine weeks at No. 1 on the Top Latin Albums chart, and "Live in Hollywood," which reached No. 6. The Mexican supergroup is also up for Latin tour of the year.

SHAKIRA

The Colombian superstar who made a big impact at last year's awards with her Alejandro Sanz collaboration "La Tortura" is back this year as a finalist with another duet. "Hips Don't Lie" with Wyclef Jean dominated the Hot Latin Songs chart for eight weeks. Its English version boosted Shakira's reissued "Oral Fixation, Vol. 2" (Epic) album and made her a bona fide phenomenon in Europe as one of the official songs of the FIFA World Cup.

MANÁ

"Amar es Combatir," the first studio album in four years by Mexican rock favorite Maná, was warmly received by audiences, landing the Warner group at No. 1 on the Top Latin Albums chart for four weeks and scoring a finalist slot for Latin rock/alternative album of the year. Single "Labios Compartidos" stayed atop the Latin pop chart for 11 weeks.

AVENTURA

Romantic urban bachata group Aventura scored four top 10 hits: "Ella y Yo," "Un Beso," "Los Infieles" and "Noche de Sexo" with Wisin & Yandel. The group made a strong impact at tropical radio, with "Los Infieles" topping that chart for seven weeks. No. 1 knockout "K.O.B.:

AVENTURA



Live" (Premium Latin/Sony BMG Norte) is a finalist for group tropical album of the year. Leader Anthony "Romeo" Santos is up for songwriter of the year, having penned three Aventura hits and "No, No, No" for Thalía.

JOAN SEBASTIAN

Last year's Billboard Hall of Fame inductee is going strong again this year with Grammy Award-winning banda album "Mas Alla del Sol," which is up for male solo regional Mexican album of the year. Its title track spent 35 weeks on the Hot Latin Songs chart during the eligibility period, making it Sebastian's longest-running Hot Latin single ever. The legend is also up for songwriter of the year, both for his own material and for hits by Jenni Rivera and Valentín Elizalde.

FONSECA

This year's Colombian breakout star scored at pop and tropical airplay with "Te Mando Flores." EMI Televisa album "Corazon" is a finalist for best tropical album by a new artist.

TOBY LOVE

Crunkchata pioneer Toby Love struck chords in several genres, with his "Tengo Un Amor" featuring Rakim & Ken-Y, a finalist in the Hot Latin Songs and tropical airplay categories. Love's self-titled album on Sony BMG Norte is up for Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year.

WISIN & YANDEL

The reggaetón standard-bearers charted 12 Hot Latin singles, including "Noche de Sexo" with Aventura, and were featured on cuts from

SEBASTIAN: COURTESY BALBOA RECORDS; RAKIM & KEN-Y: COURTESY UNIVERSAL MUSIC; AVENTURA: ALEX GOMEZ/FESO ENTERTAINMENT



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Pepe Aguilar



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07-08 Chicago, IL Rosemont Theatre



Ricky Martin

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05-19 Miami, FL American Airlines Arena *



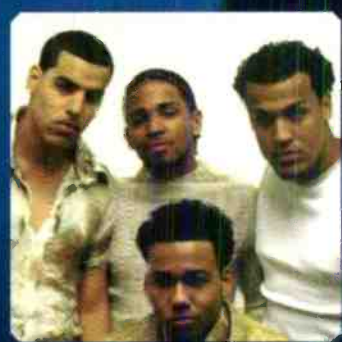
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from >>PLM18

Daddy Yankee, Don Omar and Bone Thugs-N-Harmony. The Mas Flow/Machete duo's "Pam Pam" topped the Latin rhythm airplay chart for eight weeks and "Rakata" sprung out of many a mobile phone.

ANAIS

Versatile newcomer Anais scored at radio with pop and tropical versions of "Lo Que Son las Cosas," a single from her Univision album "Asi Soy Yo," which is a finalist for Latin pop album of the year, new artist.

DON OMAR

The "King of Kings" on VI/Machete earned his crown with the No. 1 Latin album for 11 weeks and No. 1 tropical airplay song "Los Hombres Tienen la Culpa" with Gilberto Santa Rosa. Previous hits compilation "Da Hitman" also boosted Don Omar's position.

RICKY MARTIN

The pop star returned to Spanish fare for the first time since 2003, this time with a stripped-down "MTV Unplugged" album on Sony BMG Norte. The release marked Martin's fourth consecutive No. 1 debut on the Top Latin Pop Albums chart. Single "Tu Recuerdo," a duet with Spain's La Mari, went to No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs and Latin Pop Airplay, where it stayed for 13 weeks.

DADDY YANKEE

The charts still felt the effects of the reggaeton superstar's "Barrio Fino" and "Barrio Fino en Directo," which spent 14 weeks overall atop the Latin albums chart. The El Cartel/Interscope artist is a finalist for Hot Latin Songs artist of the year, with four top 10 hits during the eligibility period: "Rompe," "Mayor Que Yo," "Noche de Entierro" and "Machucando," which is also a finalist for reggaeton song of the year.

LUIS MIGUEL

The crooner's "Navidades" (Warner Music Latina) was the first all-Spanish album to appear on Billboard's holiday chart since 1966. Miguel is up for male Latin pop album and Latin tour of the year.

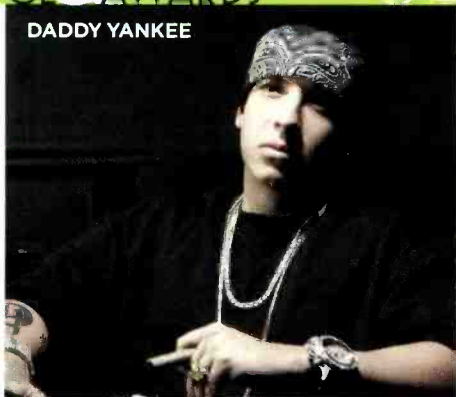
MARCO ANTONIO SOLÍS

The legendary singer/songwriter's highly anticipated "Trazos de Mi Alma 2" (Fonovisa) debuted at No. 1 on the Top Latin Pop Albums chart and stayed there for four weeks. Solís

LOS HOROSCOPOS DE DURANGO



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DADDY YANKEE

is also a finalist for songwriter of the year, having penned his own hit "Antes de Que Te Vayas" as well as Patrulla 81's "Como Me Haces Falta," Grupo Montez de Durango's "Que Vuelva" and Control's "Viva el Amor."

ANA GABRIEL

The songstress is a finalist for female Latin pop album of the year for "Dos Amores un Amante" (EMI Televisa) and female regional Mexican album of the year for "La Reina Canta a Mexico" (Sony BMG Norte).

PAULINA RUBIO

The pop diva's album "Ananda" (Universal Latino) and first single "Ni Una Sola Palabra" hit No. 1 on the Latin pop album and singles charts, respectively. The two scored finalist spots in the female pop album and pop airplay categories.

YURIDIA

After her rise to fame on reality TV talent show "La Academia," Yuridia's debut Sony BMG Norte release "La Voz de un Angel" sold more than 700,000 copies in Mexico and reached No. 8 on Billboard's Latin pop album chart. "La Voz de un Angel" is a finalist for Latin pop album of the year in the female and new artist categories.

VOZ A VOZ

The trio's "En Presencia del Futuro" (Urban Box Office) went to No. 7 on the Latin pop album chart and is a finalist for pop group album and pop new artist album of the year.

VICTOR MANUELLE

Manuelle's "Decision Unanime" (Sony BMG Norte) dominated the tropical album chart for seven weeks. No. 1 sin-



PAULINA RUBIO

gle "Nuestro Amor Se Ha Vuelto Ayer" is up for male tropical airplay song of the year.

GILBERTO SANTA ROSA

"Directo al Corazon" (Sony BMG Norte) hit No. 1 on the tropical album chart. Santa Rosa's duet with Don Omar, "Los Hombres Tienen la Culpa," is a finalist for group tropical airplay song of the year.

OLGA TAÑON

Pop-tropical favorite Tañon's "Soy Como Tu" (Univision) spent three weeks atop the tropical albums chart. Single "Desilusioname" is a finalist for female tropical airplay song of the year.

MARLON

Newcomer Marlon hit No. 3 on the tropical airplay chart with "Usted Abuso." Album "Mi Sueno" (La Calle/Univision) is a finalist for tropical album of the year, new artist.

VICENTE FERNANDEZ

The ranchera icon's "La Tragedia del Vaquero" (Sony BMG Norte) was Fernandez's first studio album in three years. It went to No. 1 on the regional Mexican albums chart. Fernandez is also a finalist for Latin tour of the year.

INTOCABLE

The genre-bending band

from Texas is a finalist in the male group regional Mexican album of the year category for its chart-topping "Crossroads: Cruce de Caminos" (EMI Televisa). The group also had a hit ringtone, "Y Todo Para Que."

GRUPO MONTEZ DE DURANGO

No. 1 album "Borrón Y Cuenta Nueva" is a finalist for male group regional Mexican album of the year. Single "Que Vuelva" also hit the top spot on the regional Mexican airplay chart.

CONJUNTO PRIMAVERA

The romantic norteño group soared with Fonovisa album "Algo de Mi," the top regional Mexican album for five weeks. The title track spent 10 weeks at No. 1 on the regional Mexican airplay chart.

LOS HOROSCOPOS DE DURANGO

The female-led duranguense group is up for regional Mexican album of the year with "Desatados." Single "Mi Amor por Ti" hit No. 2 on the regional Mexican airplay chart.

BANDA PEQUEÑOS MUSICAL

The techno-banda group scored a top 10 hit on the regional Mexican albums chart with "La Produccion Maestra 2006" (Fonovisa). Single "Reencuentro" is a finalist in the genre's airplay song of the year category.

MARC ANTHONY

The salsero's "Que Precio Tiene el Cielo" was his biggest No. 1 hit, spending 13 weeks atop the tropical airplay chart. His "Sigo Siendo Yo" collection on Sony BMG Norte went to No. 2 on the Top Latin Albums chart and is up for Latin greatest hits album of the year.

ALFREDO RAMIREZ CORRAL

The leader of Los Creadores del Pasito Duranguense is a finalist as a male soloist and as a new artist for his No. 2 regional Mexican airplay hit "Que Lastima."

continued on >>PLM24



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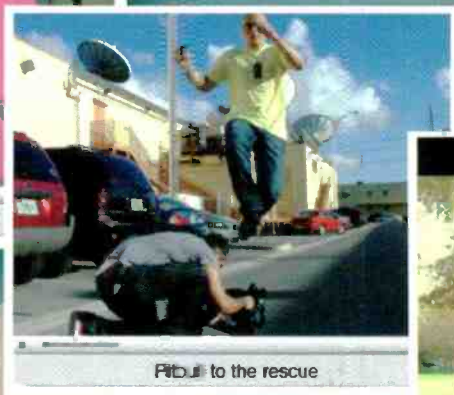
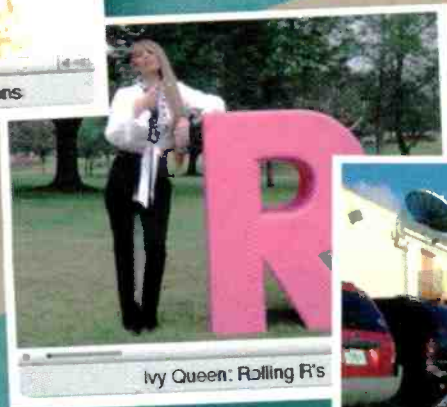
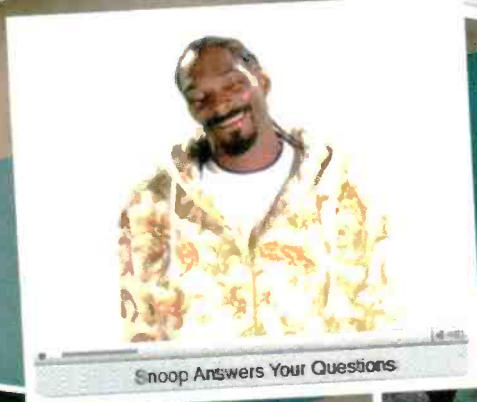
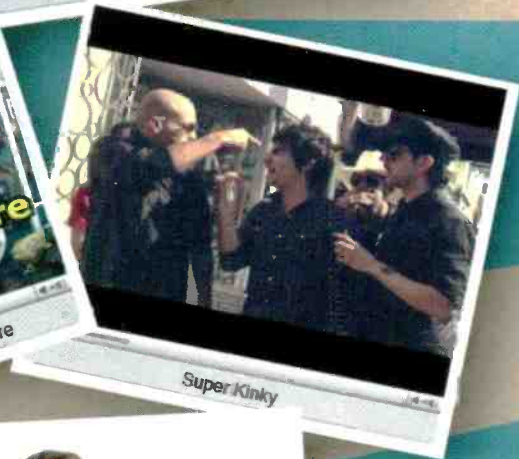


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LUNY TUNES

JENNI RIVERA

Two top 10 hits, "Besos y Copas" and "De Contrabando," make Rivera a double finalist for regional Mexican airplay song of the year, female.

LUNY TUNES

The prolific reggaeton producers scored 12 Hot Latin Songs hits during the chart year, including Daddy Yankee's "Machucando" and Wisin & Yandel's "Pam Pam." Luny Tunes and Tainy are finalists for reggaeton album of the year with the Mas Flow/Machete release "Mas Flow: Los Benjamins," which spent six weeks at No. 1 on the Latin rhythm albums chart.



DIANA REYES

AKWID

The Gomez brothers' "E.S.L." on *Headliners/Univision* and "Still Kickin' It" with compatriot Jae-P are finalists in the Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year category.

JAE-P

The rapper's "Pa' Mi Raza" and collaboration with Akwid "Still Kickin' It" on *Univision* land two finalist spots for Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year.

RICARDO ARJONA

The veteran singer/songwriter yielded hit "A Ti," a finalist in the male pop airplay category.

JULIETA VENEGAS

Grammy Award-winning album "Limon y Sal" (Sony BMG Norte) is a finalist in the female Latin pop album of the year category.

DIANA REYES

Single "Como Una Mariposa" nets the Musimex/Universal Latino artist a finalist spot for regional Mexican airplay song of the year, female.

PEPE AGUILAR

Aguilar's "Enamorado" (EMI Televisa) is up for regional Mexican album of the year by a male solo artist.

VALENTÍN ELIZALDE

"Vencedor" (Universal Latino) is a finalist for regional Mexican male solo album of the year and continues to be a hit for the late Elizalde.

LOS TIGRES DEL NORTE

Grammy Award-winning set "Historias Que Contar" (Fonovisa) is up for regional Mexican album of the year by a male duo or group.

JUANES

"Lo Que Me Gusta a Mi" by the 2007 Billboard Latin Conference keynote Q&A artist is up for Latin pop airplay song of the year by a male soloist.

JEREMIAS

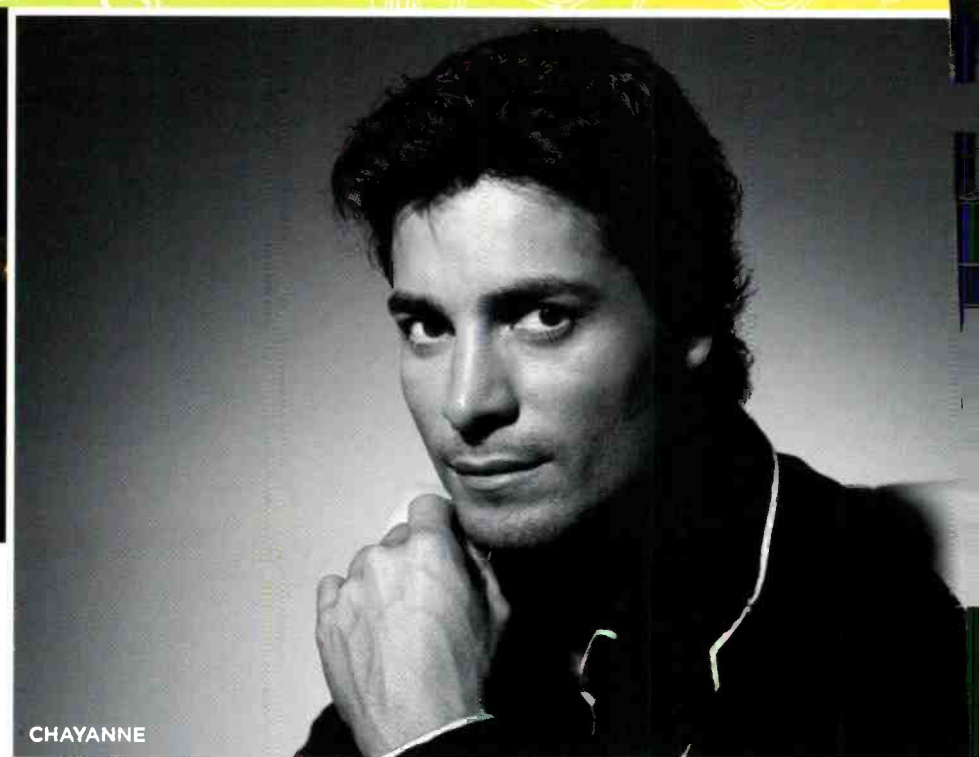
"Uno y Uno es Igual a Tres" by the Venezuelan breakout artist on Universal Latino was a top 10 hit on Latin pop airplay.

MONCHY & ALEXANDRA

The duo is up for tropical airplay song of the year by a duo or group for "No es Una Novela."

XTREME

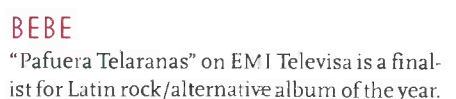
"Haciendo Historia" by rising urban act Xtreme is a finalist for tropical album of the year.



CHAYANNE



JULIETA VENEGAS



BEBE

"Pafuera Telaranas" on EMI Televisa is a finalist for Latin rock/alternative album of the year.

EL CHAPO DE SINALOA

"Para Que Regreses" is up for regional Mexican song of the year by a male solo artist.

ALEGRES DE LA SIERRA

"De Rodillas Te Pido" was No. 1 for 10 weeks on the regional Mexican airplay chart.

MICHAEL STUART

Machete release "Back to Da' Barrio" is a finalist for male tropical album of the year.

CALLE 13

The debut by this reggaeton maverick is a finalist for album of the year in the genre.

ROCIO DURCAL

"Amor Eterno: Los Exitos" by the late Spanish chanteuse, who died from cancer last year, is up for Latin greatest hits album of the year.

CHAYANNE

As this star embarks on his biggest U.S. tour ever, his "No Se por Que" is a contender for



JENNI RIVERA

male Latin pop airplay song of the year.

BELANOVA

Electro-pop set "Dulce Beat" (Universal Latino) is a finalist for top Latin rock/alternative album.

ANDY MONTAÑEZ

His "Salsa Con Reggaeton" on La Calle/Univision is up for male tropical album of year.

GISSELLE

"Libre" (Universal Latino) combined ballads and uptempo songs to become a finalist for female tropical album of the year.

CHELO

"Cha Cha (Dance Remixes)" earned a finalist spot in the Latin dance club play category for the Sony BMG Norte up-and-comer.

SERGIO MENDES

"Mas Que Nada (Dance Remixes)" featuring the Black Eyed Peas introduced a new generation of dance club listeners to the Brazilian legend.



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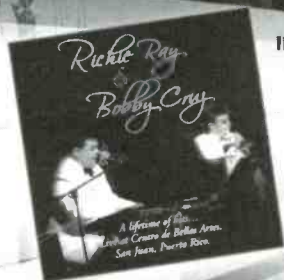


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LAUNCH PAD

Conference Showcases Are The Place
For Rising Artists To Shine

The Billboard Latin Music Conference showcases are the place where rising stars make their mark in the industry. Last year's performers include current Billboard Latin Awards finalists Diana Reyes, Victor Manuelle, Camila and Chelo. This year's lineup is a platform for newcomers to strut their stuff and for familiar names to launch new chapters in their careers. What follows are introductions to some of the artists scheduled to perform.

JEREMIAS

The Venezuelan singer/songwriter has penned hits for the likes of Luis Fonsi, but carved his own niche of pop, rock and folk on last year's "Ese Que Va por Ahi" on Universal Latino. Jeremias' song "Uno y Uno Es Igual a Tres" is a finalist in the pop airplay category.

COTI SOROKIN

Hailing from Argentina, this singer/songwriter/producer has collaborated with artists from Paulina Rubio to Julieta Venegas. Coti released his fourth album, "Gatos y Palomas," April 3 on Universal Latino.

JORGE EDUARDO MURGUIA & MAURICIO L. ARRIAGA

This producing/songwriting team has had a fruitful collaboration since attending music school together. The duo have worked on hits for Natalia Lafourcade, RBD, Intocable and Noelia, to name a few. Murguia and Arriaga have also had their songs featured in successful "telenovelas" (soap operas).

NACHO

Born Juan Ignacio Londono in Medellin, Colombia, Nacho is a singer/songwriter/guitarist who sings meditative acoustic rock in English and Spanish. A composer and arranger of his own material, Nacho will perform April 25 at Billboard's ASCAP-sponsored showcase.

MARIANO BARBA

A five-time finalist this year, Barba brings his brand of intensely romantic banda to the Billboard Bash. On the heels of a burgeoning career in Mexico, the singer's "Aliado del Tiempo" on Three Sound is his most successful release in the United States to date.

FRANCO 'EL GORILLA'

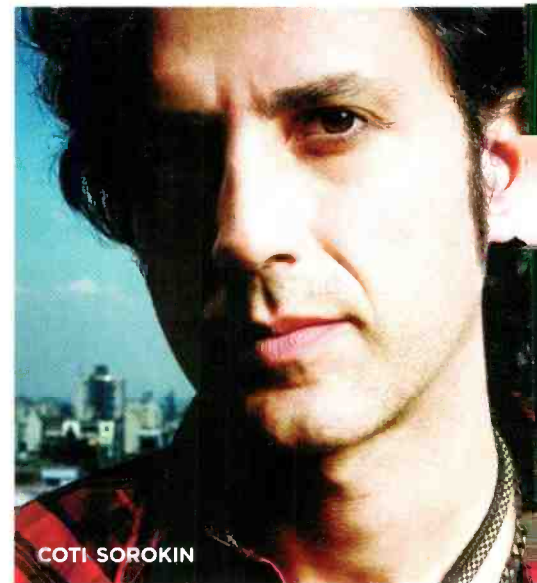
One-time chef Luis Francisco Cortés Torres realized his longtime reggaeton dream when he was signed to Wisin & Yandel's WY Records in 2005. Since then, he has appeared on several albums, including the duo's "Pa'l Mundo" and most recently the "Los Vaqueros" compilation, on which he performs on six tracks.

FEMY

Spain's Femy is a pop/R&B artist working on her first album, "Nuevo Imperio," due to feature guest appearances by Bubba Sparxxx and Loon. She will perform during the conference's "We Hear the Future" showcase.

JOHNNY SIGAL

After a formal music education and stints in Venezuelan bands Frenesi and Tartara, the Caracas native came to Miami to work on a solo proj-



COTI SOROKIN

ect with producer Marcello Azevedo. In May, he will play the title role in a Venezuelan production of the musical "Jesus Christ Superstar."

MICHAEL STUART

Urban salsaer Stuart is a finalist in the male tropical album of the year category for his 2006 Machete release "Back to Da' Barrio." Stuart co-produced the album on which he interprets reggaeton hits in the styles of salsa, bomba and guaganco.

GUSTAVE LAUREANO

The former member of Puerto Rico's La Secta Allstar recently released his solo debut album on Universal Latino, "Kingcallero del Amor." A singer/songwriter/co-producer (with Marteen), Laureano fuses pop, rock, electronic and soul. He also has collaborated with rappers Gocho, Santana and Eddie D.

TOBY LOVE

Love's self-titled album on Sony BMG Norte is up for Latin rap/hip-hop album of the year. The Bronx-born urban bachatero got his start as a backup singer for Aventura before striking out on his own, scoring airplay hit "Tengo un Amor" with Rakim & Ken-Y. The track is a finalist in the Hot Latin Songs and tropical airplay categories.

MOTEL

Counting Coldplay, Blur, Caifanes and Jeff Buckley as influences, this Mexico City quartet leads a rock resurgence with its self-titled debut on Warner. The set, which was produced by Aureo Baqueiro and Jay de la Cueva, went gold in Mexico. The group got its start in 2002 and its members' experiences include music education at various U.S. colleges and stints in performer/producer Benny Ibarra's band.

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XTREME

XTREME

The bilingual romantic bachata duo's Univision album, "Haciendo Historia," is a finalist for tropical group album of the year, propelled by radio hit "Shorty Shorty." The group recently completed a tour of New York City schools.

BÁRBARA

Bárbara Paz Muñoz Urzúa went from singing Frank Sinatra songs at age 12 to winning music festivals and singing on TV in her hometown of Santiago, Chile. The performer/composer collaborates with Mario Domm and Leonel Garcia from Sin Bandera on her forthcoming album on Sony BMG.

ARTHUR HANLON

The Latin pop pianist who scored a tropical airplay smash with "La Gorda Linda" is back with his new album on EMI Televisa, "Mecanomania." Hanlon reinterprets 10 tracks from Spain's legendary group Mecano and contributes an orchestral tune of his own. He will reveal his creative process at BMI's "How I Wrote That Song" panel.

TONY DIZE

Tony Feliciano Rivera, aka Tony Dize, is working on his first solo project on WY Records, "La Melodia de la Calle." Dize has appeared on Wisin & Yandel's "Pa'l Mundo" and Luny Tunes' "Mas Flow 2.5."

JOSSIE CORDOBA

The Panamanian singer/songwriter fuses cumbia, salsa and reggaetón on "Nada Normal," her self-produced album on her own Song Catcher Productions label. Choruses on Cordoba's album come courtesy of samples of Juan Luis Guerra's song "Agrupacion 440."

QUEENIE

Tijuana, Mexico-born Raul Ruiz (aka Queenie) is a bilingual rapper who bases the rough tales of his hometown on his own experiences. Queenie has hosted LATV's "Cruzin' TV" and has recorded with the Game and Baby Bash. Queenie has gained a following through his mixtapes, the latest of which, "King of

MARGER

the Southside Volume 2," was released in November.

BLACK:GUAYABA

The Puerto Rican rock group's debut "Lo Demás es Plástico" on Ole Music garnered Grammy Award and Latin Grammy Award nominations, as well as opening gigs for Enanitos Verdes and Journey. The quintet has lent its music to several public service campaigns in Puerto Rico as it works on its second album.

MONTY

Soulful Argentine singer/songwriter Facundo Monty is releasing tracks from his debut album, "Ella," digitally through publisher peermusic. The album was produced by Grammy Award winner Gustavo Borner and the Redzone's Tricky Stewart. Monty strikes out on his own after penning songs for Alejandro Fernandez, Laura Flores and others.

RAYITO

Madrid native Rayito, a Latin Grammy Award nominee for songs performed by Ricky Martin and David Bisbal, released his self-titled debut album in September on SouthBeat Records. Rayito's music is influenced by contemporary pop and urban as well as the flamenco guitar of his Gypsy father. Rayito's song "Sin Palabras de Relleno" is featured on Chayanne's new album.

KILO

Juan Martinez, also known as "Down" by his peers in the underground hip-hop scene, recently released his album "Definition of an Ese" (Kilo Gram Music Group/Silent Giant Entertainment). First single "Lean Like a Cholo" has gone to radio. The Oxnard, Calif., native collaborated with Snoop Dogg and N.W.A.'s MC Ren on previous release "California Cowboys."

MARGER

The Venezuelan also known as "MG" has starred in Latin-American productions of hit Broadway musicals like "Fame" and "Little Shop of Horrors." After TV appearances including the talent competition "Protagonistas de la Musica," Marger began work on a solo project with producers including Iker Gastaminza and Pablo Manavello. First single "Sexy Lover" was released in March via iTunes.

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

THE MAGICIANS BEHIND THE STARS

Urban And
Pop Vie For
Producer Honors
BY LEILA COBO

The four finalists for producer of the year are evenly divided between reggaetón and pop, with stalwarts Luny Tunes and chart newcomer Nely representing the urban side, and Mexican Armando Avila and Argentina's Cachorro López representing pop.

The group reflects a new generation of acts whose sound—veering from urban to acoustic to electronica-tinged—is now defining Latin radio. Two of them, Luny Tunes and Avila, return for encore performances after scoring finalist slots last year (Luny Tunes won).

Their presence is a testament to the durability of the artists they work with (Avila is up for productions with RBD and La Quinta Estación, Luny Tunes for Daddy Yankee and Wisin & Yandel) and for their particular knowledge of the marketplace.

Luny Tunes, who last year won on the success of 12 tracks appearing on the Billboard charts, return this time with credits on 10 songs, including Wisin & Yandel's chart-topping "Pam Pam," which spent 39 weeks on the Hot Latin Songs chart. Following in sheer impact was Daddy Yankee's "Machucando," which peaked at No. 2 and spent 29 weeks on the chart, and "Caile" by Tito "El Bambino," which also peaked at No. 2 and spent 27 weeks on the chart. Other artists produced by the Dominican duo included Hector "El Father," Tego Calderón and Luny Tunes themselves

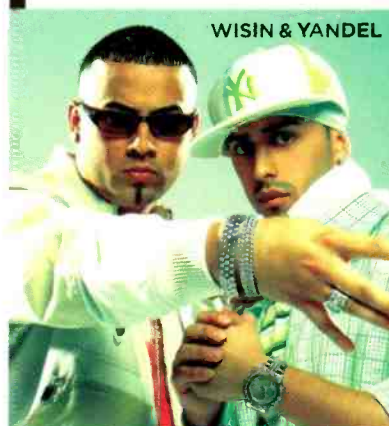
with the track "Alócate," featuring Zion, from the album "Más Flow."

New to the producer of the year category is Nely, aka "El Arma Secreta" (the Secret Weapon). At only 19 years old, Nely, whose real name is Josias de la Cruz, has produced major hits like Wisin & Yandel's "Rákata" and Daddy Yankee's "Gangsta Zone." His finalist slot comes courtesy of five tracks, including Wisin & Yandel's "Noche de Sexo" (featuring Aventura) and "Mía" by Tito "El Bambino."

Avila comes to the list for tracks produced by pop group RBD, including "Este Corazón" and its latest, "Ser o Parecer," which spent two weeks at No. 1 on Hot Latin Songs and which Avila also penned. He's also up for three tracks produced for La Quinta Estación, the Spanish trio helmed by power vocalist Natalia Jiménez.

Chameleonic producer López, who won the producer of the year Latin Grammy Award in 2006, comes with five tracks recorded by four different acts: Christian Castro, Belanova, Julieta Venegas and Paulina Rubio.

The biggest success, by far, was Rubio's single "Ni Una Sola Palabra," which topped Hot Latin Songs for four weeks. And a welcome surprise was the electro-pop sound of Mexico's Belanova, which placed two songs on the Billboard charts, signaling a breath of fresh air for Latin pop.



WISIN & YANDEL

TOP LABELS, PUBLISHERS

Machete Joins The Big Leagues

While it's no surprise to see Universal Latino, Sony BMG Norte and EMI Televisa dominating the label field at the Billboard Latin Music Awards, newcomer Machete is a finalist in five categories. They include Hot Latin Songs label of the year and Top Latin Albums label of the year and two newly created categories: Latin Rhythm Airplay label of the year and Latin Rhythm Albums label of the year.

Machete charted 45 singles on Billboard's Latin Rhythm Airplay chart during the eligibility period, including hits from Wisin & Yandel, Don Omar, Daddy Yankee and Hector "El Father."

Sony BMG Norte is the label with the most nods this year, with eight mentions in the label categories, including Top Latin Albums label of the year. Home to Ricky Martin, Javier Solís and Julieta Venegas, the label racked up 74 titles on the Top Latin Albums chart during the year.

However, with 86 charting sets, Univision Music Group leads the way as the label with the most titles on the Top Latin Albums chart, thanks to hits from Marco Antonio Solís, Los Tigres del Norte and Conjunto Primavera.

Among publishers, Universal-Musica Unica placed a whopping 40 titles on Hot Latin Songs this year, including the No. 1 smash "Angelito" by Don Omar. EMI April and EMI Blackwood each scored more than 20 hits from such acts as Shakira, RBD and Wisin & Yandel. Meanwhile, Sony/ATV Discos garnered 19 hits, including Pitbull's "Dime (Tell Me)."

—Ayala Ben-Yehuda

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THE SONGWRITERS SPEAK

Multitalented Finalists Discuss Their Hits

It was the year of the singer/songwriter. Every finalist for the prestigious songwriter of the year award, determined by airplay of the composer's songs, is also a recording artist. And, in a twist, every finalist, save for Anthony "Romeo" Santos, lead singer of urban bachata band Aventura, is a regional Mexican star. Genre aside, these songwriters have struck a universal chord. In their own words, they share the inspiration behind their songs.



MARIANO BARBA: 'ALIADO DEL TIEMPO'

"Many of my songs come from my personal experiences. With 'Aliado del Tiempo,' I spent a long time visualizing, thinking about that song. It's something that happens to many people, and happened to me. With a relationship I had, where I wasn't able to get close to her and tell her how much I loved her. How could we get to the point where we completely gave up to each other? That's when I wrote the song, trying to find the right words to tell the person I loved that I wanted to be with her. I'm no longer with that person. But she did know that was written for her."

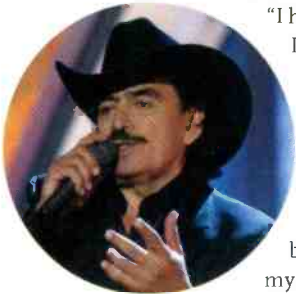
ANTHONY 'ROMEO' SANTOS: 'NOCHE DE SEXO,' 'NO, NO, NO,' 'LOS INFIELES,' 'MI CORANZOCITO'

"I talk about issues a lot of other artists don't want to touch. A lot of writers don't want to talk about a 12-year-old getting raped [as happens in the single "Angelito"]. A lot of the things I write about have nothing to do with my personal life, thank God. 'Los Infeles' [Unfaithful Ones], again, talks about things no one wants to talk about. A lot of people don't want to accept that cheating happens. My point was, everybody has had some experience with cheating."



JOAN SEBASTIAN: 'DE CONTRABANDO,' 'MÁS ALLÁ DEL SOL,' 'LOBO DOMESTICADO'

"I have a complicated life, and this provides me a lot of material to write. Perhaps because I haven't found total peace, I keep singing and writing so much. I don't like to explain my songs, because when people ask me to explain my songs it makes me feel like they aren't well made. But what I can say [about "Mas Allá del Sol" (Beyond the Sun)] is that it has impacted the public because most men, and sometimes women too, fail in love or let down their partner. It is that moment of regret and the search for getting someone back from [which] comes the phrase, 'Beyond the sun and beyond my mistakes, I love you.'"



MARCO ANTONIO SOLÍS: 'VIVA EL AMOR,' 'ANTES DE QUE TE VAYAS,' 'QUE VUELVA,' 'CÓMO ME HACES FALTA'

"I write things down in little scraps of paper, or record them on my little tape recorder. It's very old-fashioned. If the entire song develops, I write it, but generally, it's fragments. The rest comes when I arrive somewhere. That's when I take my little slips of paper, and my tape recorder, and I need the space and a lot of silence. What I feel at the moment, that trance I fall in when I'm able to capture a precise emotion is magical for me. It's a connection with something else. With God, I think. It's a very, very magical moment and a very personal moment, and it's very satisfying."

—Leila Cobo



LATIN CHART RECAPS SPOTLIGHT TOP ACTS

The chart recaps in this Latin music special are year-to-date starting with the Dec. 2, 2006, issue—the beginning of the chart year—through the March 31, 2007, issue.

Recaps for Top Latin Albums are based on sales information compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. Recaps for Hot Latin Songs are based on gross audience impressions from airplay monitored by Nielsen BDS.

Titles receive credit for sales or audience impressions accumulated during each week they appear on the pertinent chart.



Hot Latin Songs

- Pos. TITLE - Artist Imprint/Label
- 1 TU RECUERDO** Ricky Martin Featuring La Mari De Chambao Y Tommy Torres-Sony BMG Norte
 - 2 BENDITA TU LUZ** Mana-Warner Latina
 - 3 PAM PAM** Wisin & Yandel-Machete
 - 4 SOLA** Hector "El Father"-VI/Machete
 - 5 ANTES DE QUE TE VAYAS** Marco Antonio Solís-Fonovisa
 - 6 DIME QUIEN ES** Los Rieleros Del Norte-Fonovisa
 - 7 SER O PARECER** RBD-EMI Televisa
 - 8 SHORTY SHORTY** Xtreme-La Calle/Univision
 - 9 DIME (TELL ME)** Pitbull Featuring Ken-Y-Famous Artists/TVT
 - 10 PEGAO** Wisin & Yandel Featuring Los Vaqueros-WY/Machete
 - 11 I WANNA LOVE YOU** Akon Featuring Snoop Dogg-Konvict/Upfront/SRC/Universal Motown
 - 12 TU AMOR** Luis Fonsi-Universal Latino
 - 13 INVIERNO** Reik-Sony BMG Norte
 - 14 ESE** Conjunto Primavera-Fonovisa
 - 15 IRREEMPLAZABLE** Beyoncé-Columbia
 - 16 SI TU NO ESTAS** Sin Bandera-Sony BMG Norte
 - 17 ME MATAS** Rakim & Ken-Y-Pina/Universal Latino
 - 18 ME MUERO** La 5A Estacion-Sony BMG Norte
 - 19 CHIQUILLA** A.B. Quintanilla III Presents Kumbia All Starz-EMI Televisa
 - 20 MAS ALLA DEL SOL** Joan Sebastian-Musart/Balboa

continued on >>pLM32

Hot Latin Songs Artists

- Pos. ARTIST (No. Charted Titles) Imprint/Label
- 1 WISIN & YANDEL** (1) Machete (1) WY/Machete (1) CFE/Urban Box Office (1) VI/Machete (1) Roc-La-Familia/Machete/Def Jam/IDJMG (1) Mas Flow/Machete
 - 2 MANA** (3) Warner Latina
 - 3 RICKY MARTIN** (2) Sony BMG Norte
 - 4 HECTOR "EL FATHER"** (1) VI/Machete (1) Roc-La-Familia/Machete/Def Jam/IDJMG (1) Mas Flow/Machete
 - 5 RAKIM & KEN-Y** (2) Pina/Universal Latino (1) Sony BMG Norte
 - 6 RBD** (2) EMI Televisa
 - 7 MARCO ANTONIO SOLÍS** (1) Fonovisa
 - 8 LOS RIELEROS DEL NORTE** (1) Fonovisa
 - 9 XTREME** (1) La Calle/Univision
 - 10 ALEJANDRO SANZ** (2) Warner Latina

Hot Latin Songs Imprints

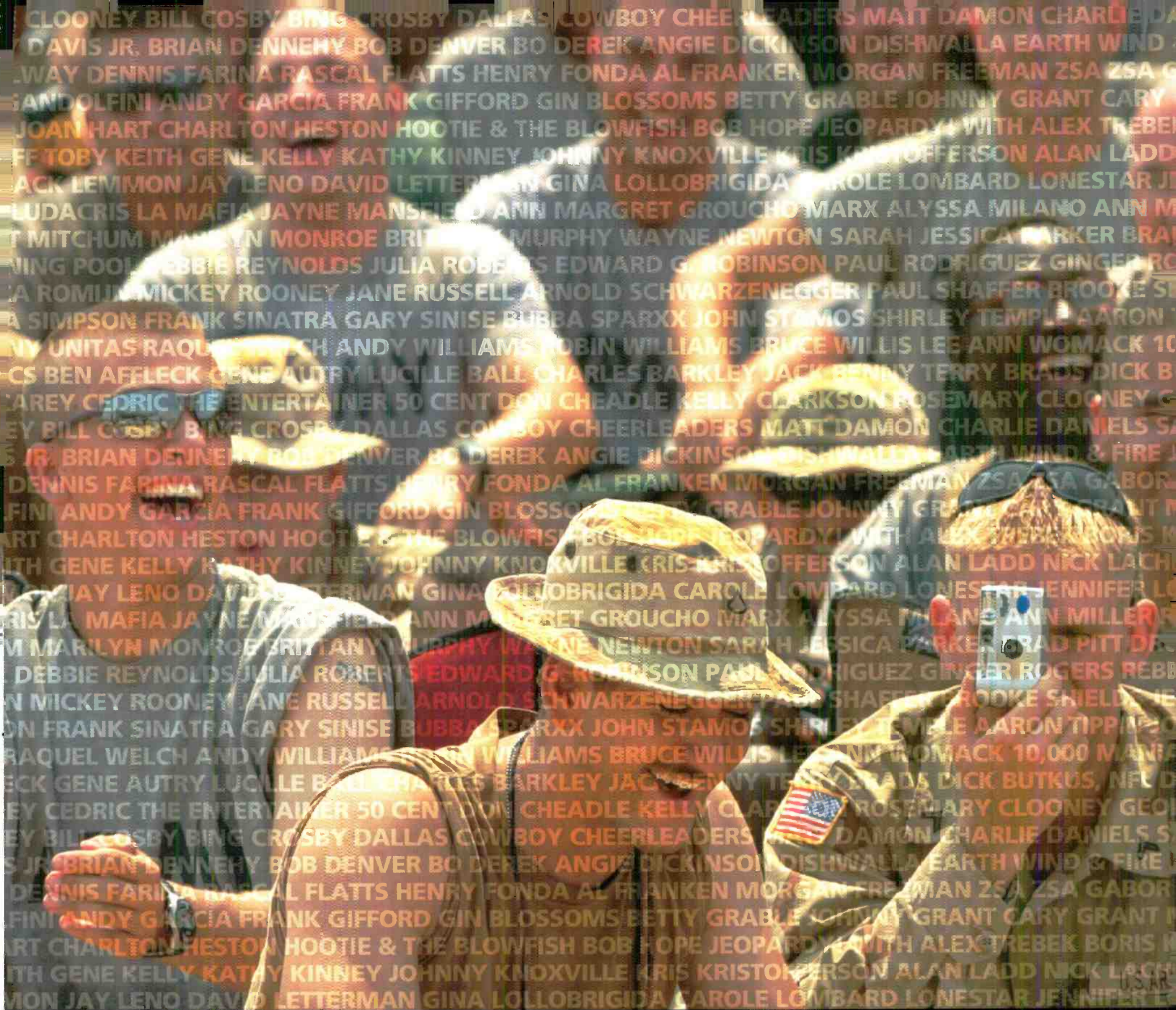
- Pos. IMPRINT (No. Charted Titles)
- 1 SONY BMG NORTE** (19)
 - 2 EMI TELEVISIA** (16)
 - 3 FONOVISA** (9)
 - 4 WARNER LATINA** (5)
 - 5 DISA** (9)

Hot Latin Songs Labels

- Pos. LABEL (No. Charted Titles)
- 1 SONY BMG NORTE** (21)
 - 2 EMI TELEVISIA** (16)
 - 3 UNIVERSAL LATINO** (11)
 - 4 MACHETE** (8)
 - 5 FONOVISA** (9)



BARBA: ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES; SEBASTIAN: STERHEN LOVEN/REXUS/REXUS; SOLÍS: THEO WARGOV/REXUS; MARTIN: ELISEO FERNANDEZ/REUTERS



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LATIN MUSIC CONFERENCE AWARDS

Top Latin Album Artists

Pos. ARTIST (No. Charted Titles) Imprint/Label

- 1 RBD (4) EMI Televisa
- 2 VALENTIN ELIZALDE (4) Universal Latino
(1) Cintas Acuario
(1) Venemusic/Sony BMG Norte
(1) BCI Latino/BCI
- 3 MARCO ANTONIO SOLIS (3) Fonovisa/UG
- 4 LOS BUKIS (4) Fonovisa/UG
- 5 AVENTURA (2) Premium Latin/Sony BMG Norte
- 6 MANA (1) Warner Latina
- 7 LUIS MIGUEL (1) Warner Latina
- 8 RICKY MARTIN (1) Sony BMG Norte
- 9 ANA GABRIEL (2) Sony BMG Norte
- 10 RAKIM & KEN-Y (1) Pina/Universal Latino
(1) Pina/Pr/Universal Latino



RBD

Top Latin Album Distributors

Pos. DISTRIBUTOR (No. Charted Titles)

- 1 UNIVERSAL (85)
- 2 SONY BMG (34)
- 3 EMM (14)
- 4 WEA (6)
- 5 INDEPENDENTS (10)

Top Latin Album Imprints

Pos. IMPRINT (No. Charted Titles)

- 1 SONY BMG NORTE (22)
- 2 EMI TELEvisa (13)
- 3 FONOVISA (23)
- 4 UNIVERSAL LATINO (8)
- 5 WARNER LATINA (4)



MANA

Top Latin Album Labels

Pos. LABEL (No. Charted Titles)

- 1 SONY BMG NORTE (31)
- 2 UNIVISION MUSIC GROUP (42)
- 3 EMI TELEvisa (13)
- 4 UNIVERSAL LATINO (20)
- 5 MACHETE (8)

Top Latin Albums

Pos. TITLE -Artist Imprint/Label

- 1 CELESTIAL RBD-EMI Televisa
- 2 NOW LATINO 2 Various Artists-Sony BMG Strategic Marketing Group/EMI/Universal/Universal Latino
- 3 AMAR ES COMBATIR Mana-Warner Latina
- 4 NAVIDADES LUIS MIGUEL Luis Miguel-Warner Latina
- 5 RICKY MARTIN: MTV UNPLUGGED Ricky Martin-Sony BMG Norte
- 6 WY RECORDS PRESENTS: LOS VAQUEROS Various Artists-WY/Machete
- 7 VENCEDOR Valentin Elizalde-Universal Latino
- 8 K.O.B.: LIVE Aventura-Premium Latin/Sony BMG Norte
- 9 KING OF KINGS Don Omar-VI/Machete
- 10 FROM KUMBIA KINGS TO KUMBIA ALL STARZ A.B. Quintanilla III Presents Kumbia All Stars-EMI Televisa
- 11 TROCOS DE MI ALMA 2 Marco Antonio Solis-Fonovisa/UG
- 12 THE BAD BOY Hector "El Father"-VI/Machete
- 13 PA'L M'JUNDO Wisin & Yandel-Machete
- 14 LOBO DOMESTICADO Valentin Elizalde-Universal Latino
- 15 LA REINA CANTA A MEXICO Ana Gabriel-Sony BMG Norte
- 16 RECIO RECIO MIS CREADOREZ Los Creadores Del Pasito Duraguense De Alfredo Ramirez-Disa
- 17 MAS FLOW: LOS BENJAMINS Luny Tunes & Tainy-Mas Flow/Machete
- 18 EL TREN DE LOS MOMENTOS Alejandro Sanz-Warner Latina
- 19 CONQUISTANDO CORAZONES K-Paz De La Sierra-Disa
- 20 LA TRAGEDIA DEL VAQUERO Vicente Fernandez-Sony BMG Norte

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LATIN MUSIC
CONFERENCE & AWARDS 2007



APRIL 23-26, 2007
INTERCONTINENTAL MIAMI

Sunday, April 22

9:00pm
CHAKRA, 1501 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach
THE OFFICIAL PRE-PARTY
TO THE 2007 BILLBOARD LATIN
MUSIC CONFERENCE AND AWARDS
PRESENTED BY STREETLEVEL
ENTERPRISE & CONCIERTOS AMERICA
HOSTED BY PITBULL
PERFORMANCES BY:



Monday, April 23

8:00pm
CHAKRA, 1501 Collins Avenue, Miami Beach
PRE-CONFERENCE PARTY



Billboard Latino presents
DADDY YANKEE
On Fuego Radio Show Live
SPONSORED BY SWA,
ORBITS AND U.S. NAVY

Tuesday, April 24

9:00am-5:00pm
Grand Ballroom Foyer, Second Level
REGISTRATION &
HEINEKEN LISTENING LOUNGE

Enjoy a premium and comfortable space to
kick back and relax while listening to music
from Billboard Latin Music Award finalists.

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Dodge Interactive Lounge
Verizon
MTV Tr3s
Batanga Internet Lounge
and more!

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Badges sponsored by **SESAC**
Lanyards sponsored by **CMN**
iTunes Latino music sampler download card

CONFERENCE SESSIONS
Versailles Ballroom - Second Level (subject to change)

9:15am-9:30am
OPENING GREETING

Leila Cobo, Exec. Director of Latin Content/
Programming, Billboard

9:30am-10:30am
SURFING FOR PROFIT

SPONSORED BY ELHOOD.COM
Utilizing the Internet as a marketing and
revenue-generating tool.
MODERATOR: Leila Cobo, Executive Director of
Content/Programming for Latin Music and
Entertainment, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
Demian Bellurmo, Pres., Hoodiny Entertainment/elhood.com
Fernando Espuelas, CEO/Chairman, Voy LLC
Travis Katz, SVP & GM, FIM International
Diego Prusky, Principal, In-Style! Software
Rafael Urbina, CEO, Batanga

10:45am-11:45am
ASCAP PRESENTS BIG SCREEN,
LITTLE SCREEN

Find out how to get your music on film, ads
and television.
MODERATOR: Michael Todd, Sr. Director, Film & TV
Music, ASCAP
SPEAKERS:
Tomas Cookman, President, Nacional Records
Osvaldo Feliu, Esq., Director of Licensing & Music
Supervision for Hispanic Market, Production Advisors, Inc.
Margaret Guerra Rogers, VP of Music Affairs,
Telemundo Network Group/Indep. Music Supervisor
Andres Levin, Artist/ Film Composer/Record Producer

11:45am-12:45pm
BREAKING THE DIGITAL FRONTIER

Following years of slow growth, Latin digital
sales finally begin to take off.
MODERATOR: Geoff Mayfield, Director of Charts/Sr.
Analyst, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
Federico Baptista, Product Manager of Latin Music,
The Orchard
Skander Goucha, Director, Digital Media, Universal
Music Latino
Rich Masio, Sr. Dir., Content Acquisition & Client
Relations, Ioda
Val Valdez, Head of Latin Division, Avatar Records

12:45pm-2:00pm
RIAA PANEL AND LUNCH

SPONSORED BY THE RECORDING INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
State of the industry—physical and digital
market, the economic impact of piracy &
strategy under current conditions.
MODERATOR: Leila Cobo, Executive Director of Latin
Content/Programming, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
Brad Buckles, EVP, RIAA, Anti-Piracy
John Echevarria, President, Universal Music Latino
Eddie Fernandez, SVP, Universal Music Publishing Group
Mitch Glazier, EVP Government & Industry Relations, RIAA
Raul Vazquez, Regional Director, IFPI Latin America
Inigo Zabala, President, Warner Music Latina

2:30pm-3:30pm
PLAY MY TUNE

SPONSORED BY NIELSEN BDS/
NIELSEN SOUNDSCAN
In a world of changing radio formats and
mediums, new artists get a new chance to
be heard on the airwaves.
Top programmers tell you how.
CO-MODERATORS: Leila Cobo, Executive Director
of Latin Content/Programming, Billboard
Jackie Madrigal, Latin Formats Editor, Radio & Records
SPEAKERS:
Juan D. Gonzalez, PD, WKKB-Latina 100.3 FM,
Rhode Island
Tony Hernandez, Pres./CEO, Latino Broadcasting Co.
Jesus Salas, Senior PD Latin Channels, XM Satellite Radio
Frank Walsh, PD, Mega 94.9 Miami

3:45pm-4:45pm
THE ART OF THE TOUR

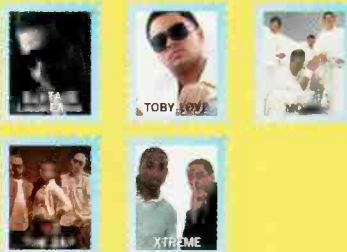
SPONSORED BY MORGAN RENEE
ENTERTAINMENT
Managers, promoters, sponsors, and venue pro-
fessionals say it all in this roundtable discussion.
MODERATOR: Ayala Ben-Yehuda, Latin Corresp., Billboard
SPEAKERS:
Dee Aguirre, Chief Operating Officer, Roptus, Inc.
Ayelet Corona, Owner/Part., Corona Jones Entertainment
Larry Gold, Owner/Creative Director, S.O.B.'s
Larry Harlow, Artist
Jorge Naranjo, President, Cardenas Marketing Network
Michel Vega, VP/Head of Latin Music, William Morris
Agency, LLC

5:00pm-6:00pm
WHAT TEENS WANT

SPONSOR ADDRESS BY ALEX PELS, GM, MUN2
Our most popular panel returns for an
encore as a group of Latin teens discuss their
musical preferences and buying habits with
our attendees.

6:30pm-8:30pm
Bayfront Ballroom, First Floor
WELCOME COCKTAIL RECEPTION

SPONSORED BY MTV TR3s
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10:30pm
1334 Washington Avenue, South Beach
SHOWCASES AT
MACARENA RESTAURANT

PERFORMANCES BY
Bletzung Mager "MG"
Black: Guayaba Rayito
Coral

Wednesday, April 25

9:30am-5:00pm
Grand Ballroom Foyer, Second Level
REGISTRATION &
HEINEKEN LISTENING LOUNGE

9:30am-10:30am
DIAL M FOR MUSIC

How mobile has become the biggest revenue
growth area for Latin music in the U.S. & beyond.
MODERATOR: Alfonso Perez-Soto, Director of New
Media for US, Hispanic Market & Latin America,
Warner Music Latin America
SPEAKERS:
José Guilherme Novaes, Multimedia Business
Manager, Ditetoria Segmento
Premium Vivo
Marcus Owenby, Director of Hispanic Marketing
Operations, AT&T Mobility
Edwin Prado, Business Manager, Prado Law Office
Seth A. Schachner, VP, Digital Business Latin America,
Sony BMG

10:45am-11:45am
BMI PRESENTS

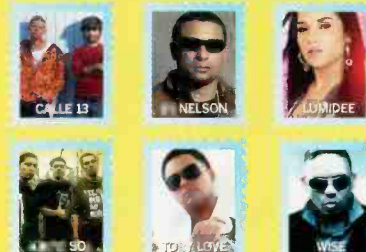
HOW I WROTE THAT SONG
Top songwriters pick up their instruments and
walk us through their inspirational process.
MODERATOR: Delia Orjuela, VP of Latin Music, BMI
SPEAKERS:



Plus:
EDGAR COTAZAR
AARON MARTINEZ
LUIS "LOUIE" PADILLA
ADRIAN PIERAGOSTINO

12:00pm-1:00pm
RAP, RHYTHM & REGGAETON
ALL-STAR PANEL

SPONSORED BY MTV TR3s
It's artists-only in this inside look at the
growing urban sound of Latin music.



1:15pm-2:45pm
Chopin Ballroom, Second Level
LUNCHEON SHOWCASE

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WEEK IN LATIN MUSIC

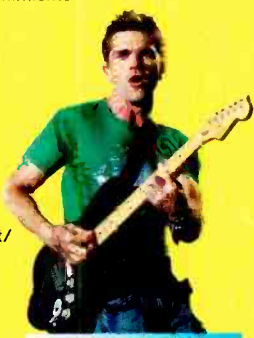
Download a free 10-song music sampler from iTunes Latino
www.billboard.com/itunes

2:45pm-3:45pm GIVE ME THE COVER!

SPONSORED BY REGGAE TON WEAR
 What kind of press is your act getting? Our panel of marquee journalists, TV producers and publicists give the inside scoop on what gets ink and what gets heat.
MODERATOR: Tamara Conniff, Executive Editor/
 Associate Publisher, Billboard
SPEAKERS:
 Judy Cantor Navas, Latin & World Music Programmer, MTV Urge
 Fifi Castany, Editor in Chief, Ocean Drive en Español
 Felix Castillo, President, Frontera Visual
 Alba Eagan, Partner, League of Their Own
 John Reilly, VP, Rogers & Cowan
 Celeste Rodas Juarez, President, Asociación Latina de Periodistas de Entretenimiento

4:00pm-5:15pm THE BILLBOARD Q&A WITH JUANES

and Leila Cobo, Exec. Director of Latin Content/
 Programming, Billboard
PRESENTED BY HEINEKEN



5:30pm-7:00pm HEINEKEN HAPPY HOUR & "WE HEAR THE FUTURE" "ESCUCHAMOS EL FUTURO"

Artist Showcase & Competition
PERFORMANCES BY:



HOSTED BY BILLBOARD LATINO'S:



Plus:
**HEINEKEN ESTRELLA
 WINNERS FROM
 TEXAS & CHICAGO**

JUDGES:

Leila Cobo, Exec. Dir. of Latin Content/
 Programming, Billboard
 Walter Kolm, SVP, Marketing/A&R, Universal
 Music Latino
 Jorge Mejia, VP, Latin America & US Latin, Sony/
 ATV Music Pub.
 Jorge Pino, VP, Venevisión International
 Coti Sorokin, Artist, Universal Music Group
 Chelina Vargas, Music Programmer, iTunes Latino

6:30pm-9:00pm Yuca Lounge (501 Lincoln Road, South Beach) ASCAP ACOUSTIC SHOWCASE

ASCAP showcases some of its top songwriters
 in an intimate setting.



9:00pm The Fifth Nightclub 1045 5th Street at Lennox, Miami Beach THE BILLBOARD BASH

SPONSORED BY VERIZON
 The official pre-awards show party with
 presentations and performances by 2007
 Billboard Latin Music Awards finalists including:



HOSTED BY: ADRIANA CATANO

10:30pm 1334 Washington Avenue, South Beach SHOWCASES AT MACARENA RESTAURANT

PERFORMANCES BY DEL CASTILLO AND:



Thursday, April 26

10:00am-2:00pm
 Grand Ballroom Foyer, Second Level
**REGISTRATION & LAST CHANCE
 FOR TICKET PICK-UP**



BONUS PROGRAMMING!

**VOZ LATINA:
 MESSAGING, MEDIA, MARKETING.**
**Strategies to Reach Hispanics for
 Entertainment, Retail, Mobile & Online
 Marketers. Hosted by Adweek's Marketing y
 Medios, Adweek, Brandweek and Mediaweek.
 PRESENTED BY CITYREACH LATINO**

7:45am-3:45am
 Grand Ballroom - Second Level
**REGISTRATION & EXHIBITS
 CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST SPONSORED BY
 MSN LATINO**

8:45am-8:50am
WELCOME ADDRESS
 Nancy Ayala, Editor, Adweek's Marketing y Medios
 Terri E. Simpson, President & CEO, CityReach Latino

8:50am-9:30am MAXIMIZING YOUR ENDORSEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITH HISPANIC CELEBRITIES

Aligning your product with the appropriate
 Hispanic celebrity will ensure cultural significance
 so your brand becomes better defined and more
 profitable. The bond between fan and star—what
 will prove beneficial for your product?
MODERATOR: Jacqueline Hernandez-Fallous,
 Publisher, People en Español
SPEAKERS:
 Danna Garcia, Actress and Singer
 Stephanie Rinaldi, Vice President, Multi-Ethnic
 Marketing & Promotions, Maybelline New York-Garnier
 Daniel Villaruel, Director, Multi-Ethnic Marketing,
 Maybelline New York-Garnier

9:30am-10:10am DIFFERENTIATING HISPANIC CONSUMERS FROM THE GENERAL MARKET: THE LATINO FILTER

Using lifestyle and cultural relevance to segment
 the market, MTV Tr3s' sweet spot is the 12-24
 demographic. It connects today's Hispanic youth
 to the most hip, cool and relevant entertainment
 brands. Get the inside story on the launch of
 MTV Tr3s and its successes and milestones.
SPEAKERS:
 Lucia Ballas-Traynor, SVP & General Manager, MTV Tr3s
 Gonzalo Perez, Director, Multicultural Research and
 Consumer Insights, MTV Networks

10:10am-10:40am NETWORKING BREAK SPONSORED BY YAHOO! TELEMUNDO

10:40am-11:20am HISPANIC CONSUMERS IN THE MULTICULTURAL MARKETING EQUATION

**SPONSORED BY
 LANGUAGE LINE SERVICES**
 How does the Hispanic population compare
 with African Americans, Asians and non-
 Hispanic Whites? Attitudes about marketing,
 advertising and branding, trends in category
 expenditures, media usage and social
 networks will be analyzed.

SPEAKER:
 Felipe Korzeny, Ph.D., Professor and Director
 of the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication,
 Florida State University and Cheskin Co-Founder

11:20am-11:30am
MOBILE MEETS OUT-OF-HOME
SPONSORED BY CITYREACH LATINO
 It's all about the messaging, how it's deliv-
 ered, the technology platform and, most
 importantly, what the consumer is getting out
 of the interaction. Moreover, it's important to
 define what the advertiser is getting out of
 running the campaign and how it's working
 into a larger CRM solution to maximize
 advertising dollars.

SPEAKER:
 Marc Malovany, Managing Director,
 ALCANCE - US Hispanic

11:30am-12:10pm
AGENCY CREATIVE PANEL
 Hispanic consumers are a strong, yet diverse
 group, and reaching them through traditional
 advertising as well as new media is an ongoing
 challenge. Leading creative directors discuss
 what ad campaigns work and which don't.
MODERATOR: Nancy Ayala, Editor, Adweek's
 Marketing y Medios
SPEAKERS:
 Sergio Alcocer, President/Chief Creative Officer, LatinWorks
 Thomas Schimoler, Creative Dir., The Vidal Partnership
 Carlos Tornell, Creative Director, OLE



7:00pm
 The BankUnited Center
 1245 Dauer Drive, Coral Gables
SCHEDULED TO APPEAR:



Plus: EL GRAN COMBO DE PUERTO RICO
 LOS HOROSCOPOS DE DURANGO

11:30pm OFFICIAL AFTER PARTY!

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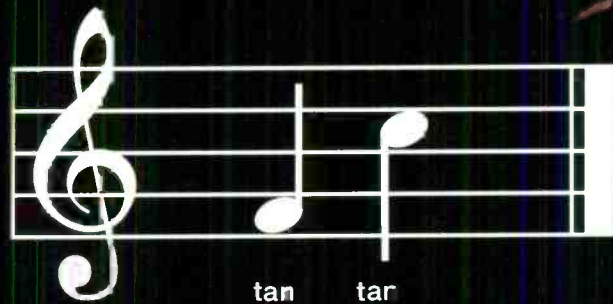


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CD FEATURING

Maná

Latin Pop Airplay Song Of The Year, Duo Or Group

Yuridia

Latin Pop Album Of The Year, Female
Latin Pop Album Of The Year, New Artist

Ana Gabriel

Latin Pop Album Of The Year, Female

Julieta Venegas

Latin Pop Album Of The Year, Female

Tito El Bambino

Reggaeton Song Of The Year

Don Omar

Top Latin Albums Artist Of The Year
Reggaeton Album Of The Year

Wisin & Yandel

Hot Latin Songs Artist Of The Year

Xtreme

Tropical Album Of The Year, Duo Or Group

Fonseca

Tropical Album Of The Year, New Artist
Latin Pop Airplay Song Of The Year, Male

Andy Montañez

Tropical Album Of The Year, Male

Marlon

Tropical Airplay Song Of The Year, New Artist

Gilberto Santa Rosa

Tropical Album Of The Year, Male

Victor Manuelle

Tropical Album Of The Year, Male

Michael Stuart

Tropical Album Of The Year, Male

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LATINA

VEN A VIVIR LA FIESTA DESPUÉS DE LA ENTREGA

Reventón
Billboard V.I.P.

28 DE ABRIL 9PM/8PM C

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CENTER

at the University of Miami

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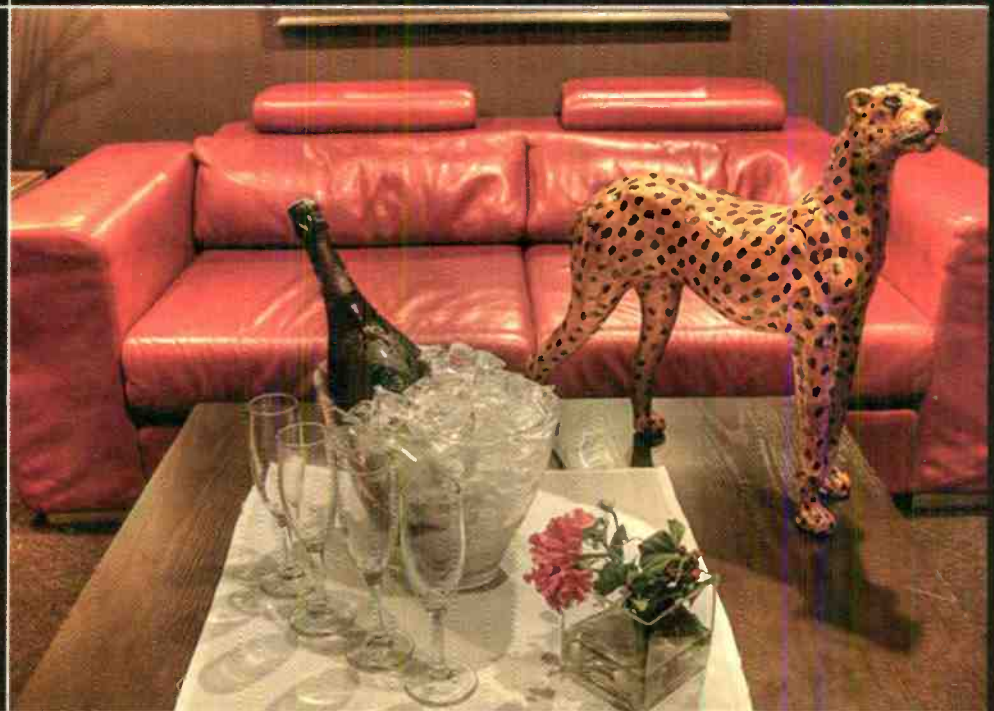
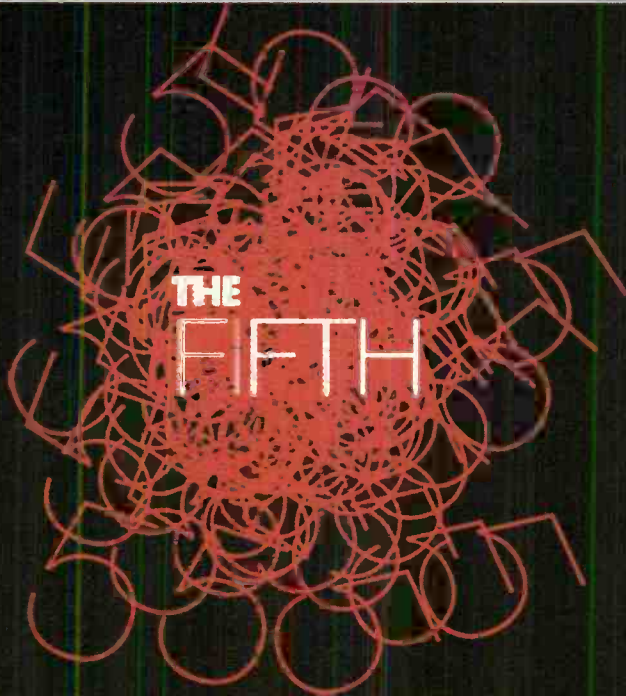

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Finalists





REVVING BACK UP
Black Rebel Motorcycle Club returns to rocking



PAM'S PET PROJECT
Country star Tillis' impressive indie album



DYNAMIC DUDAMEL
The L.A. Philharmonic's young new conductor



STILL GO-GO-ING
Chuck Brown blasts loose groove again



GIMME SHELTER
Christian label helps Habitat for Humanity

32

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MUSIC



ROCK BY JONATHAN COHEN

Feist Forward

This Time Around, The Canadian Singer/Songwriter Gets A Real Push

After two years of touring in support of her 2004 album "Let It Die," Canadian singer, songwriter Leslie Feist realized she had really just been making "baby steps toward an undetermined future."

So rather than commit to a lengthy recording process, she roped in a few key collaborators and her touring band and assembled "The Reminder" in less than a week's worth of sessions at a rented home outside Paris. The new album arrives May 1 in the United States via Cherrytree/Interscope. Arts & Crafts issued the record April 23 in Canada, while Polydor France will handle it internationally.

"We often had people playing instruments

they hadn't come to play," Feist says with a proud grin over scrambled eggs and orange juice at a trendy downtown New York hotel. "Every time someone said, 'Why?' the answer would be, 'Why not?' There was a mass hypnosis that occurred when we played the songs over and over."

That attitude has helped the honey-voiced Feist build a sizable following in the States and abroad since "Let It Die," which blended luxurious pop originals like "Mushaboom" and "One Evening" with chilled-out Bee Gees and Ron Sexsmith covers. The album has sold 116,000 copies in the States, according to Nielsen SoundScan, and substantially more abroad, according to Cherrytree president Martin Kierszenbaum.

"There were certain intervals, or tempos, that were worn in, so I kept wanting to skip over and refine those places I hadn't gone yet," Feist says of her songwriting approach this time around. "People often write what they know they'll be able to sing, but what I loved about singing covers was that my voice ended up doing things it would never naturally do."

In tandem with longtime associates Gonzales and Dominic "Mocky" Salole, Feist was able to crystallize the "lo-fi, lowbrow sound" she had been hearing in her head for months. Indeed, "The Reminder" places the artist in a wide array of sonic environments, from the girl-and-her-guitar vibe of opener "So Sorry," "Lullation" and

"The Park" to the pounding, piano-led blog favorite "My Moon My Man" and the frenetic sing-along "Sea Lion Woman."

"Something that was new for me was trying not to use headphones," says Feist, who is also a key member of Toronto rock collective Broken Social Scene. "We tried to do as few overdubs as possible. We'd do what we'd call 'town hall,' which was everybody around one mic singing all at once. I wanted it to sound a bit like a congregation."

Kierszenbaum says a staggered promotional scheme helped "Let It Die" gradually build steam, but there will be a more concerted push for "The Reminder" at the outset, including a May 8 appearance on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno." "Starbucks reached out to us and wanted to carry this record right off the bat," he says. "Last time, we'd have a TV appearance, and then not have another until two months later. This time, we're primed for maximum impact."

Last time around, Feist signed off on a few sync deals, including a Lacoste fragrance commercial in the United Kingdom and an HSBC Bank TV ad campaign in the States that utilized "Gatekeeper." Moving forward, "Feist is receptive to that avenue of exposure but won't compromise her music," Kierszenbaum says. "Several ad agencies and music supervisors have called about [the] new album but we haven't yet decided on a specific sync."

Starting last month, Cherrytree has been sending e-blasts to fans featuring behind-the-scenes glimpses of the recording sessions and snippets from the album artwork, which follows Feist's "very specific artistic vision." The label also virally released a sort of EPK with snippets of journalists discussing Feist in a variety of languages and commissioned videos from noted director Patrick Coughters for "My Moon My Man" and "1 2 3 4."

And despite the bevy of labels involved in bringing "The Reminder" to market worldwide, all parties are working like "a collective team," according to Kierszenbaum. "Plus, Leslie is really inclusive," he says. "She has been able to evolve her art with U.S. She says Cherrytree is like a mom-and-pop shop inside a department store."

Feist is already back on the road, having hit major European cities earlier this month in advance of a Canadian tour and a June run through the States, which includes a stop at Bonnaroo. But she's pacing herself a little better this time out. "In July, I'll be ready to just rent a cabin by a lake somewhere," she says.

FEIST: MARY ROZZI

>>>CROW'S NEST

Sheryl Crow promises the unexpected on her next studio album, which will reportedly have more of a country slant than past efforts. "People will be very surprised," she says. "I'm working with some very interesting people." The as-yet-untitled set is due out before Christmas via A&M/Interscope. "There's a song on there I'm hoping will come out first, which is very environmentally conscious," she adds.

>>>SONGS FOR 'SHREK'

Fergie's cover of Heart's classic "Barracuda" and a duet between Eddie Murphy (as Donkey) and Antonio Banderas (as Puss in Boots) on Sly & the Family Stone's "Thank You (Falettinme Be Mice Elf Again)" lead the soundtrack to "Shrek the Third," due May 15 via Geffen. The DreamWorks film opens three days later in U.S. theaters. The album will also include cuts from Led Zeppelin, Paul McCartney & Wings, Harry Chapin and the Ramones.

>>>LEE TO BE YOU AND ME

Australian singer/songwriter Ben Lee is at work on his next album, "Ripe," due in September via New West. Mandy Moore guests on the track "Birds and Bees." "Mandy was very sweet and did her best Olivia Newton-John for me," he says. Other contributors include Good Charlotte's Benji Madden, Nickel Creek's Sara Watkins, Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers keyboardist Benmont Tench and members of Rooney.

>>>'NATION' BUILDING

Sonic Youth will release a deluxe edition of its revered 1988 album "Daydream Nation" June 12 via Geffen/UMe. The new version includes a host of bonus tracks and rare photos and will also be available as a four-LP set on the band's own Goofin' Records label. The second disc of the CD set includes live renditions of every track on the studio release, captured at such venues as New York's CBGB and Amsterdam's Paradiso.

Written by Jonathan Cohen.

ROCK BY SUSAN VISAKOWITZ

LOUD AND PROUD

Black Rebel Motorcycle Club Plugs Back In On New RCA Set

"After six months of always pulling back, you just want to slam your fist through a wall," Black Rebel Motorcycle Club's Robert Levon Been says.

He's explaining how, as he and bandmate Peter Hayes worked on BRMC's third album, "Howl," a mostly restrained country- and folk-tinged affair that radically departed from previous efforts, the duo's pent-up energy rose to a threatening boil.

"We burned out on being delicate."

Once known as a garage-meets-shoegazer-meets-psychedelic rock outfit thanks to its first two Virgin albums, "B.R.M.C." and "Take Them On, On Your Own," BRMC turned its sound on its head with "Howl."

"'Howl' was definitely a test for the fan base," says Hugh Surratt, senior VP of creative and marketing for RCA, which signed the group after BRMC and Virgin parted ways following "Take Them On."

"But," he adds, "the game plan from

the moment we signed them was that the band was going to come back after 'Howl' with more familiar BRMC sounds."

New album "Baby 81," due May 1 in North America and a day earlier in the United Kingdom and Ireland via Island, delivers. With British-born drummer Nick Jago, who'd quit the band shortly before the split with Virgin, back in the mix, the reconstituted trio returned to its usual business—kicking out the jams.

"'Howl' was written on acoustic guitars mostly in bedrooms, outside of the rock'n'roll world, while a lot of 'Baby' was written on the road, with the whole band," Been says. "It's a completely different outcome because of all that electricity."

The high-volume, guitar-heavy result has RCA gunning for modern rock radio, which virtually abandoned the group last time around.

"We knew the sound of 'Howl' didn't fit on modern rock, and it only got about 1,200 spins," Surratt says. "But in terms of sales, the album still came close to duplicating the success of the first two records."

Indeed, "Howl" has moved 90,000 units, according to Nielsen SoundScan,

about 10,000 less than either of its predecessors. And Surratt expects "Baby 81" to surpass all three of BRMC's previous efforts. "Our promotion team will get airplay on this, and that will drive sales," he says.

RCA senior director of marketing Brad Oldham acknowledges that "the sound of the record leans toward a broader, more mainstream audience" than BRMC's first two, but feels "the aesthetic of the band is still indie. The way they tour, their style—they're still a little bit left of center."

Oldham says college and "taste-maker" stations remain key, and a U.S. headlining tour spanning May and June will see the band sticking with 1,500- to 2,000-capacity theaters. "That's a smart move," Oldham says, "because it's in line with the venues they played last time. It will help create a high-demand situation."

But Been isn't worried about buzz. "A lot of indie bands have that 'too cool for school' attitude and I think they're nitwits," he says. "We've always wanted to fight from the inside out, rather than being cynical from the outside in. It's much more powerful."



BLACK REBEL MOTORCYCLE CLUB



Global Pulse

TOM FERGUSON tferguson@eu.billboard.com

Keeping A Legacy Alive

Shaila Dúrcal Pays Tribute To Her Late Mother Rocío

One year after the death of **Rocío Dúrcal**, daughter **Shaila** is keeping the revered Spanish singer's memory alive through the release of a musical homage. Within just six weeks of the Feb. 5 Spain release of "Recordando" (EMI Music Mexico), the 12-track album had gone platinum (80,000 units), according to charts compiler Media Control. The set, which comprises 10 reworkings of Rocío's songs (published by BMG Publishing) plus two new works (EMI Music Publishing), entered at No. 1, and moved 2-1-2 in the following weeks. "It is very important that the essence of my mother lives on forever," the 27-year-old artist says. "Recordando" has since been released in Dúrcal's current home Mexico, as well as Colombia and the United States. Rocío died from cancer in March 2006.

"I want young people to know about the legacy of my mother, and for lots of people to listen to her songs," Shaila says. "That's why the album has all kinds of styles—pop, ballads, rancheras." EMI Music Spain product manager **Angel Alonso** says, "This is Shaila's first record in Spain—she had an earlier album in Mexico—and we're very happy that she's made an immediate impact."

Shaila's booking agent/manager is Mexico-based **Alejandro Barrales** at BC Music & Management. —Howell Lewellyn

UTADA'S LIFE: Japanese pop star **Utada Hikaru** has put her hand up as an early contender for the No. 1 single of

2007. The female vocalist's "Flavor of Life" has been a multiformat smash in Japan, where the Toshiba-EMI track recently finished three weeks at No. 1 on the SoundScan Japan (SSJ) chart after its Feb. 28 release. So far, it has shifted more than 700,000 physical copies, according to the label, and has been certified triple-platinum by the Recording Industry Assn. of Japan. Toshiba-EMI says "Flavor of Life" has sold 5.3 million units, including 300,000 PC-based downloads, 900,000 mobile-based downloads and 3.4 million digital versions—such as master ringtones, "machi-uta" ringback tones and mobile-video ringback tones.

The track, jointly published by Nichion and U3Music, has been used as the theme song to TV drama series "Hana Yori Dang" ("Boys Over Flowers") broadcast on the TBS network.

"The chart performance is especially impressive given that Utada is usually considered an album artist," SSJ GM **Tadashi Takahashi** says. Utada's 1999 debut album, "First Love," is Japan's all-time top-selling album, with total sales to date of more than 9 million, according to Toshiba-EMI.

—Steve McClure



DÚRCAL

TILLIS



Nashville Scene

KEN TUCKER ktucker@billboard.com

Pam Tillis, On Her Own

Country Star Asserts Her Artistry On First Indie Release

"Major label? I don't need no stinking major label." OK, **Pam Tillis** didn't appropriate the memorable quote from "The Treasure of Sierra Madre," I did. But the sentiment is there. "You get to a point in your career where you do get tired of vying for the dollars and attention of your label," Tillis says.

During her 25-year-plus career, Tillis has always recorded for majors, but now she's taken matters into her own hands. "We can focus all our energies on this one project and that's awesome," Tillis says of her label, Stellar Cat, which is a joint venture with Nashville-based Thirty Tigers and is distributed by Sony BMG RED. "What you lack in size and muscle and clout, you make up for in intensity and focus and passion.

"We don't have to sell a million copies to be viable," she adds, sounding a refrain familiar to newly independent artists.

Her first indie record, "Rhinestoned," released April 17, is as impressive a collection as anything she released on a major—perhaps better.

Co-producing with **Gary Nicholson** and **Matt Spicher**, Tillis put together a complete package. "People are concerned with having 10 singles and don't think in terms of an album anymore," she says of today's producers and A&R people. "To me, an album cut is not filler. It's just like when you paint a painting, there has to be stuff in the background. The background sets off the foreground."

There's an artistic advantage to being on an indie, Tillis says. "You don't have to water down your music, you don't have to be all things to all people, you can just be yourself and know that if you like it, there's going to be other people out there that like it, too."

That said, Tillis maintains that her new album is not a radical departure from her successful major label records. "I'm not trying to alienate

my radio fans—I love them. I just want to take them on this journey with me."

The journey is filled with introspective songs that lean toward past loves and love lost. "Train Without a Whistle" is a cautionary tale of a fly-by-night lover, while "The Hard Way," written by Tillis with her brother, **Mel Tillis Jr.**, is an honest look at the failure to learn from mistakes.

"Life Has Sure Changed Us Around," an entertaining romp through a couple's memories of their wilder days ("Our sins were not original, but we gave them our own twist") that was written by Tillis and Nicholson, is a duet with country legend **John Anderson**, with whom, amazingly, she has never recorded before.

"Band in the Window" is a look at the bars and clubs of Nashville's Lower Broadway and the people who play them. "That's the Nashville I'm celebrating," Tillis says. "People who do music for the love of it. When I found that song, the whole album came together in my mind."

Meanwhile, the album's spiritual closer, "Over My Head," is a testament to better days ahead.

In addition to country radio, Tillis' music has been released to the Americana format. "I feel like I'm starting over again," Tillis says happily.

Eventually Tillis would like to reprise "It's All Relative: Tillis Sings Tillis," the album she recorded with her father **Mel Tillis**, but with a twist—each will produce five sides by the other. Tillis already has a song in mind for her famous stuttering father. "I want Dad to record a version of 'Bad to the Bone,'" she says with a laugh.

Tillis is clearly content with her career and where it stands. "I got to make my mark at radio, and I've got my audience, and I can work, and I can pay my bills, and now I feel like I don't have to hit anybody over the head with my music. I'm just doing my thing. It's all about fun for me right now." ...



Classical Score

ANASTASIA TSIOLCAS atsioulcas@billboard.com

From Los Angeles, An Easter Surprise

Young Conductor Replacing Salonen At Los Angeles Philharmonic

The news arrived hastily at the oddest hour: early on Easter Sunday morning, a time hardly associated with big music industry happenings. What the message contained, however, was even more astonishing.

Not only would **Esa-Pekka Salonen**, the conductor who has molded the Los Angeles Philharmonic into one of today's most exciting orchestras, step down from his post at the end of the 2008-09 concert season, but his successor, who has signed a five-year contract, is 26-year-old **Gustavo Dudamel**, a Venezuelan dynamo who until three years ago had never conducted any professional orchestra.

Despite current conductor searches at three major podiums—**Chicago**, **Philadelphia** and the **New York Philharmonic**—Salonen, 48, isn't leaving to take another music director gig. Instead, he wants to carve out more time for composing.

Through representatives, Dudamel declined to be interviewed for this piece, citing scheduling overload. (He has generally been declining interviews since the Los Angeles Times broke the story of his appointment on April 8 and the L.A. Phil issued its official notice that same day.) The young

conductor commented in the press release announcing his appointment, "Almost two years ago, I made my United States debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and from the first moment I stepped onto the stage, I felt a special connection and deep feeling from the players."

Despite his short professional career, Dudamel has made a big splash thus far. While continuing on as music director of the **Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra** in Venezuela and as principal conductor of Sweden's **Gothenburg Symphony**, Dudamel will conduct 10 weeks of the 2009-10 season as well as summer concerts at the Hollywood Bowl. In the four following years, he will be in Los Angeles for 14 weeks of the season, plus appear with the orchestra at the Hollywood Bowl and on tours.

During an era in which many top American orchestras are regularly assailed for their utter lack of risk-taking when it comes to hiring music directors, the L.A. Phil's news has shaken up the orchestral world. It also leaves the orchestra's recording profile in potential flux. Under Salonen's reign, the Los Angeles orchestra has initiated a highly successful partnership with

Deutsche Grammophon in its digital "DG Concerts" series; their releases thus far have largely featured such 20th- and 21st-century composers as **Steve Reich**, **Arvo Part**, **Louis Andriessen** and **Witold Lutoslawski**.

By stark contrast, Dudamel's own recording career, for which he is coincidentally signed exclusively to Deutsche Grammophon, has so far hewed strongly to tried-and-true crowd pleasers. His first album, a reading of the **Beethoven Symphonies Nos. 5 and 7**, made with the **Simon Bolivar Youth Orchestra**, was issued in September; his next recording, which will be **Mahler's Fifth Symphony**, is slated for release later this year. It's calling-card repertoire that is in large part geared toward introducing the youthful Dudamel to an international audience (though, undoubtedly, his name is far more familiar now to many classical listeners than it was a few short weeks ago).

Nevertheless, the L.A. Phil has a long history of placing its bet on up-and-comers. **Zubin Mehta** was just 26 as well when he became music director in Los Angeles in 1962, and Salonen himself was only 34 when he assumed the same position in 1992. ...



DUDAMEL

THE BILLBOARD REVIEWS

SINGLES

from >>p35

some utterly forgotten. But the 12 tracks on "Ghetto-blasters" finally unify his multiple personalities, through the lens of '80s revivalism. With a colorful troupe of collaborators (including best-kept-secret New York band Kudu and hip-hop star Fat Joe) Van Helden taps into the decade's every musical current. There's high-drama New York freestyle ("Still in Love"), jacking Chicago house ("Je T'aime"), first-wave party rap ("This Ain't Hollywood"), total pop indulgence ("Go Crazy"), funky art-rock a la ESG ("Playing House") and unexpected combinations of them all. Van Helden pulls it off with an energetic authenticity that puts the rehashed mash-up craze to shame.—*KM*

WORLD

IBRAHIM FERRER

Mi Sueño

Producers: Nick Gold, Roberto Fonseca
Nonesuch

Release Date: April 24

▶ This is the late Ibrahim Ferrer's final album, and he certainly departed with a flourish. The brainstorm that resulted in the "Buena Vista Social Club" album, released in 1997, resurrected Ferrer's career, and he made the most of the opportunity. He was a stylish vocalist, possessed of a wonderfully nuanced interpretive gift, and that gift is very much in evidence on "Mi Sueño." The record features some masterful players, including Orlando "Cachaíto" López, co-producer Roberto Fonseca, the late Rubén González and vocalist Omara Portuondo.

Ferrer's vocals are simply enchanting from opening to finale. "Mi Sueño" ("My Dream") is Ferrer's dream of doing a bolero album come to life. He sings these songs with great poise and a good deal of Latin soul. Particularly choice moments include "Dos Almas," "Copa Guajira," the duet "Quizás, Quizás," with Portuondo, and "Convergencia."—*PVV*

MARTIRIO

Primavera en Nueva York

Producer: Nat Chediak
Calle 54

Release Date: April 17

★ Spanish vocalist Martirio tracked this collection of boleros in May 2006 at Avatar Studios in New York, so the title ("Spring in New York") is more literal than one might imagine. Flanked by heavy-hitters like Dafnis Prieto and Paquito D'Rivera, Martirio's performance is positively elegant. She can sing everything from flamenco to pop, and sing it beautifully, so it's no surprise that she has her way with the bolero. The genre is the stuff of romance, while the arrangements flirt quite successfully with jazz. The combination elicits a vibe that's at once urbane and sultry. Highlights include "No Pueda Callar," "Son Cosas Que Pasan" and "Primera Iluvia," though in truth every track is golden.—*PVV*

Additional reviews online this week at billboard.com:

- The Hold Steady, "Live at Fingerprints" (Indie store exclusive)
- Bireli Lagrene, "Djangology" and "To Bi or Not to Bi" (Dreyfus)

POP

LINKIN PARK

What I've Done (3:27)

Producers: Rick Rubin, Mike Shinoda, Linkin Park

Publishers: various
Machine Shop/Warner Bros.

▶ Radio didn't instantly leap on "What I've Done" just because it's been a few minutes since Linkin Park released a new album. If this song is any indication, "Minutes to Midnight" will be another hit-filled juggernaut in the vein of previous sets "Hybrid Theory" and "Metora." The genius of this track is that it packs a wallop even as it backs off from the heavily produced style of Linkin Park's catalog—minimalism is the key. Piano and programmed drums trade off as the song's focal point, nimbly skipping about. Brad Delson lets his guitar flare only when necessary at the chorus and bridge, while Chester Bennington holds screams in check. "What I've Done" is catchy and memorable. Prepare for air-wave saturation.—*CLT*

NELLY FURTADO

All Good Things (Come to an End) (3:48)

Producers: Timbaland, Nate "Danja" Hills

Writers: N. Furtado, Timbaland, Danja, C. Martin
Publishers: various
Geffen

▶ Nelly Furtado's chart-topping "Promiscuous" offered a dubious omen that the Canadian singer/songwriter's "Loose" was merely going to rip off Gwen Stefani's throwaway pop. Psych! Bewitching "Say It Right" renewed faith, with its melodic stamp and now third single "All Good Things (Come to an End)"—which has topped charts in 20 countries—is again adventurous, hip, playful and enduring. Featuring an enlightened lyric ("Pain sets in and I don't cry/I only feel gravity and wonder why") with the track's hypnotic melody featuring contribution from Coldplay's Chris Martin, "Good" lives up to Furtado's 2001 double Grammy Award nods. Our hope is that after this winning release runs its course, Geffen will rerelease "Maneater," still an unparalleled track and a

contender to command top 40, R&B and dance.—*CT*

ALANIS MORISSETTE

My Humps (4:09)

Producer: not listed
Writers: W. Adams, D. Payton
Publishers: various
MySpace independent video

▶ Alanis Morissette truly knows the definition of ironic. It's hard not to howl over her sniper-sharp parody of "My Humps." What has made the rap-hit-turned-piano-ballad an Internet sensation is the hysterical video Morissette shot on the fly. Decked out in hottie attire, she shakes her junk with a barely concealed smile as she vamps with a pack of Blues Brothers-esque playas. The music for "My Humps" is completely reconstructed, so you don't know what you're in for until you catch the lyric. Morissette's piercing voice gives driveline like "What chu gonna do with all that breast inside that shirt?" a faux depth you never thought possible. We wondered what the Recording Academy was thinking when the Black Eyed Peas won a Grammy Award for this song, so Alanis, thank u for doling out a little justice.—*CLT*

ROCK

THE BRAVERY

Time Won't Let Me Go (4:10)

Producer: Brendan O'Brien
Writer: S. Endicott

RIHANNA

Umbrella (3:46)

Producer: Christopher "Tricky" Stewart

Writers: C. Stewart, T. Nash, T. Harrell, S. Carter

Publishers: various
Def Jam

Rihanna's move to the center with 2004 smash "S.O.S." was a shrewd move in advancing her authority as a mainstream hitmaker. With R&B/new wave groove "Umbrella," she is again poised to soak the pop and urban charts. With a chorus that recalls Ashlee Simpson's "L.O.V.E.," a synthy chord that snakes over high-hat drums and lyric of teenage adoration, Rihanna dares listeners to keep the hook out of their heads. This first single from upcoming third album "Good Girl Gone Bad" is just the beginning of summertime domination from the 19-year-old Cover Girl, whose "Umbrella" will be pervasive along beaches and a prime companion to convertible road trips. An accompanying mix featuring a disruptive rap from Jay-Z does nothing but demonstrate how dated his ubiquitous presence has become; trust in the original.—*HC*



Publisher: not listed
Island

▶ The Bravery's first single from forthcoming sophomore album "The Sun and the Moon" finds the New York-based quintet ironing out dance-rock creases and embracing a simpler downtempo sound. Frontman Sam Endicott wistfully sings of life's regrets and missed opportunities as his throaty vocals soar and crack between synth-infused guitar riffs. While demonstrating maturity, the song lacks the same gusto and innovation

prevalent on 2005's self-titled debut, which earned the Bravery comparisons to labelmates the Killers. Nonetheless, with indie-pop flavor and a high-school-anthem vibe "Time" will find a home at modern rock radio and showcase the Bravery's evolving style.—*SH*

TRIPLE A

SHAWN MULLINS

Find Love (3:54)

Producer: Shawn Mullins
Writer: S. Mullins
Publisher: Roadie/odie/Bug, BMI
Vanguard

★ Having one signature hit is a blessing and a curse: "You made it! Now work without end to repeat." Shawn Mullins, who catapulted "Lullaby (Rockaby)" to The Billboard Hot 100 top 10 in 1999, found modest success last year with "Beautiful Wreck" at triple A and Americana, spawning promise for upcoming "9th World Pickin' Parlor." "Find Love" is a more likely bid for his mainstream second shot, which skillfully nods to the Chris Isaak or Roy Orbison songbooks, showcasing savory acoustic guitars and a steam engine midtempo beat. Early kudos from Rolling Stone, VH1 and his hometown Atlanta Journal-Constitution point to positive impact.—*CT*

KELLY CLARKSON

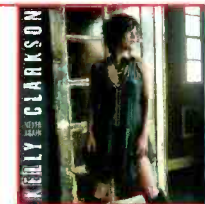
Never Again (3:37)

Producers: David Kahne, Jason Halbert, Jimmy Messer

Writers: K. Clarkson, J. Messer

Publishers: various
RCA

▶ Pop's ruling queen Kelly Clarkson marks her anticipated return with rough-and-ready anthem "Never Again." As with 2004-2005 staple "Since U Been Gone," America's sweetheart is mightily pissed off: "I hope the ring you gave to her turns her finger green/I hope when you're in bed with her you think of me." Lip-curling guitars and percussion lurch and lunge alongside Clarkson's uptempo rant, with multiple vocal layers and background echoes adding to the emotional torrent. The first single from upcoming third opus "My December" is guaranteed top 40's unbridled support as she maintains standing as one of the format's few sure things. No. 1 Billboard Hot 100 domination is a given. Great to have one of the best back, albeit in a disarmingly foul mood.—*CT*



LEGEND & CREDITS

EDITED BY JONATHAN COHEN (ALBUMS) AND CHUCK TAYLOR (SINGLES)

CONTRIBUTORS: Troy Carpenter, Mariel Concepcion, Hillary Crosley, Gary Graff, Stephanie Horst, Kerri Mason, Dan Ouellette, Michael Paoletta, Mark Sutherland, Chuck Taylor, Christa L. Titus, Ken Tucker, Philip Van Vleck, Susan Visakowitz

PICK ▶: A new release predicted to hit the top half of the chart in the corresponding format.

CRITICS' CHOICE ★: A new release, regardless of chart potential, highly recommended for musical merit.

All albums commercially available in the United States are eligible. Send album review copies to Jonathan Cohen and singles review copies to Chuck Taylor (both at Billboard, 770 Broadway, Sixth Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003) or to the writers in the appropriate bureaus.

THE HOT BOX

A WEEKLY ROUNDUP OF NOTABLE CHART ACHIEVEMENTS

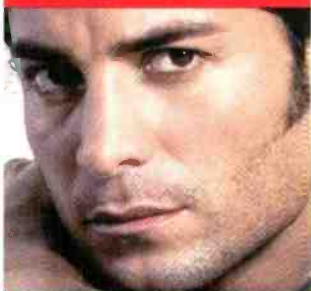


CÉU SAYS HELLO

>> Brazilian singer/songwriter CÉU's self-titled album vaults up The Billboard 200, moving 146-57 with a 50% increase. The set, powered by Starbucks sales, becomes the first non-Celtic Woman title to be No. 1 on Top World Albums since Aug. 6, 2005.

RING THE BELL

>> The Washington Post's April 8 story on its experiment posing violinist Joshua Bell as a street musician is the buzz of the blogosphere. Nearly all his albums post sales increases this week, including "Voice of the Violin" which is up 248% (No. 1 on Top Classical Albums, No. 13 on Top Heatseekers).



LUCKY SEVEN

>> Chayanne notches his highest-charting album on The Billboard 200, as "Mi Tiempo" begins at No. 42 with 17,000. It's also his seventh consecutive top 10 set on Top Latin Albums, where it debuts at No. 2.

CHART BEAT

>> Growing popularity at pop radio and a resurgence in digital sales send Carrie Underwood's "Before He Cheats" (Arista) to a new peak on The Billboard Hot 100. The single, which is now part of the class of 2007 instead of 2006, had apparently peaked at No. 16 in its 11th week on the chart. But now, in its 33rd frame, "Cheats" rebounds 22-15. It's the longest journey into the top 15 in Hot 100 history.

>> Avril Lavigne's "Girlfriend" (RCA) also surprises with a new peak position, as it makes a 6-3 move. It's only the seventh chart week for the track, though it seemed to have debuted and peaked at No. 5. By moving to third place, it is the second-highest charting single of Lavigne's career, runner-up to first hit "Complicated," which peaked at No. 3.

Read Fred Bronson every week at billboard.com/fred.

Billboard CHARTS



Over the Counter

GEOFF MAYFIELD gmayfield@billboard.com

Post-Easter Dip Less Severe Than It Appears

Everybody calm down. In a year when album sales have slid more than most analysts and industry insiders anticipated, I beg you not to overreact to this particular week's set of numbers.

Certainly the dip of almost 24% from prior-week sales makes sense. Last issue, reflecting the week ending April 8, included gift-shopping for Easter baskets, while the one that ended April 15 was a non-holiday week. So, no panic there.

The comparison that would be prone to cause more alarm is the 31.6% plunge from the same-week of 2006, yet the explanation remains as simple as the one noted in the previous paragraph.

As stated here last issue, the roving Easter holiday landed on April 16 last year, therefore falling a week later than it did this year. So, again, this issue's comparative-week numbers compare a holiday frame with a non-holiday week.

If you line up Easter 2006 with 2007, the one from this year was only 10% lighter. Yeah, we'd be happier with a smaller Easter-to-Easter miss, or even flat, but a 10% decline certainly alarms less than a gap of more than 30%. You have to remember to compare apples to apples—or in this case, eggs to eggs.

So, how 'bout the fact that "Now 24"

can lead The Billboard 200 with 89,000 copies, the fourth time this year that an album could top the big chart with a sum lower than 90,000. Is that cause for panic?

Hastings Entertainment chief John Marmaduke might cite those lighter numbers as a cue for his ongoing campaign to spread key releases throughout all 12 months.

I also suspect that as music companies grapple with readjusting their business models, the lighter numbers we sometimes see at No. 1 are more a cause for concern than panic.

As digital tracks, ringtones and other mobile phone plays, Internet streaming and other new modes of music delivery continue to evolve, lighter album numbers seem more indicative of an evolution that seems to be moving at a revolutionary pace. Or, to twist a hook from Barry McGuire's anthem, I don't believe we're on the eve of destruction.

Mind you, I won't play Pollyanna and pretend the 2007 album picture isn't concerning. Even with digital albums growing by 58%, overall album sales are down 17%, a pace accelerated by the 21% decline of CDs.

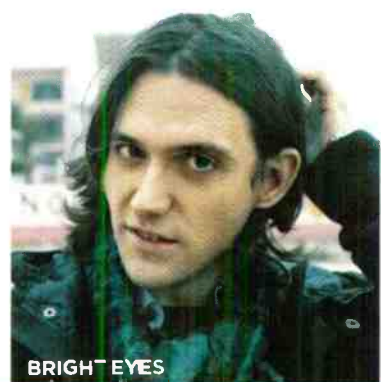
Certainly album sales hit a wall as soon as the Christmas-selling season

ended. But give us the more thoughtful album flow that Marmaduke and other retailers have been begging for, and the picture might look less dire.

On that score, kudos to Nine Inch Nails and Avril Lavigne, whose new albums arrived April 17, rather than the last four months of the year, and to Maroon 5 and 50 Cent, whose next sets arrive May 22 and June 19 respectively. After the lapsed 2006 that we lived through, ain't it cool to see high-profile acts target a month earlier than September?

Lavigne should lead the page next issue, while she and NIN could surpass 200,000. The latter does this week at No. 11 on Top Internet Albums.

QUITE BRIGHTLY: With record com-



BRIGHT EYES

panies pushing any marquis-value releases they had before Easter, the Tuesday after the holiday carried a light schedule.

That and the softness of the post-Easter volume allowed indie darling Bright Eyes to make the most of its largest sales week to date. "Cassadaga" sells 58,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan, good for No. 4 on The Billboard 200.

Both marks are career bests for Conor Oberst's vehicle. "I'm Wide Awake, It's Morning" earned the previous peaks in 2005 when it opened at No. 10 with 56,000 sold in the same week the band's "Digital Ash in a Digital Urn" started at No. 15 with 46,000.

FOR THE RECORD: Erasure's "I Could Fall in Love (With You)" was initially identified as an EP, rather than a single. It should have bowed last week at No. 1 on Hot Dance Single Sales and No. 5 on Hot Singles Sales.

Also, a late reprocessing by Nielsen SoundScan put the start of Martina McBride's "Waking Up Laughing" at 138,000 copies. The album's rank was correct last issue on The Billboard 200 and Top Country Albums, but its total was overstated on the latter page's between the bullets.

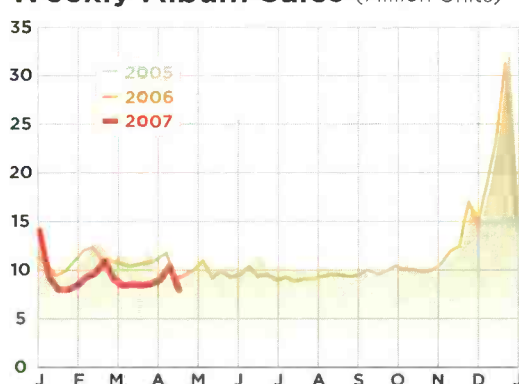
Market Watch A Weekly National Music Sales Report

Weekly Unit Sales

	ALBUMS	DIGITAL ALBUMS*	DIGITAL TRACKS
This Week	8,059,000	908,000	16,066,000
Last Week	10,582,000	957,000	16,148,000
Change	-23.8%	-5.1%	-0.5%
This Week Last Year	11,789,000	539,000	10,074,000
Change	-31.6%	68.5%	59.5%

*Digital album sales are also counted within album sales.

Weekly Album Sales (Million Units)



Year-To-Date

	2006	2007	CHANGE
OVERALL UNIT SALES			
Albums	163,388,000	135,753,000	-16.9%
Digital Tracks	164,266,000	250,815,000	52.7%
Store Singles	1,017,000	635,000	-37.6%
Total	328,671,000	387,203,000	17.3%
Albums w/TEA*	179,814,600	160,834,500	-10.2%

*Includes track equivalent album sales (TEA) with 10 track downloads equivalent to one album sale.

DIGITAL TRACKS SALES



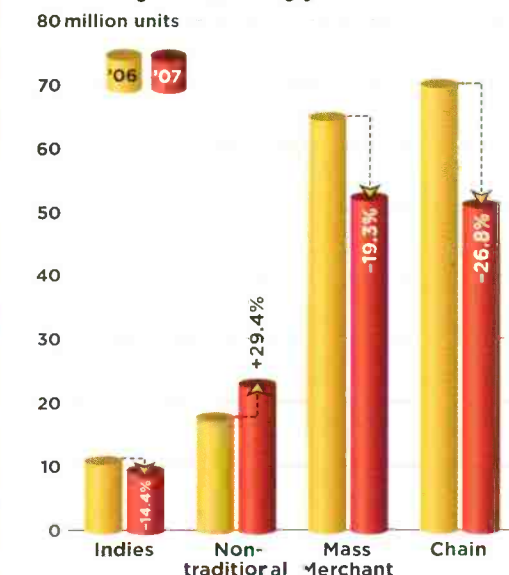
SALES BY ALBUM FORMAT

CD	154,159,000	121,954,000	-20.5%
Digital	8,501,000	13,400,000	57.2%
Cassette	442,000	119,000	-73.1%
Other	286,000	280,000	-15.7%

For week ending April 15, 2007. Figures are rounded. Compiled from a national sample of retail store and rack sales reports collected and provided by

Nielsen SoundScan

Year-To-Date Album Sales By Store Type



APR 28 2007 THE Billboard 200

Main Billboard 200 chart table listing artists, album titles, and chart positions.

Continuation of the Billboard 200 chart table.

Rock group with members from Pantera, Nothingface and Mudvayne starts with 45,000 sold.

Though he has been a fixture on our dance and electronic lists since 2001, this is his best sales week ever (11,000) and highest chart position.

Influential Family Christian chain is selling the album for \$5, which yields 679% jump for the 2005 set.

Blonde Redhead (No. 63) nabs its best week yet with 11,000, easily beating the No. 180 peak of 2004's "Misery Is a Butterfly."

Her video for "The Story" premiered during a special April 12 episode of "Grey's Anatomy." That, plus a Best Buy sale tag, pushes a 15% jump.

THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX table listing artist names and their corresponding chart positions.

Continuation of THE BILLBOARD 200 ARTIST INDEX table.

APRIL MONITORED BY SALES DATA COMPILED BY Nesen Broadcast Data Systems Nielsen SoundScan

HOT COUNTRY SONGS

Table with columns: This Week, Last Week, 2 Weeks Ago, Weeks on Chart, Title, Artist, Cert. Peak Position. Row 1: 1, 1, 2, 21, Wasted, Carrie Underwood, 1.



Up 2.4% in audience, it's the ninth top two single for the group. Trails chart leader Underwood by 4 million in audience.



His biggest hit in three years also becomes his longest charting single, as it sees a 16% jump in audience impressions.



Third offering from 'Love, Pain & the Whole Crazy Thing' bows with solid support from WCTV, Providence, R.I., and MSOP Salt Lake City.

Table with columns: This Week, Last Week, 2 Weeks Ago, Weeks on Chart, Title, Artist, Cert. Peak Position. Row 31: 31, 32, 33, 13, I Got More, Cole Deggs And The Lonesome, 31.

HITPREDICTOR

DATA PROVIDED BY promosquad

See chart legend for rules and explanations. Yellow indicates recently tested title, ☆ indicates New Release

Table with columns: Artist/Title/LABEL (Score), Chart Rank, Artist/Title/LABEL (Score), Chart Rank, Artist/Title/LABEL (Score), Chart Rank. Row 1: CARRIE UNDERWOOD Wasted ARISTA NASHVILLE (81.9), 1.

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BETWEEN THE BULLETS wjesser@billboard.com

'DIRECTIONS' LOOKS GOOD FOR CURRINGTON

Billy Currington's 'Good Directions' has the largest audience gain on the chart (No. 6, up 3.9 million audience impressions) scoring the Greatest Gainer award for a second straight week. It's the first time a song has snared the trophy two weeks in a row while in the top 10 since Toby Keith's 'As Good As I Once Was' did the trick in June 2005. Keith's song eventually went on to spend six weeks at No. 1



Right." It has spawned two earlier top 15 hits—"Must Be Doin' Somethin' Right" and "Why, Why, Why." Thanks to the success of the set's latest single, the album has staged a comeback on the Top Country Albums chart, with sales increases in 10 of the past 12 weeks.

Meanwhile, Carrie Underwood's "Wasted" holds at No. 1 for a second week. It's her 13th week at No. 1 overall, extending her lead as the female artist with the most weeks at No. 1 since 2000.

HOT COUNTRY SONGS: 123 country stations are electronically monitored by Nielsen Broadcast Data Systems, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Airplay awarded 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. © 2007 VNU Business Media, Inc. All rights reserved.

HITPREDICTOR: © 2007, Promosquad and HitPredictor are trademarks of Think Fast LLC. ALL CHARTS: See Chart Legend for rules and explanations

"Good Directions" is the third single from Currington's 2005 album "Coin Somethin'

EUROCHARTS

SINGLE SALES

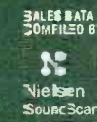
Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, ALBUM SALES CHARTS OF 20 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. APRIL 18, 2007. Includes entries like GIVE IT TO ME, GIRLFRIEND, SAY IT RIGHT, GRACE KELLY, WHAT GOES AROUND... COMES AROUND, MIRACLE, THE SWEET ESCAPE, EIN STERN (DER DEINEN NAMEN TRAGT), MAUVAISE FOI NOCTURNE, DESTINATION CALABRIA, STOP ME, AUX ARBRES CITOYENS, ALL GOOD THINGS (COME TO AN END), SPRING NICHT, BEAUTIFUL LIAR.

ALBUMS

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, ALBUM SALES CHARTS OF 20 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. APRIL 18, 2007. Includes entries like NELLY FURTADO, MIKA, JENNIFER LOPEZ, AMY WINEHOUSE, CASCADA, DIE FANTASTISCHEN VIER, KINGS OF LEON, JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, TAKE THAT, HERBERT GRONEMeyer, ANDREA BERG, SIMPLY RED, TIMBALAND, NORAH JONES, ROGER CICERO.

RADIO AIRPLAY

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, RADIO AIRPLAY INFORMATION FROM 17 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AS MONITORED AND TABULATED BY NIELSEN MUSIC CONTROL. APRIL 18, 2007. Includes entries like WHAT GOES AROUND... COMES AROUND, BEAUTIFUL LIAR, THE SWEET ESCAPE, ALL GOOD THINGS (COME TO AN END), GRACE KELLY, SAY IT RIGHT, AMERICA, RUBY, GIRLFRIEND, I DON'T NEED A MAN, SHINE, CHASING CARS, MAKES ME WONDER, SHEILA MADONNA, FAIRYTALE GONE BAD.



TOP JAZZ

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHIT, ARTIST, TITLE, IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL. Includes entries like HARRY CONNICK, JR., PAT METHENY / BRAD MEHLDAU, DIANA KRALL, KURT ELLING, RANDY CRAWFORD & JOE SAMPLE, THE BBC BIG BAND ORCHESTRA, MADELEINE PEYROUX, PATTI AUSTIN, WYNTON MARSALIS, CHRIS BOTTI, PAT METHENY / BRAD MEHLDAU, NAT KING COLE, MICHAEL BUBLE, RAY CHARLES + THE COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA, ROBERT GLASPER, MATT DUSK, HARRY CONNICK, JR., VARIOUS ARTISTS, LOUIS ARMSTRONG, GLADYS KNIGHT, THELONIOUS MONK QUARTET WITH JOHN COLTRANE, VARIOUS ARTISTS, GLENN MILLER, PAUL MOTIAN/BILL FRISELL/JOE LOVANO, DEPARTMENT OF GOOD AND EVIL.

TOP CLASSICAL

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHIT, ARTIST, TITLE, IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL. Includes entries like JOSHUA BELL, YO-YO MA, STING, STING, JOSHUA BELL, YUNDI LI/PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA (DAVIS), LORRAINE HUNT LIEBERSON WITH THE BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (LEVINE), KRONOS QUARTET, ANDRE RIEU, ANNA NETREBKO, LANG LANG, SARAH CHANG, JOSHUA BELL, VARIOUS ARTISTS, DAVID RUSSELL, LIBERA, GABRIELA MONTERO, CHRISTOPHER PARKENING/JUBILANT SYKES, POLYPHONY (LAYTON), THE 5 BROWNS, ANONYMOUS 4/DAROL ANGER/MIKE MARSHALL, HILARY HAHN, HAN-NA CHANG ORCHESTRA DELL'ACCADEMIA NAZIONALE DI SANTA CECILIA (PAPPANO), OLIVIER LATRY/THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA (ESCHENBACH), BERLIN PHILHARMONIC (RATTLE).

TOP CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHIT, ARTIST, TITLE, IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL. Includes entries like GEORGE BENSON & AL JAFREAU, KENNY G, DAVE KOZ, KIM WATERS, JEFF LORBER, BONEY JAMES, PAUL BROWN & FRIENDS, KENNY G, BILLY MARTIN / JOHN MEDESKI, BEN TANKARD, PETER WHITE, JEFF GOLUB, WAYMAN TISDALE, MARION MEADOWS, VARIOUS ARTISTS, WALTER BEASLEY, FOURPLAY, JAMIE CULLUM, BOB JAMES, MINDI ABAIR, DOWN TO THE BONE, HIROMI'S SONICBLOOM, THE RIPPINGTONS, MEDESKI SCOFIELD MARTIN & WOOD, HERBIE HANCOCK.

TOP CLASSICAL CROSSOVER

Table with columns: THIS WEEK, LAST WEEK, WEEKS ON CHIT, ARTIST, TITLE, IMPRINT & NUMBER / DISTRIBUTING LABEL. Includes entries like JOSH GROBAN, IL DIVO, IL DIVO, ANDREA BOCELLI, ANDREA BOCELLI, HAYLEY WESTENRA, IL DIVO, JUANITA BYNUM & JONATHAN BUTLER, ANDREA BOCELLI, SOUNDTRACK, SARAH BRIGHTMAN, JOHN WILLIAMS/YO-YO MA/ITZHAK PERLMAN, CHLOE, MORMON TABERNACLE CHORUS, VITTORIO, ANDIAMO, SOUNDTRACK, JOHN WILLIAMS AND JOHN EHRIDGE, HAYLEY WESTENRA, MORMON TABERNACLE CHORUS, SASHA & SHAWNIA, VARIOUS ARTISTS, THE STRING QUARTET TRIBUTE, MORRIS ROBINSON.

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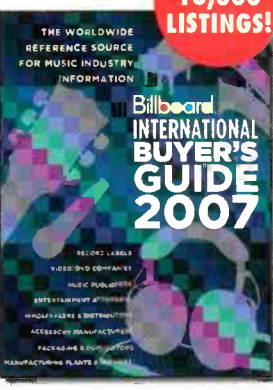
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF ASSETS
OF
THE SONGWRITER COLLECTIVE, LLC

Notice is hereby given that Fortress Credit Opportunities I LP, a Delaware limited partnership, as a lender and as agent on behalf of the lenders (the "Agent") under that certain Loan Agreement, dated as of March 1, 2004, as amended (the "Loan Agreement"), among The Songwriter Collective, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, as borrower (the "Debtor"), the Agent and the lenders, having postponed the public sales scheduled for November 4, 2005, December 14, 2005, January 31, 2006, March 14, 2006, April 25, 2006, June 6, 2006, July 18, 2006, August 29, 2006, October 17, 2006, November 29, 2006, January 9, 2007, February 20, 2007 and April 10, 2007, intends to sell at public sale in accordance with the provisions of the New York Uniform Commercial Code, certain personal property assets of the Debtor, generally described as all of the Debtor's right, title and interest of every kind and nature in and to all accounts, chattel paper, deposit accounts, documents, electronic chattel paper, equipment, general intangibles, goods, instruments, inventory, investment property, payment intangibles and software belonging to the Debtor, in each case whether tangible or intangible, wherever located or situated, including all rights to a portfolio of musical compositions, including, in some instances, copyrights of the musical compositions, the right to and interest in any and all revenues and licenses derived from such musical compositions, and all claims and causes of action related to the musical compositions accruing at any time and all other rights of the Debtor of any nature whatsoever in the musical compositions (the "Collateral"). A more detailed description of the Collateral will be provided to you upon execution of a confidentiality agreement.

The public sale will take place at the office of Sidley Austin LLP at 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019, on Tuesday, May 22nd, 2007 at 11:00 a.m., New York time. The Agent reserves the right to cancel the sale, without notice, in its entirety, or to adjourn the sale to a future date. The Agent may further adjourn the sale herein described to another date from time to time, before, during or after commencement of bidding, without written notice, by announcement at the time and place appointed for such auction, or any adjournment thereof, and, without further notice, such auction may be made at the time and place to which the auction may have been so adjourned.

Interested persons should take notice that the Collateral will be sold on the following terms and conditions:

1. All bids must be given orally at the public sale.
2. The Agent reserves the right to bid for and purchase the Collateral and to credit the purchase price against the expenses of sale and principal, interest and any and all other amounts due and payable to the Agent pursuant to the terms of any and all indebtedness secured by the security interest in the Collateral.
3. The Agent has sole discretion to determine which offer is the highest or best offer, and to reject any offer which it deems to be insufficient.
4. Concurrently with the acceptance of any bid, the prospective purchaser shall be required to execute and deliver to the Agent the Asset Purchase Agreement, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting one of the person's identified in the final paragraph of this notice, containing terms of sale and conditions precedent to the Agent's obligation to sell, in each case, in addition to those set forth herein, including, without limitation, the requirement that the sale of the Collateral pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement be consummated no earlier than 30 days following execution thereof.
5. Upon acceptance of any bid, the prospective purchaser shall be required to deposit (the "Deposit") with the Agent earnest money in an amount equal to ten percent of the purchase price. Such Deposit shall only be refunded to such prospective purchaser as, and to the extent, provided in the Asset Purchase Agreement. In all other cases, the Agent shall have the right to retain such Deposit. If such sale of the Collateral is consummated with such prospective purchaser, the full amount of such Deposit shall be applied to the purchase price. If such sale is not consummated, the Agent shall have the right, but shall have no obligation, to reoffer the Collateral for sale, without further notice. The prospective purchaser shall not be entitled to any interest on the Deposit held by the Agent, whether or not the Deposit is required to be refunded to such prospective purchaser by the Agent pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement.
6. No bids may be withdrawn once made, but no sale is final until accepted by the Agent.
7. Only cash or cashier's check or other immediately available funds will be accepted for the Deposit or for payment of the purchase price. The bid of any prospective purchaser who fails to tender proper payment may be rejected and the Agent may, subject to the other terms hereof, (i) accept any alternative bid made at the sale, in which case the Agent shall have no obligation to reconvene the sale, accept additional bids, or notify any other bidders of the acceptance of such bid, or (ii) reoffer the Collateral for sale without further notice, in each case, at the Agent's option. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, the Agent shall not be obligated to make any sale of the Collateral pursuant to this notice.
8. In the event the Agent is unable to consummate any sale and deliver the Collateral to a purchaser, then the sole liability of the Agent to such purchaser shall be to refund the purchase price, if any, previously paid to the Agent.
9. The Agent will announce at the outset of the public sale whether the Collateral will be sold in whole or in part, and whether the Collateral will be sold in one or more lots.
10. Subject to satisfaction of all of the conditions precedent to the Agent's obligation to sell the Collateral pursuant to the Asset Purchase Agreement and the terms and conditions hereof, consummation of the sale of the Collateral will be made immediately upon receipt by the Agent of the purchase price and shall be evidenced by delivery of the Collateral to the purchaser thereof, BUT WITHOUT DELIVERY OF A BILL OF SALE, WITHOUT GUARANTEE OF SIGNATURES, WITHOUT PAYMENT OF ANY TRANSFER OR OTHER TAX, AND WITHOUT REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTY BY THE AGENT, AND SUBJECT TO ALL DEFENSES.
11. The above terms and conditions of sale may be subject to additional or amended terms and conditions to be announced at the time of sale.
12. If any dispute arises between two or more bidders, the Agent may decide the same or put the Collateral up for sale again and resell to the purchaser submitting the best bid, as determined by the Agent. In all cases, the Agent's decision shall be final.
13. All bidders and other persons attending this auction agree that they have full knowledge of the terms set forth above and contained in the Asset Purchase Agreement and agree to be bound by the terms hereof and thereof.
14. The Debtor shall have the right to redeem the Collateral in accordance with, and only to the extent provided for, under applicable law.

Persons desiring further information as to the public sale of the Collateral, and the terms and condition relating thereto, and/or desiring to obtain copies of the confidentiality agreement or the Asset Purchase Agreement, may contact either Martin Jackson (212/839-6726) of Sidley Austin LLP, 787 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019 or Colleen McDonald (415/772-1207) of Sidley Austin LLP, 555 California Street, San Francisco, California 94104, counsel for the Agent.

April 21, 2007

MILEPOSTS

COMPILED BY KRISTINA TUNZI ktunzi@billboard.com

Don Ho, 76

Don Ho, 76, legendary crooner who entertained Hawaiian tourists for four decades wearing raspberry-tinted sunglasses and singing his catchy signature tune "Tiny Bubbles," died April 14 of heart failure.



Inspired by the U.S. military planes flying in and out of Hawaii during World War II, Donald Tai Loy Ho—who was of Hawaiian, Chinese, Portuguese, Dutch and German descent—joined the Air Force. As the Korean War wound down, he piloted transport planes between Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu and Tokyo.

When he returned home and took over his parents' struggling neighborhood bar, Honey's, he put together a band and started performing at his father's request. For years after, for many, no trip to Hawaii was complete without seeing his Waikiki show—a mix of songs, jokes, double-entendres, Hawaiian history and audience participation.

Besides "Tiny Bubbles," his other well-known songs include "I'll Remember You," "With All My Love" and "Hawaiian Wedding Song." Ho is survived by his wife, Haumea, and 10 children, including recording artist Hoku, who sometimes performed with her father.

BIRTHS

BOY: Ellington Fair, April 16 to **Ron and Stefanie Ridel-Fair**. Father is chairman of Geffen Records, and mother, formerly of Wild Orchid, is a singer/songwriter/producer.

DEATHS

Beto Quintanilla, 57, a regional Mexican singer who achieved fame with a daring arsenal of the topical narrative songs known as corridos, died March 18.

Quintanilla had been rumored to have died last year in the wake of the murder of regional Mexican singer Valentín Elizalde. Recent news of his death again stirred up reports that he had been killed, but Quintanilla died of natural causes in a hospital in Reynosa, Mexico.

Born Quintanilla Iracheta, he was known as "el León de los Corridos" (the Lion of Corridos) and had long recorded for indie Frontera Records.

Henson Cargill, 55, Oklahoma City-born country music singer best-known for his hit "Skip a Rope," died March 24 from complications following surgery.

"Skip a Rope" topped the country charts in 1968 and crossed over to the pop charts. His other hits included "Row Row Row," "None of My Business" and "The Most Uncomplicated Good-Bye I've Ever Heard."

In the 1980s, Cargill owned and operated a western Oklahoma City country music club known as Henson's. Those who performed there included Ray Charles, Merle Haggard, Roy Orbison, Glenn Campbell, Waylon Jennings and Cargill's friend Johnny Cash.

Mimi Lerner, 61, internationally renowned mezzo-soprano died March 29 of complications from cancer.

A longtime Pittsburgh resident who was a cantorial soloist at a local synagogue, Lerner sang in Europe at La Scala, Glyndebourne, the Théâtre du Châtelet, the Netherlands Opera and La Monnaie, and with North American companies including the Metropolitan Opera, Seattle Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Santa Fe Opera and Washington Opera.

She was also chairman of the voice faculty at Carnegie Mellon, where she received her master's degree in voice.

She was diagnosed with cancer—a tumor in her heart—in 1995. In July 2000 she underwent surgery that involved the removal, rebuilding and replacement of her heart. But in October 2001, she returned to the stage for an intimate recital in Kresge Recital Hall at Carnegie Mellon University.

Lerner is survived by her son, Daniel, and her sister, Lizette Corman.

Frank Rochman, 68, a veteran independent distributor, died April 10 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., due to complications from heart trouble, emphysema and cancer.

Rochman co-founded Duluth, Ga.-based Rock Bottom Distribution with partner Jeff Scheible 25 years ago. The company worked with such labels as Mardi Gras, Delmark, Landslide Record, Taragon Records and CMH. Rochman worked from his Fort Lauderdale home, selling some accounts like Alliance Entertainment Corp. and serving as label liaison. Prior to Rock Bottom, Rochman was a branch manager with Trans Con and Tone Distributors, two long-defunct wholesalers.

Rochman is survived by children Rachael, Tim and Aly. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations in Rochman's name to the American Lung Assn.

BACKBEAT

EXECUTIVE TURNTABLE

Send submissions to: exec@billboard.com

RECORD COMPANIES: Warner/Chappell Music promotes **Chris Hicks** to senior VP of A&R and head of urban music, while Atlantic Records has tapped him as senior VP of urban A&R. He was the publishing unit's VP of urban A&R.

Walt Disney Records promotes **Damon Whiteside** to senior VP of marketing. He was VP.

Universal Music Group promotes **Lawrence Kenswil** to executive VP of business strategy. He previously headed eLabs, UMG's new-media and technology division.

Provident Music Group appoints **Bob Heaster** corporate controller. He was senior director of finance at Sony BMG Music Publishing.

Zomba Label Group names **Bridgett Germroth** director of adult formats. She held the same title at Island Def Jam Music Group.

Park Lane Drive Records names **Henry Golis Jr.** CEO. He was VP at Mansfield Publishing and remains co-owner.

BMG Label Group promotes **Marissa Mencher** to senior VP of human resources. She was VP.

Universal Music Group International promotes **Jean-Christophe Casalonga** to VP of physical operations for its supply chain management unit. He was director of planning and procurement.

Big Machine Records names **Jamice Jennings** artist development and secondary promotion rep. She handled marketing and promotions at Oceanaut Watch.



HICKS

WHITESIDE

KENSWIL

JONES

TOURING: Live Nation promotes three executives in its venue divisions: **Karl Adams** to senior VP of the Chicago region, **Matt Prieshoff** to senior VP of the northern California and Pacific Northwest regions, and **AJ Wasson** to senior VP of the Florida region.

PUBLISHING: Peermusic Latin promotes **Marissa Lopez** to West Coast assistant manager. She was creative assistant.

DISTRIBUTION: Universal Music Distribution promotes **Kurt McDermott** to VP of mass merchants. He was senior director.

RELATED FIELDS: Retail Entertainment Design names **Ed Steinberg** VP of licensing and label relations. He was a media relations and licensing consultant to the company.

The Mitch Schneider Organization names **Chelsi Schriver** and **Bari Lieberman** tour publicists. They were assistants.

Apple Corps names **Jeff Jones** CEO. He was executive VP at Legacy Recordings/Sony BMG Catalog Worldwide.

The American Assn. of Independent Music names **Jim Mahoney** membership director. He was president at Fat Beats.

—Edited by Mitchell Peters

GOODWORKS

JAZZY SENSATION

The Jazz Foundation of America will hold its sixth annual A Great Night in Harlem benefit concert at the Apollo Theater in New York. Hosted by Bill Cosby, the May 17 event will feature appearances and performances by Roy Haynes, Ron Carter and others. Jazz pianist Dave Brubeck will be honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Funds raised from the benefit will provide emergency assistance and long-term support to jazz and blues musicians in need. For more info, go to jazzfoundation.org.



BILLBOARD UNDERGROUND

Billboard Underground presented **Crash Boom Bang** March 12 at the Cutting Room in New York. PHOTOS: COURTESY OF RICK GILBERT/SKYHOOK ENTERTAINMENT

ABOVE: From left are Billboard online editor **Katie Hasty**, drummer **Mauricio**, singer **Omar**, guitarist **Chauce**, bassist **Raul** and Billboard senior pop correspondent **Chuck Taylor**.

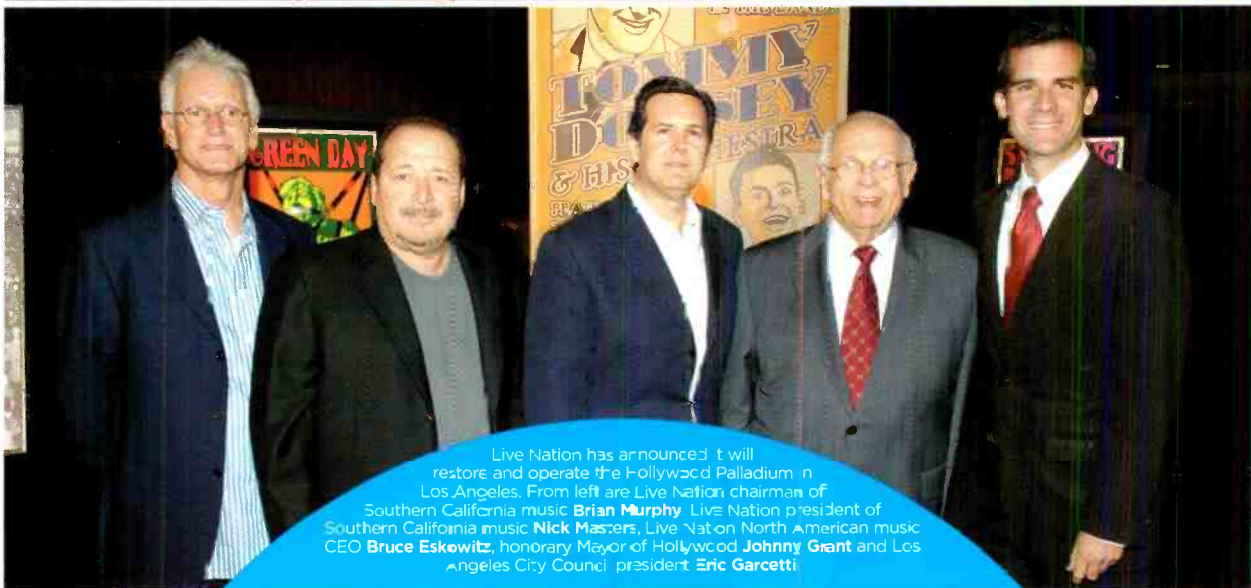
BELOW: **Crash Boom Bang** takes over the Cutting Room.



Super-producers **the Underdogs** have been busy lately working with such artists as Jennifer Hudson, recording a track with Antonio Banderas and Eddie Murphy for "Shrek the Third" and working on Whitney Houston's new album. Here, **Damon Thomas**, left, and **Harvey Mason Jr.**, right, hang in the studio with **Chris Brown**. PHOTO: COURTESY OF DABLING HARWARD



UJA Federation of New York's Music for Youth initiative presented "A Tribute to Bruce Springsteen" April 5 at Carnegie Hall. The gala concert, produced by Michael Dorf, raised funds for music education programs for underprivileged youth. Backstage, **Bruce Springsteen**, left, congratulates **Joseph Arthur** on his rendition of "Born to Run." PHOTO: COURTESY OF MICHAEL PRIEST



Live Nation has announced it will restore and operate the Hollywood Palladium in Los Angeles. From left are Live Nation chairman of Southern California music **Brian Murphy**, Live Nation president of Southern California music **Nick Masters**, Live Nation North American music CEO **Bruce Eskowitz**, honorary Mayor of Hollywood **Johnny Grant** and Los Angeles City Council president **Eric Garcetti**.

INSIDE TRACK

AROUND THE CAMPFIRE WITH RAY

With the news of country hottie Brad Paisley partnering with Hershey's for a s'mores-fueled partnership (see story, page 7), **Track** immediately reached out to fave food goddess **Rachael Ray** for her own take on the chocolate, marshmallow and graham cracker treat. Let's face it, if anyone knows her way around a s'more, it's Ray.

"Unfortunately, I got kicked out of the Girl Scouts, so I never got the s'mores lesson and didn't earn my cooking badge," Ray tells **Track**. Pausing for a moment, the host of the hit syndicated daytime show "Rachael Ray" adds, "But the kitchen team on my show whipped up this twist on the campfire classic."

S'MORES CONES SERVES 4

- 12 large marshmallows, about three per cone
- 4 sugar cones (the ones with the point on the bottom)
- 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

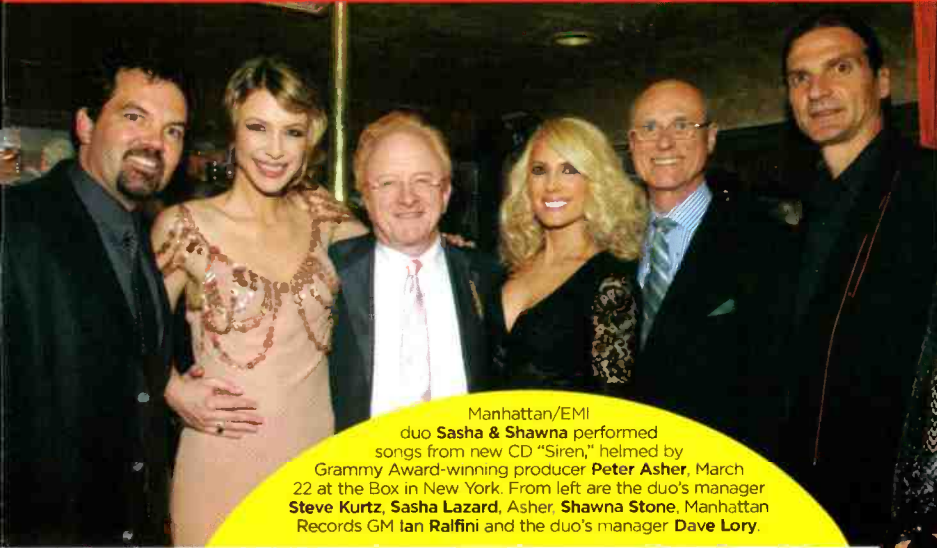
■ Place three marshmallows each on a metal skewer. Toast over an open flame gas stove or a fire for about 15-20 seconds, or until golden brown. If using a wood skewer, be sure the wood does not catch fire.

■ Place a few chocolate chips in the bottom of each cone. Top with one toasted marshmallow. Use a fork to remove the marshmallows from the



RAY

skewer as it will be hot. Repeat, adding chocolate chips and another marshmallow until you have used three marshmallows per cone. The heat from the marshmallows will slightly melt the chocolate chips.



Manhattan/EMI duo **Sasha & Shawna** performed songs from new CD "Siren," helmed by Grammy Award-winning producer **Peter Asher**, March 22 at the Box in New York. From left are the duo's manager **Steve Kurtz**, **Sasha Lazard**, Asher, **Shawna Stone**, Manhattan Records GM **Ian Ralfini** and the duo's manager **Dave Lory**.

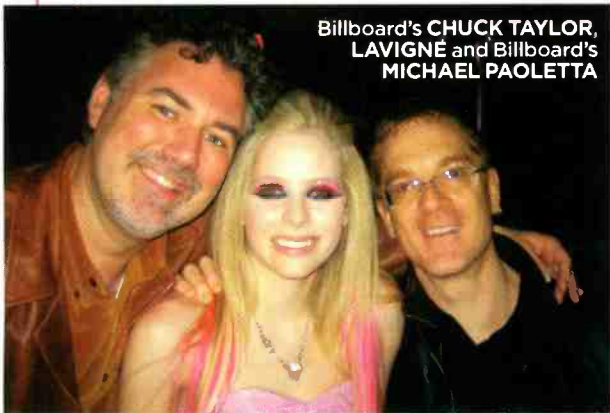


Hundreds of VIPs gathered April 14 in New York to wish long-time MC/rapper **Q-Tip** a very happy birthday. Notables at the party included **David Arquette**, **Lance Armstrong**, DJ **Clue** and **Ray J**. From left are Violator CEO **Chris Lighty**, **Q-Tip**, EMI senior VP of programming **Stephen Hill** and Q-Tip's manager **Giana Wallace**. PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAVID GOODSON

INSIDE TRACK

'BEST DAMN' PARTY GIRL

Avril Lavigne celebrated the release of her new RCA album, "The Best Damn Thing," with a soiree at New York's new downtown hot spot, the Box. While Track couldn't tell if the singer was tipsy, overexcited about the top 10 status of the album's lead single, "Girlfriend," or just happy to see us, there was a slight slur to her enthused welcome. "This is my third album and my



Billboard's **CHUCK TAYLOR**, **LAVIGNE** and Billboard's **MICHAEL PAOLETTA**

first album release party," she exclaimed from the stage. As she toasted the crowd—which included husband Deryck Whibley of Sum 41—she encouraged all to party along with her. Taking her own words to heart, Lavigne, looking fabulous in a pink prom dress, mingled with those of us in attendance. Throughout, her champagne glass was always nearby. Oh, bartender...

TALKIN' 'BOUT A REVOLUTION

Track joined Tavis Smiley, Hidden Beach Recordings founder Steve McKeever, former Motown head Jheri Busby and others at a private listening session of Dr. Cornel West's "Never Forget: A Journey of Revelations." Set for release in June (Black Music Month) on Hidden Beach's new Hidden Beach Forum label, the set pairs the best-selling author and Princeton University religion professor with a diverse lineup of hip-hop and R&B artists. Prince, Talib Kweli, KRS-One, Rhymefest, the late Gerald Levert and others are featured on the set.

Plugging into music's tradition as a force for social change (forgive us for channeling Don Imus here), "Never Forget" includes the compelling track "The N Word," where West, TV/radio personality Smiley and writer Dr. Michael Eric Dyson rhythmically debate the still-unresolved issues about the use of the word. A mesmerizing West invoked the names of Marvin Gaye, John Coltrane and Curtis Mayfield as he noted that "Never Forget" is "part of a greater tradition [that was] in place before we came and one that we're trying to keep alive."



Jennifer Lopez poses at her album release party at Spotlight Live, a new restaurant and venue in New York's Times Square, where she christened the stage with a surprise performance of songs from new album "Come Ama Una Mujer."

Rock icon **Debbie Harry**, right, turned the tables and interviewed Billboard executive editor/associate publisher **Tamara Conniff** March 30 during New York University's CEO in the Arts Speaker Series. PHOTO: COURTESY OF JULIA HIPPI



THE RECORDING ACADEMY HONORS

The Nashville Chapter presented the Recording Academy Honors April 9 at the Loews Vanderbilt Hotel in Nashville to celebrate the careers of the **Fisk Jubilee Singers**, **Loretta Lynn**, **Jars of Clay** and **Rascal Flatts**. PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE RECORDING ACADEMY AND RICK DIAMOND/WIREIMAGE.COM

RIGHT: Loretta Lynn with Recording Academy president **Neil Portnow**. **ABOVE:** From left are Rascal Flatts' **Gary LeVox**, **Jay DeMarcus** and **Joe Don Rooney**.

BELOW: From left are Recording Academy president **Neil Portnow**, **Loretta Lynn**, **Tanya Tucker** and **Marty Stuart**.



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