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January 2001

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# MUSICROW

NASHVILLE INDUSTRY PUBLICATION

*keith  
urban*

LYRIC STREET'S  
RANDY GOODMAN

## Takes Off The Gloves

CMA TOWN  
MEETING

## Digital Horizons

The Class  
of 2000  
Perimeter's  
Best Albums

Elusive  
Art Of  
Tracking  
CD Sales

# Alone, the SRM450 Active SR speaker kicks serious butt. With our new SRS1500 Active Subwoofer, it violates strategic arms limitation treaties.

Our SRM450 has re-defined compact active speaker sound quality. Now the first 2-way system accurate enough to be called a monitor is joined by the bone-shaking SRS1500 Active Subwoofer.

Thanks to 600 watts of internal amplification, electronic equalization and weapons-grade 15" LF transducer, it has the most low bass output of any "small" SR subwoofer. You get tight, baseball-bat-to-the-gut response down to 35Hz at -10dB – at up to 127 dB SPL! A special 3" surround-wound voice coil dissipates heat and lets the SRS1500 crank all night at max volume.

Plus it has a built-in electronic crossover system so you can shore up passive systems' low end, too.

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**SRS1500 Active Subwoofer** Takes up less than 3 sq. ft. of stage space

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- Electronic phase and time correction circuitry
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**SRM450 Active 2-Way SR Speaker** 400 watts of bi-amped FR Series amp power, 300 watts for lows/mids and 100 watts for highs • Ultra-wide audience coverage via multi-cell high-dispersion horn • Damped titanium HF transducer • Easy to carry – three balanced ergonomic handles • Easy set up – pole mount + multiple fly points

- Makes a superb floor monitor, too.

The new SRS1500. Think of it as a portable mesh pit in a 4.7 cubic foot enclosure with balanced carrying handles.

SRM450. Activeus Accuratus

SPM100. Pods not included, but then you probably knew that already.

SRS1500. Shove your audience around.

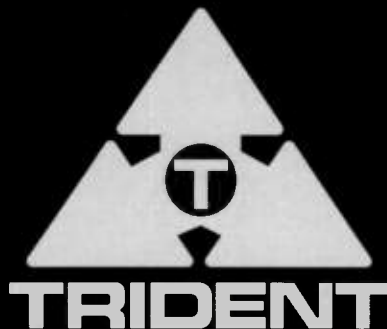


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Some of the gentle, sensitive Mackoids who make our active SR speakers in scenic Woodinville, USA and Reggio Emilia, Italy.



## is back

### The new Series 80-5.1 console



**Yes, the Trident name with its legendary sound is back.**

The Series 80-5.1 is the latest mixing board from Trident Audio. Not only does it look just as good, with black anodized panels, and aluminum knobs, it has the exact same patented John Oram EQ. So you can be sure that the classic Trident sound lives on.

What's been added? More aux sends and stereo returns, with routing and EQ. Logic control means that you press one button and the board is automatically in remix mode. The center section even has a stereo mastering Hi-Def EQ and stereo limiter/compressor - so you can deliver a finalized 2-mix straight from the board.

But not all things stay the same. For DVD and film requirements we have included a full surround 5.1 mix and playback facility, together with remote patchbay and silent running power supply unit. The Series 80-5.1 console delivers vintage sound for today's music.

For the travelling producer we also present the S80 'lunch box'. Two channels of the classic Series 80 input strip, with 2-mix output, housed in ash wood finish.

So, how does the new Series 80 patented EQ compare to the 1970's original?

*"As far as my ears are concerned, the new box sounds absolutely identical to the original Series 80 channel in every way."* (Hugh Robjohns - Sound on Sound)

*"The most remarkable thing though was the fact that John Oram has achieved the aim of duplicating the original; any setting I created on the original could be cloned exactly on the S80 with no audible difference."* (Dave Foister - Studio Sound)

**In a rapidly changing world it's nice to know that some things do stay the same, and that Trident is back.**



**S 80  
Producers  
Box**

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## On the Cover keith urban

**Current Single:** "But For The Grace of God"

**Current Album:** keith urban

**Current Video:** "But For The Grace of God"

**Current Producer:** Matt Rollings and keith urban

**Hometown:** Caboolture, Queensland, Australia

**Management:** Greg Shaw

**Booking:** CAA

**Recent Hits:** "Your Everything," "It's A Love Thing"

**Awards:** Nominated for American Music Awards—Favorite New Country Artist

**Birthdate:** 10/26/67

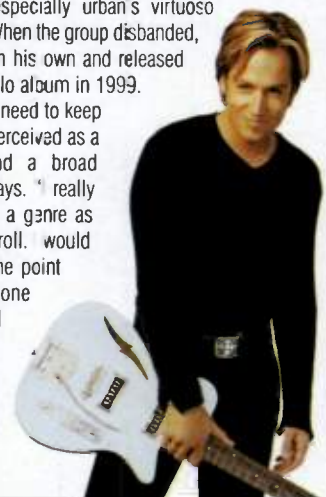
**Interesting Facts:** keith has written with hip-hop/R&B impresario Stevie J and former Go-Go's Charlotte Caffey and Jane Wiedlin; plays guitar on the Dixie Chicks current album ("Some Days You Gotta Dance"); Chicks' Emily Robison and Martie Seidel sing on his album.

**Musical Influences:** Don Williams, Dr. Hook, Elton John, Glen Campbell, Dire Straits, Jackson Browne, Fleetwood Mac

Australian keith urban grew up with parents who loved country music. The first records he heard were by Charley Pride, Dolly Parton and Jim Reeves. He picked up a guitar at age six and by eight he was winning talent shows. As a teenager he had steady work in a band and began introducing Dire Straits-style guitar solos into his country music, resulting in his signature style. In 1988, he formed a three-piece band in his homeland that charted four No. 1 country singles.

Hoping to further his career, he headed to Nashville and created another three-piece band, The Ranch. The trio's live shows caused a buzz in town, leading to a deal with Capitol Nashville. Critics raved about their resulting 1997 album, especially urban's virtuoso guitar playing. When the group disbanded, urban set out on his own and released his self-titled solo album in 1999.

"I have this need to keep country being perceived as a cool genre and a broad genre," urban says. "I really think country is a genre as big as rock and roll. I would love to get to the point where someone asks, 'What kind of music do you play?' I say, 'Country.' And they say, 'Great. What kind of country?'"



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## Radio To Pay; Word & Myrrh Combine; Country Scores On TV; E-News

### NEWS

**RADIO TO PAY FOR WEB BROADCAST**—The U.S. Copyright Office ruled that record companies are entitled to royalties when a radio station simulcasts its music programming on the Internet. The exact amount has yet to be determined. At stake are millions of dollars in fees to companies such as BMG and Universal Music Group. Radio stations have argued against having to pay for Web programs, citing exemptions for over-the-air broadcasters. Roughly 4,000 U.S. stations rebroadcast their signals over the Internet.

**WORD & MYRRH COMBINE**—Word Entertainment has combined the artist rosters and staffs of Word Records and Myrrh Records to create a consolidated, multi-faceted label that will operate under the Word Records trademark. **Elisa Elder** will lead the new Word Records team as Senior VP/GM. **Gabriel Vasquez** will expand his former role as Director of Marketing at Myrrh to serve as Executive Director of Marketing for the new label.

**COUNTRY SCORES ON TV**—Country music is helping the networks pull in huge ratings. **Faith Hill's** CBS broadcast of her first prime-time special *Faith!* was viewed by more than



Dixie Chicks

20 million people, according to Nielsen. CBS also scored with *Grand Ole Opry's 75th—A Celebration*, which aired Thanksgiving night. Over 13 million viewers tuned in, helping the network post its best Thursday showing season-to-date. The **Dixie Chicks** energized NBC's pre-Thanksgiving Monday lineup, delivering the network's highest 18-49 rating on Mondays at 8 p.m. in nearly 21 months. *The Dixie Chicks in Concert: On the Fly* attracted a 4.9 rating, 12 share adults 18-49 and 7.6/11 in households, according to preliminary reports.

**PUBLISHERS TAKE TO WEB**—A new business-to-business Website for the music publishing industry launched in October with more than 6,000 selections. Song-

Catalog.com provides centralized access to an extensive range of music, searchable by genre, publisher, theme, keyword and tempo, among other criteria. This enables producers, music supervisors, film companies, ad agencies, multimedia developers and record labels to find songs and immediately negotiate a deal with the seller through the site's online messaging system. Publishing companies represented by the site include Leiber & Stoller Music, Curb Music Publishing, Balmur Music, Wrensong, Windswept Pacific, Moraine Music and Marathon Key Music.

**EMUSIC TAKES ON NAPSTER**—EMusic.com is launching an initiative designed to prevent the illegal distribution of EMusic songs using the Napster service. EMusic will use internally developed software that includes "acoustic fingerprinting" technology to identify songs on the Napster service that infringe on the rights of EMusic's artist and label partners.

**SIRIUS LAUNCHED**—Sirius Satellite Radio successfully launched its third satellite, marking the completion of its three-satellite constellation. In-orbit testing is expected to be completed within 45 days. Sirius is scheduled to begin broadcasting in early 2001. **MR**

## MUSICAL CHAIRS

**Fletcher Foster** has joined Capitol Records Nashville as Senior VP of Marketing. In his new position he will oversee all marketing, new media, creative services and production efforts of the label...**Chris Melancon** has been named Managing Editor of *Country Music Live*...**Deb Markland**, Director, Artist Development/Marketing Arista/Nashville announced her resignation. **Cindy Mabe** has been promoted to fill that position...**Jim Chaffee**, VP/GM of Myrrh Records for the past seven years, announced his departure from the label to partner with Michael

Smith & Associates...**Kathryn Crow** has been promoted to Senior Director for Industry Development, General Licensing at BMI/Nashville...**Bob Dickinson** has been named Executive VP of Programming at the Nashville-based broadband provider CompleteTV...Porter Novelli Public Relations has named **Dan Orsborn** Partner in charge of the company's Los Angeles office. Orsborn was head of The Orsborn Company, an independent public relations firm in Nashville...**Kristy Irrer**, VP of Convention Services, has submitted her resignation after nearly nine years with the Gospel Music Association (GMA)...Seattle-based Jones Broadcast Programming announced **Ray Randall** has become a

Programmer-Consultant specializing in country formats for its TotalRadio group...**Christy Grealis** has left Warner Bros. to join CMA's Special Projects department...Encore Entertainment has promoted **Brad Allen** to VP/Creative Services and COO/Business Affairs...**Leigh Reynolds** has resigned from March Music...**Tracy Collins** joins Dreamcatcher Records as Regional Field Promotion Director...**Denise Nichols** has joined TBA Entertainment as Director of Radio Promotion and Marketing...After 12 years with Starstruck Entertainment as VP of Media Relations, **Jenny Bohler** has moved to MCA Records to become VP of Publicity. **MR**



Fletcher Foster



Cindy Mabe



Jim Chaffee



Kathryn Crow



Dan Orsborn



Brad Allen



Denise Nichols



Jenny Bohler



## GAYLORD DROPS THE AXE

In one fell swoop last month Gaylord Entertainment cut loose its cash-hungry Internet division, restructured from three divisions into two and laid off 116 employees. At the same time, the company all but put a for sale sign on its cable operations, saying it is looking for "strategic alternatives" for that aspect of its business.

The action "reflects our continuing efforts to focus on our core assets," according to President/CEO Dennis Sullivan. Gaylord's operations now fall under two headings—hospitality and attractions, and music, media and entertainment. Dave Jones continues to head the former, while Carl Kornmeyer, formerly the Executive VP for Corporate and Operational Development, steps in to run the latter.

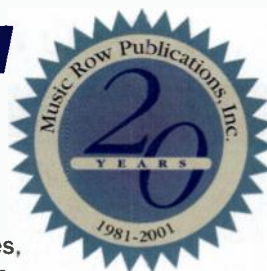
Gaylord Digital's demise comes less than 18 months after the company began an aggressive investment in Internet technology. The strategy's cornerstone was the purchase of Christian music Websites Musicforce.com and Lightsources.com, which Gaylord is now in negotiations to sell. Other now-abandoned investments include indie music-focused Songs.com and MusicCountry.com, Gaylord's bid to create a one-stop destination for country fans.

MusicCountry debuted last summer, inking a six-figure sponsorship of the Dixie Chicks' Fly tour in the process. Despite the high-profile positioning, MusicCountry was slow to develop an engaging mix of content to keep visitors coming back. Gaylord's Internet plans also had the misfortune of coming together just as the market's technology bubble burst. And with the company's international cable network One Country now apparently on the block, the cuts may not be over at Gaylord.

—Chuck Aly



## Twenty And Counting

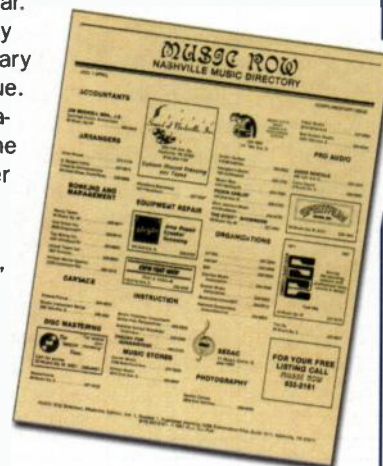


In the beginning, it wasn't even a magazine. *Music Row* was a one-sheet directory of goods and services, hand delivered by publisher/one man band David Ross to businesses around the Row. Obviously, things have changed since that first issue hit Nashville in April of 1981. Twenty years of refinements have yielded the publication you now hold in your hand.

The first came in June of '81, when two news columns were added. "Keeping Track" covered the studio scene, and "Streets of Music Row" was a precursor to today's Musical Chairs. The first cover artist was Cristy Lane (August), and Kerry O'Neil authored the first Financial column (September). Our single reviews bowed in March 1982, penned by the razor-tongued...Al Cooley. The notorious Robert K. Oermann took over in April of that year.

*Music Row* will officially celebrate its 20th anniversary with this year's August issue. We'll reflect upon the magazine's growth and that of the industry it's sought to cover for two decades. Also, in each monthly issue we will unearth a nugget of interest, wisdom or humor from our past. We hope you'll enjoy reading these retrospectives as much as we'll enjoy digging them up.

—Chuck Aly



**THE FOUR TENORS**—Lyle Lovett and music industry pioneer Ahmet Ertegun were honored during last month's Nashville Symphony Ball. Lovett received the Harmony Award, given to the person who most represents the unique synergy of Nashville music while contributing significantly to the progress and respect of the music culture. Ertegun, founder of Atlantic Records, was bestowed the Golden Sound Award which honors those who've made immeasurable contributions to the field of music. Pictured (L to R) are: Vector Management's Ken Levitan, MCA Nashville President Tony Brown, Lovett, Ertegun. Photo: Genia Massey

## The Buzz

### Brand New Year Edition

*Music Row* turns 20. Just think, next year we'll be old enough to drink.

- Music**—Overall industry sales dropped in the fourth quarter. Obviously, everybody did their shopping on Napster.
- Layoffs**—You're all fired. And a Merry Christmas to you!
- Hank III**—Just read the *GQ* interview and had a question: How do you *really* feel about Curb Records?
- Gwyneth Paltrow**—"Cruisin'" hits No. 1 on *Billboard's* Adult Contemporary singles chart. Ah, the power of payola.
- Wilbur Rimes**—Drags daughter through the media mud, but insists he'd *never* stoop low enough to steal from her. Hmmm.

## Site Survey: Where The Industry Surfs

In our ever-inquisitive manner, *Music Row* asked those in the music industry to tell us where they surf on the Web. Here's what they had to say:



**RANDY WACHTLER**  
President & CEO  
615 Music Companies

[www.615music.com](http://www.615music.com)

I need to see how the updates are working.

[www.ascap.com](http://www.ascap.com)

I'm constantly checking song titles.

[www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com)

Still checking song titles.

[www.pmamusic.com](http://www.pmamusic.com)

To check on production music issues.

[www.promax.org](http://www.promax.org)

To check on industry issues.

[www.nab.org](http://www.nab.org)

To check on industry issues.



**FLETCHER FOSTER**  
Senior VP of Marketing  
Capitol Nashville

[www.TVTalkshows.com](http://www.TVTalkshows.com)

A site that covers the up-to-minute ratings and information on talk shows.

[www.Bluefly.com](http://www.Bluefly.com)

A great place to find designer clothes! Mail order online!

[www.Travelocity.com](http://www.Travelocity.com)

Travel plans online.

[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

The next best thing to getting it on your doorstep.

*We want to know where you surf.*

E-mail us at [mcveyr@musicrow.com](mailto:mcveyr@musicrow.com). Include up to five of your favorite Websites and tell us why you like them.

## NEW YEAR'S All We Want For ~~Christmas~~



We searched in vain under the *Music Row* tree for those must-have gifts. With e-mail commanding a much larger portion of the information flow here at the mag, we were hoping for a few little techno nuggets to speed the process along. But fear not, there's still time. Repeat after us, "I resolve to..."

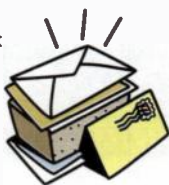
**Get Blind**—If you haven't figured out what a "blind cc" is, ask someone for help. We don't really mind getting your entire list of private e-mail addresses, but some folks don't want their contact info bounced around the entire Internet for everybody to use.

**Get Small**—Never send files bigger than a megabyte (1 MB) unless you've cleared it with the recipient. And never, ever send a 36 MB jpeg photo unless you want to get flamed like the techno-challenged publicist who made that unfortunate mistake earlier this year.

**Use Text**—Those HTML formatted e-mails may look nice, but generally add little. Plus, they're slower. Plain e-mail text is just fine. If you're attaching the information as a .doc file, take the time to paste it in the body of the e-mail, too. Some of us would rather not have to open a separate file to get your information. And then there's the whole virus thing.

**Stop The Insanity**—Is that forward truly funny, or just kind of cute? Here's the litmus test we use: If you were really, really busy would you be pleased to get this distraction, or merely annoyed?

And above all, when it comes to e-mail—use it! Faxes are so 1989.



NOISE

*A look at Nashville's hottest music*

# MAKERS

**Randy Goodman**—"We are just as prone to prejudice and living in our own little boxes as the most conservative, fearful people." (See page 15)

**Tomorrow's Sounds Today**—Dwight Yoakam's latest has *MR's* Richard McVey II raving, "the year's best." (See page 34)

**Tim McGraw**—His greatest hits powered to more than 700k in SoundScan sales after only three weeks.

**"Please"**—Pam Tillis aims for a hit as her latest single earns an impressive 8.24 on the *SongPower Index*. (@MusicRow No. 48)

**Breathe**—Powers past the four million mark on SoundScan, moving better than 100k per week. Apparently, people gotta have Faith.

**Town Meeting**—MyPlay.com's David Pakman notes, "the [music] industry has been great at mobilizing a task force of people who I call the success prevention department..." (See page 9)

**"The Last Thing On My Mind"**—RKO loves the new single from Patty Loveless. "I bow before her greatness." (@MusicRow No. 47)

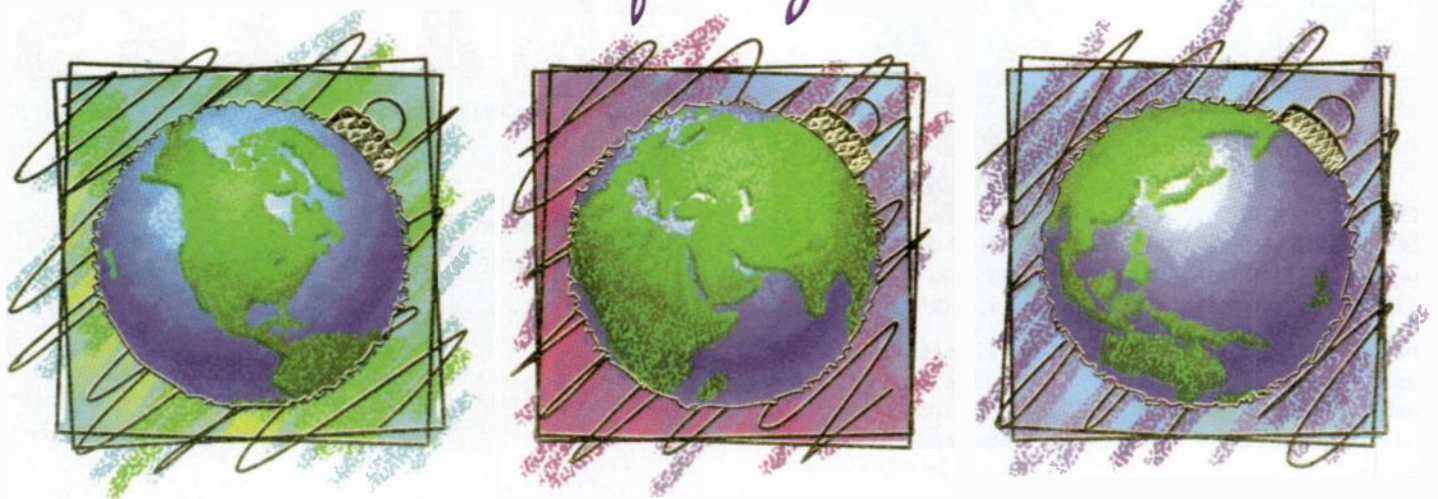
In past years at this time, we've ventured our predictions for the months ahead and, in the process, managed to prove only one thing: We suck at that. So this year we're a lot more comfortable offering up those things you probably won't see in our pages. Here we go with...



### TOP 10 HEADLINES YOU WON'T READ IN 2001

10. CMA Branding Initiative Adopts Domino's Mascot "Bad Andy"
9. Paisley Leads New Outlaw Movement
8. No News From Garth
7. Music Row Mag Celebrates 20 Years With Huge Cash Giveaway
6. Labels Develop Firm Grasp Of Digital Music Market
5. Stacy Harris Named CMA Journalist of the Year
4. Hazel Smith Records Pop Album
3. Playlists Expanding Too Fast, Label Heads Complain
2. Gaylord Strategy Successful
1. Quigley Returns

# *A World of Good Wishes*



*Wishing you peace, joy and happiness  
throughout the Holiday Season.*



Pictured are (L-R front row) Alan Mayor, Kerry O'Neil, David Ross, Larry Wayne Clark, John Hood and Bob Oermann (L-R back row) John Norris, Christie King, Jamie Meyerhoeffer, Chuck Aly, Eileen Shannon, Dwight Heckleman and Richard McVey. Not pictured: Susana Ross and Ron Young Photo by: Alan Mayor

*from all of us at*

**MUSIC ROW**  
NASHVILLE'S MUSIC INDUSTRY PUBLICATION

# A Change Is Gonna Do Us Good—Or Is It?

## A Town Meeting Look at Digital Music



FRANCES PRESTON

**T**oday, we talk about music in the digital age,” said BMI’s **Frances Preston**, the Opening Keynote Speaker at this year’s CMA Town Meeting. Her remarks summarized the essence of the Nov. 8 event, which attracted a sell-out crowd of more than 500 to Nashville’s Renaissance Hotel.

The industry meeting offered two sessions, “Tuning In The New Radio Spectrum” and the one that is the focus for this article, “Catalysts In Music’s Digital Realm: Change Agents Impacting the Industry.”



JEFF GREEN

The session featured the CMA’s **Jeff Green** as Moderator and a panel comprised of **Fred Graver**, Senior VP, VH1 Group; **Chris Montgomery**, VP/Subscription Channel Development, MP3.com; **David Pakman**, Sr. VP/Business Development, MyPlay.com; and **Marc Schiller**, CEO/Co-Founder, ElectricArtists. What follows is an edited transcript of that session.

**GREEN:** How many of you think what BMG did by striking a deal with Napster to build a subscription model was a good idea?

**GRAVER:** A lot of labels feel they’re going to develop their own technology. Sony’s going to develop their own download thing; Universal’s going to develop their own thing—all of which would be incompatible. And I keep thinking, “Does anybody remember Beta Cam?”

I think about *It’s A Wonderful Life*, with that great scene where there’s a run on the bank, and Jimmy Stewart kind of stops everybody and goes, “No, no, wait! Jim, your money’s in Sally’s business, and Sally, your money is in Bob’s house.” I keep thinking somebody is going to stand up to all the music companies and say, “Sony, your music is over at the Warner site. Warner, your music is over at MTV. It’s going to be OK.” Somehow, Thomas Middelhoff has ended up being the first step toward some kind of Jimmy Stewart, saying to the record

companies, “You can share this stuff with each other and we all get rich. But if you put these walls up and take your money out of the bank, we’re all going to go home poor.”

**MONTGOMERY:** I agree. There’s a potential 58 percent equity stake by BMG in Napster, which may be a barrier for Warner or EMI to say, “Well, hold on, I’m not putting my content in there, unless they have a reciprocating system where it can work fairly for everyone.” It needs to play itself out.

Ultimately, as long as the consumer experience is really great, seamless and not clumsy, that’s half of it. The other half is that whoever creates the content needs to get compensated for the content and that’s on every single level. That’s not an easy challenge.

**PAKMAN:** Napster showed a couple of things. First of all, why are we all playing around with digital music? One, we want to get music into more people’s hands, and expose more artists, expose more writers. We want to increase revenues. The industry has been flat in the U.S. relatively for five or six years. The growth comes from overseas. Why has it been flat? Because we’re not offering new products, we’re not offering new services. We’re offering the same stuff with different artists.

That’s why we’re doing digital music, because maybe there’s some alternative to distribute or market or promote or sell music that gets it into more people’s hands and makes consumers happy. The big challenge and what Napster showed, is how do you make it really easy so that lots of people can completely enjoy it and get attached to it? Rob



Glaser (CEO) at RealNetworks said it really well, "If we screw it up as an industry and don't offer easy, cool things people will pay for in digital music; kids have lots of choices for what they do with their free time. We must offer them something as compelling as Napster that has a great value proposition, or they'll just go and skateboard or listen to music or... So we're competing for their mindshare and eventually their wallet-share. And Napster proved that we can do it. The problem is they did it in a way that was very easy for people to love and it's totally free. But I don't believe that that's exclusively why Napster was successful. Napster is successful because it's fun, fast and free. It's the three F's and we can change that a little bit and still make it work.

**SCHILLER:** You can't market the way you were marketing pre-Napster. To really understand the culture of Napster you have to sit down with a kid who uses it everyday, 18 hours a day. It's not about getting free music only, it's about finding other kids that have cool tastes like you and it's a one-to-one peer relationship. The power of that for a consumer is incredible. You slap a brand on Napster and immediately it becomes uncool...

Absolutely music rights need to be protected, you have to put some sort of safeguard on there so it doesn't become this wildfire distribution network. But any big corporation has the

ability to kill the culture out of stupidity, out of wanting to dominate, out of not understanding what a kid does when they sit down at it. If you kill that, then you've killed the spark that's driving music on the Internet today and we're all in bad shape. So it's too early for me as a marketer to say if BMG and Napster are good coming together, it's what they do together that matters.

Unless you have the ability to find every song you can think of, which you can today on Napster, it's not going to work. The reason kids go to Napster is not because it has the new Madonna track or the song you hear at radio every five minutes, it's because it has tracks that nobody is paying attention to. Napster is not about downloading the latest multi-platinum album, look at the album sales that are coming out. The new U2 album, a record that we're marketing, scanned 450,000 units (the first week) and that's their biggest debut ever. That's in a post-Napster world. The strategy we used there was leveraging the power of Napster. The idea there was to give everybody 30-seconds of every song off the album and let that propagate via Napster.

**GREEN:** If Napster does go to a subscription model, how many of their 38 million users will stick with it and will the other labels collaborate?

**PAKMAN:** It's not can you make money with a subscription fee to Napster, you unquestionably can. It's a matter of what is Napster when it becomes a subscription model.

**SCHILLER:** Irving Azoff called us about the (Eagles) box set and the first thing we did was go to the fans on the Internet to learn what people were thinking. They were upset. They said, "Why should we buy every track we already have as a box set because we really want the live album which is CD 5?" So we went to Elektra and Irving and said, "This isn't going to work..." We talked about releasing that album through retailers, through a series of online retailers digitally and giving the fans the record as a gift. When we put it together, immediately the big-label mentality kicked in and they said, "Let's do this in Liquid Audio and do this in a secure Windows format." I have nothing against Liquid Audio, but today mp3 is the format that fans are using. Since the Eagles owned the live recordings themselves, we went to the band and said, "What do you want to do?" They said, "Let's give every one away in the mp3 format and do it right." And we're doing that and the buzz has been absolutely amazing.

**"You can share this stuff  
with each other and we  
all get rich. But if you put  
these walls up...we're all  
going to go home poor."**

**—Graver**



"Thank you **Dixie Chicks**  
for another fabulous year  
and congratulations  
on a great tour."

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CHRIS MONTGOMERY

**“At some point the  
industry will shift away  
from the physical format  
and put all their efforts  
into the virtual CD.”**

**—Montgomery**

**GRAVER:** I can't help but think the people in this room are thinking, "That's great for the Eagles and Don Henley who it would take longer to count their money than it's taking to count the votes in Florida." So you must be confounded by what we're saying. "You want us to give my music away?"

**SCHILLER:** We're not saying everyone should give all their music away. It's amazing, we'll work on projects where we're hired to market the music, and their whole thing is, "We don't have access to traditional media, we can't get on radio or television, so market this record on the Internet." So we take it on. Four weeks into the project, we can't stream music on the Internet. So what are we supposed to do? How can we talk about an artist nobody has ever heard and expect that they're going to run into the stores and buy it? It's imperative that we start looking at ways of giving people music on the Internet for free in one format or another so that we can actually drive them to buy the music.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** Two words that have been said a lot are stream and download. As a matter of technology, now or in the near future, is there

a real difference? If not, to what extent will a current system that makes a distinction between mechanicals, performances and the way the money moves differently depending on the distinction collapse?

**MONTGOMERY:** From a consumer perspective, if you'd asked that question two months ago, there's probably a bigger distinction between a stream and a download. You can go onto various sites now and get free software that will capture any stream. So if you look at it from that perspective, it probably is the same. What's nice about streaming versus downloading is that I don't waste hard drive space and I don't have the download time often associated with that. If we look a year and a half from now, the notion of downloading may not even exist.

**PAKMAN:** We have a system that's permeated itself over 50 years and were trying to force fit the current distinction between performance and reproductions onto the Net. In the future those things actually collide pretty miserably to the point where the people who usually collect for the performances are going to make sure they're all called performances and the people that usually collect for reproductions want to make them all called reproductions. That's already happening today. At the end of the day, you have to build an economic model that works for the consumer and creator and some people in the middle that are helping deliver that product to the consumer. Today, we've got everybody who owns some piece of rights saying, "I get all of those rights." The end result as MP3.com is showing is that you won't be able to build a real economic model around everyone's contention that they all own everything.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** I want to endorse the Internet, but I still don't understand how if you can download the whole album, how would that motivate someone to go to the store and buy the CD?

**SCHILLER:** Well, they're doing it. It's a cultural thing. When someone goes into a record store for an artist they know, they want to make a statement about that. Look at the band Radiohead. So many of those kids that rushed out to the store the first week had been listening to the entire album digitally for four weeks.



**GRAVER:** There's also something about the physical pleasure of owning an object.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** But what about those who are going to download it and burn that CD, but they just don't have artwork?

**MONTGOMERY:** I think there are constraints. At the moment I can download everything onto my PC, but I can't do much else with it. So if I want to take it and put it on my boombox, my discman, or in my car, I want to own that other format. We saw the same thing when cassettes came out and the same thing whenever we transitioned into different formats. There was a point when cassettes outsold CDs for almost two years. At some point the industry will shift away from the physical format and put all their efforts into the virtual CD, if you want to call it that.

**SCHILLER:** Maybe we're losing the forest for the trees here, because people don't have unlimited wallets. You can look at



"Today, the industry has been great at mobilizing a task force of people who I call the success

prevention department who

put together great strategies

to appease their own internal

desires to put a toe in the water."

—Pakman



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*To Vince and all participating artists for making The 11th Annual Vince Gill Celebrity Basketball Game and Concert a continuing success!*

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Dr. Pam Browne  
Associate Dean  
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Rick Byrd  
Head Coach Men's Basketball  
The Department of Athletics





Napster and say, "This is showing that there's an incredible amount of hunger for music." But they don't have \$17 to buy every record they want to listen to. It really is about listening to it as much as it is about owning it. Maybe the industry has made a mistake the way they've priced digital downloads off the bat. Because if you can't get more music by accessing the Internet for the same price then we're making a huge mistake. This is about bringing more music into your life. This is fantastic for new artists. And when you're having to pay \$3.99 for a digital download that you can't play on your CD player, that's ludicrous. That's one of the biggest mistakes we've made. The significance of the BMG deal is that finally you've got a label that's listening to its one constituency, which is its artists, but now it's finally listening to the constituency of its users and saying, "We're going to put a bet on the table here and try to figure this out."

**GREEN:** A lot of pundits suggest that secure digital rights management for downloading music is virtually impossible. What's your outlook on the feasibility of creating a secure encryption-based marketplace? Can we and do we try to control what consumers do once they've bought it?

**PAKMAN:** There are two answers to that. One is convenience; the other is convenience. If you do anything to make it less convenient than putting a CD in a CD player, it's a barrier. Today, the industry has been great at mobilizing a task force of people who I call the success prevention department who put together great strategies to appease their own internal desires to put a toe in the water. But still they're not getting any consumer acceptance. Ultimately, isn't that how we should measure it?

Another issue is a constitutional question. The Digital Millennium Copyright Act says if you break encryption or use a tool that breaks encryption or look at a tool that breaks encryption, you are guilty. Even if you do that to realize a fair use privilege, which is allowed under the Constitution.

**MONTGOMERY:** I agree with that, specifically to watermarking. If you talk to a number of different companies that are in that space, they would probably view it more as a DNA, a tracking system that helps them gain more information about the user habits so they can provide a better user experience... I agree that it would be very difficult unless the consumer experience is seamless.

**AUDIENCE QUESTION:** After people get out and have more financial responsibilities, would they be as inclined to go out and purchase something that they already have for free at home?

**SCHILLER:** Well, they are. The basis of our company is to communicate in an ongoing basis with music consumers about the products they love. Matchbox 20's street team is a great example. Here's a group that was introduced to that record six months before it came out. They actually had a debate about whether they should go to Napster and download the record. We've seen as a marketing tool to sell more records, giving people the ability to listen to it is critical. We can't be cavalier about it because we're hired to sell more records, not to give away music. For my clients, I have to be extremely conservative. But what happens is every record we work and the music is out there in an organized fashion, the opening week sales and continuing sales continue to climb. I haven't seen anything that shows that people are not going to buy the music. ■



**"...when you're  
having to pay \$3.99 for  
a digital download that  
you can't play on your CD  
player, that's ludicrous."  
—Schiller**



Randy Goodman

LYRIC STREET  
RECORDS

# The Little Label That Could... Did... Is

Q&A with Lyric Street's  
Randy Goodman

by Chuck Aly

**T**his winter may come to be remembered as one of country music's coldest, but upstart Lyric Street Records is riding a heat wave. Few would have expected a label launched in the midst of Music City's recession to survive, let alone thrive, but Disney's country outpost, under the direction of President Randy Goodman, has done just that.

Goodman earned his label stripes during a 16-year career at RCA Label Group where he rose to Senior VP/GM under label chief Joe Galante. He joined Galante in running RCA's New York operation in 1990, returning to Nashville with him in 1995. Goodman opened Lyric Street's doors in June 1997, three months after leaving RCA. The label earned a top

10 single with its first release, Lari White's aptly named "Stepping Stone," and has gone on to remarkable success. They've minted country music's newest budding superstar in platinum-certified SHeDAISY, and revived the career of RCA refugee Aaron Tippin whose recent number one single punctuated his own gold certification.

*Music Row* recently interviewed Randy Goodman about Lyric Street's three-year ascension, its relationship with parent company Disney, and industry attitudes regarding SHeDAISY. He was very candid about the label's hits and misses.

**Music Row:** When you left RCA in the spring of 1997, it was pretty obvious that country was in retreat. Were you concerned about starting a label in a declining market?

**Randy Goodman:** Yes. (laughs) I was scared to death. When I first came back from New York in 1995 my attorney Joel Katz called and said Disney wanted to come to town. My first reaction was they're crazy. It wasn't the time to come to Nashville.

Personally, I went through a health scare and had to have a single bypass at 41. That changes your thinking about a lot of things. My wife, more than anybody, made me stop and think about it. I'd been at RCA 16 years which was an incredible experience. And I had a great mentor in Joe Galante. But she said this is Disney, the second largest media company in the world. How often in your life do you think this is going to happen? I had to look at it and say if it works, thank God. If it doesn't at least I won't spend the rest of my life kicking myself thinking what if.



Meet The Mouse—Carson Schreiber, Doug Howard, Goodman and Greg McCarn at Disneyworld.

**MR:** Did you immediately sense the opportunities afforded by being linked to such a media giant?

**RG:** I knew if we could tap just half of what Disney could offer it would give us a competitive advantage unlike anything I'd had even at a big company like RCA. I didn't have access to movies, television, cable, and a park with 45 million visitors per year. If you go to Disneyworld right now and turn on the television it goes right to their channel. And if you watch for five minutes you're probably going to see a SHeDAISY, Rascal Flatts or Aaron Tippin video. Those are the reasons why, after 16 years in a stable environment, this was the opportunity. I didn't want to try to salvage a label that had its own baggage. I wanted to do it from scratch.

Another big thing is that Doug [Howard] and I had been best of friends since college. He went the publishing route, I went the label route. I called him about Lyric Street and he had not re-upped his contract [at Polygram], for whatever reason. Everything conspired to come together. This is something we always dreamed about doing. I look at him as my partner in this.

**MR:** What were the strategies, goals and assumptions you started out with, and how does that vision differ from the reality as you look back on these three years?

**RG:** What Joe taught me more than anything else was how to run a company. How to be efficient and effective. How to know when to push the button, take all the chips and spend like a drunken sailor. And when to cut bait and conserve resources. I wanted to

minimize overhead and spend resources on A&R and promotion. We use Hollywood Music Group for back office finance, business affairs and sales. We also use independent publicity. Knowing how important those areas are, though, we treat them as staff.

If I've done anything right it's been hiring quality people. Theresa Russell came over from RCA as our operations person. Robin Gordon came over with Doug from Polygram. I knew Carson [Schreiber] at Curb and it just so happened he was in a position where he could come over. Dale Turner became available at RCA at a time when maybe we didn't need somebody of his ability, but I knew he was a valuable guy. We had already hired Kevin Herring who had been at Mercury and River North. He is a great asset. Greg McCarn came over from 10 years at RCA. He's a young star. Strategically, we knew we couldn't have a seasoned high-priced national staff and a seasoned regional staff, so we decided to have greener regionals. The great thing about having Kevin is he took [regionals] who had never done that job before and accelerated their learning because he's such a good teacher.

Lari [White] was out of contract and we thought she was somebody we could get on radio. The unknown with her was record sales. She afforded us the ability to go in and have our first single go top 10, which gave our promotion staff a sense they could get it done and gave us some credibility at radio. Strategically, that worked for us. Unfortunately, we didn't sell any records. Then I read that Aaron Tippin asked off

RCA. Aaron had sold a lot of albums, but he's tougher to get at radio. Again, his first single for us was top 5. We ended up selling about 350,000 units, which was really good. What those two records did is give us time to be setting up SHeDAISY. Then that success allowed Aaron the time to write for his second album.

We had a stumble with John Berry. We thought if we could get the right record and get him on radio we could sell some albums. John's manager came in and said it's not working, let's put together an artist development campaign. The bad part of my job is I have to say it's not about artist development with John. We either hit or we don't. You have to close the book, shake the dust off and move on.

With SHeDAISY we thought we had the only trio of women in country music, then the Dixie Chicks came out. So with Rascal Flatts we thought this boy band thing was going to happen so we signed them quickly and got a record turned around. The first single is top 3, the second is on its way and we've shipped 300,000 units.

**MR:** SHeDAISY was the label's first really big success, and in many ways seems to typify a different approach or mindset you guys took—from the short introductory film used to break the group in lieu of a radio tour, to a strong Internet strategy and of course the tie-in with Disney. When did you know you had something special, and how did you determine an unorthodox approach would work best?

**RG:** Doug, Shelly [Kennedy], Carson and myself felt that way from the moment we first heard their demo tapes. Having worked with Alabama and with the Judds there's just something about family harmonies. But in Kristyn [Osborn] we had someone in the age demo writing for the demc. It's not some 40 year old guy writing songs for them. When you first listen to SHeDAISY you can hear them at a very ear candy level—you can bop. But then as you get into it there's a more cerebral level. There are times I'll still find stuff in songs on the first album where I'm just now getting what she's saying. That's what blows my mind about some of the critics is they're not doing due diligence with those songs. At the ASCAP awards Mark D. Sanders and Don Schlitz came up to me saying they'd love to write with Kristyn. Heavy songwriters. And you've got radio and press writing them off.

With the film, SHeDAISY had spent the last decade honing their studio and songwriting skills. The Chicks were road dogs who, like Rascal Flatts could walk into a conference room, break into song and blow everybody away. What SHeDAISY does is much more intricate. The Chicks had just come through a promotional tour at radio and I knew it wouldn't be the right to put SHeDAISY on the same path. I didn't think they could compete on that same level, but they had other advantages. We had a brainstorming meeting and were kicking around introducing them with an epk, but that had been done before. Finally, [director] David Hogan said you guys are Disney. Think about the big screen.

**MR:** You could even argue that using Dann Huff as producer, who at the time was not the proven commodity he is today, was another way you stepped out of the box on the SHeDAISY project.

**RG:** I've got to give Doug Howard complete credit for that. Doug worked with Dann at Belmont College and had known him since he was 16. In fact, Doug brought him in to do the Lari White album, which was Dann's first solo producing project. The girls came in with a list of producers. Doug told them he had one guy on his list. Meet with him and if that doesn't work we'll start down your list. They met with Dann and that was it.

**MR:** SHeDAISY has gotten mixed reviews from the media, and from some of the remarks made at the platinum party I gather they don't feel like they've been embraced by the industry. Do you feel a little bit under siege in some ways with them?

**RG:** Certain people hold on to their perception of what they want the saviors of country music to be. Back when we were just starting with Lyric Street somebody said to me, "You have a really unique opportunity here to be a bastion of traditional country music." I love traditional country music. I love pure jazz. I also love fusion. What I can't understand about our format is we always talk about being true to our roots. What are our roots? Eddy Arnold was more pop than Perry Como at the time! What were Waylon and Willie? Now they're revered—103 calls them the legends. At the time, they weren't. With SHeDAISY we do feel under siege. I feel it more for the artist and staff then I do for myself. I've been



Presenting Platinum—SHeDAISY and Dann Huff get heavy metal.



People Like Us—Celebrating the gold certification for Aaron Tippin.



Hey Jimmy—Rascal Flatts at the Opry.



as did [producer] Walter Miller. Then the production people brought in another choreographer, and they wanted to push the girls farther than they were comfortable being pushed. Because they're new and it was CMA, they were afraid to raise their hand and say, "I don't feel comfortable." What came off was something they were embarrassed with.

I've been telling them they're great singers and writers—don't forget the substance. Don't let the style become what people see. But they're also savvy enough in a Madonna-esque way, to understand that culturally its 70 percent style and 30 percent substance. "How Can I Keep From Singing" is an a cappella hidden track on the Christmas album, and I told them to sing that song on their upcoming television appearances. How can anyone cast stones at that?

**MR:** Do the slights make the success sweeter, or would you rather have the community's embrace?

**RG:** I would love to have my cake and eat it too. But at the same time I know from experience that if you stay true to the artist and the artist stays true to their fans, that deafening scream will merely become an echo over time. People won't have much to say. We talk about being free thinking, but in our business we are just as prone to prejudice and living in our own little boxes as the most conservative, fearful people.

**MR:** Does it give you fuel?

**RG:** (laughs) It's very much that way for the girls and the staff. The first big award they were up for was at last year's American Music Awards. They were well past gold and I thought they were a shoe-in, but they didn't win. It bummed me out so bad for them, but Kristyn leaned over and asked me what Shania's first major award was. I couldn't remember. She said it was CMA Entertainer of the Year, last year. After she had sold 30 million albums. Kristyn said don't worry about it, we'll get there. And I thought, I'm the one who's supposed to be telling her that.

**MR:** You mentioned artists going to other formats because of negativity in country. Is that a possibility with SHeDAISY?

**RG:** I never wanted to cross them in a non-organic way. It's one thing to have an "Amazed" that's such a big record other

through this enough; seen people not accept artists and at the end of the day, if the artist has the quality, they're the one standing and the press person is forgotten. I don't know what you can do about it other than keep focused.

You have to go way back to find a songwriter artist where all three of the singles off the debut album go top 10. Think about how long ago that's been. That's a huge thing. Wake up! On one side they're saying radio isn't letting anything through. Well, they let SHeDAISY through, but somehow that doesn't count? Wait a minute. We shipped 1.5 million, scanned 1.2 million. They're already booked on the American Music Awards. In our little ghettoized world of country music we struggle with it. The people outside our format get it.

**MR:** You didn't advance *The Whole Shebang*. Do you wish you'd handled things differently in the beginning?

**RG:** We knew we would either hit this project over the fence or strikeout. With the strong early feedback we were getting from radio, we thought we had a chance for the first impression to be positive. We worried it would be very easy for critics to attack SHeDAISY because they don't fit firmly in people's perceptions. I remember in the early days at RCA with Alabama the critics hated them. Stupid, corny bar band. And they're going to be in the hall of fame one day. Some acts don't fit neatly into a mold—ergo that's why they sell.

SHeDAISY's creating something exciting for the format. If nothing else, give them

props for that! Everybody's kissing Brad Paisley's ass, and he just scanned over 500,000 units. But you would think this guy was the second coming. Forgive me, but he accepts the Horizon Award and I feel like I'm being talked down to. "You guys should do this..." Get off the stage! I don't need you to tell me what I should be doing. Congratulations. Great job. We need people like that in the format—he fits our image. Starched jeans. Hat. Yes ma'am, no sir. But he's not pushing the envelope enough for people to buy. Here we've got a group that's selling records and we're all talking about the down market instead of embracing them. Same with Billy Gilman. He's not my cup of tea either, but the point is you can only hear him on country radio and the guy's selling a bucketload of records. Embrace him! Say, "the only station in town where you'll hear Billy Gilman and SHeDAISY." Instead we say no, it's the antichrist. So what do they do? They take him to AC, Top 40, VH-1 and guess what? He's embraced there and we've lost something. Then we go to CMA meetings and say the sky is falling.

**MR:** For fans, the videos and what somebody wears to an awards show are window dressing. But for the industry, the window dressing is often all they see because they don't listen to the music, especially when the album isn't advanced. How do you address that?

**RG:** I go through that with them. Like at the CMA show, which is another example of how they're treated here in Nashville. I fought for them to have a performance slot,

formats pick it up. But country radio likes these girls. We should have had two number ones but for the luck of the draw. The goal was to spend the first album not pushing them into another format. The way we've tried to cross them has been through synergy and the broader media that's accepted them—television, which we've had a lot of.

**MR: If something on the second studio record leans that way, will you take it to other formats?**

**RG:** Yes. Without a doubt. We've established our base. It's almost like, how do you keep them down on the farm when they've been to the city? I listen to that Christmas record and wonder how to keep it formatically sound—which we and they want. But we told them with the holiday record formats don't apply. Go have a good time.

**MR: The approach taken for SHeDAISY perhaps doesn't translate to someone like Aaron Tippin, yet you're having success. Would you call the strategy behind Tippin more traditional, or are there ways to employ Lyric Street and Disney's unique strengths there as well?**

**RG:** The good thing with synergy is I know where the door is. If I were with another record company I probably wouldn't know where the door is and who to call to open that door. Aaron is one of those guys where if you get a hit at radio, you sell albums. He's a cool guy, but his prior videos hadn't shown him as this mature, charismatic, sexy, kinda dangerous guy. So we tried to re-image him with videos so that it was hip, cool, OK to be into Aaron Tippin. He was the edgy, macho guy standing against all this other stuff going on out there. That has allowed us to try to work Aaron into some stuff with ESPN, some NASCAR events and some hunting shows. It's more of a slow go because with media companies they're looking for a younger demo. Synergy is easier with SHeDAISY and Rascal Flatts, but Aaron represents something unique.

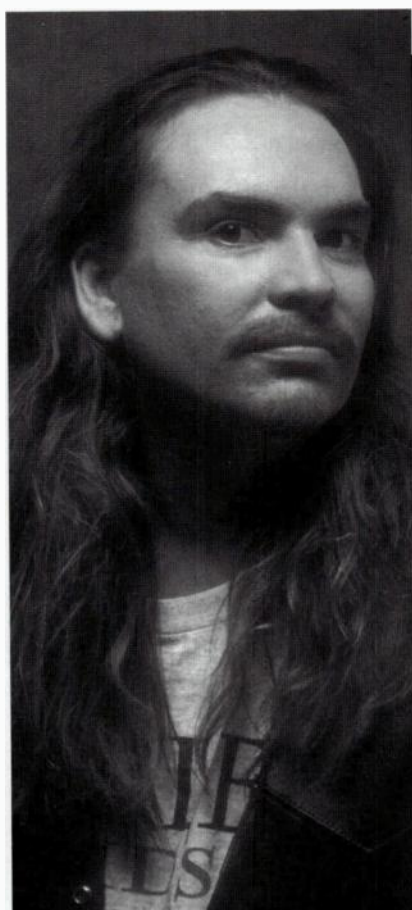
**MR: As far as the general climate in the industry, what's most encouraging to you, and what do you find most troubling?**

**RG:** The basic tenets of this business haven't changed. Because of the nature of SHeDAISY and Rascal Flatts' music you're able to expand the marketing palette. That's

exciting. But it still comes back to great artist, great song, sell records. People worry about mp3 and Napster, but I can't control that. The good news about being part of the second largest media company is I can have faith that Michael Eisner and those guys recognize the importance of e-commerce for their core businesses. We create software. If I'm worrying about the hardware, the distribution pipeline, I'm not going to have to worry about it because I won't have a business anymore.

**MR: What's most troubling?**

**RG:** The cost of doing business. Radio has gone through so much consolidation they don't have marketing budgets. You're having to support your efforts at radio even before you know if you're going to get a return. It's nothing anymore to do an album, set up the first single, do the video, listener appreciation shows, set up the album drop at the accounts and be at \$750,000 on street date with a brand new artist. It's nuts. That's why it's so important to have a great staff. This group understands fiscal responsibility because 80 percent of them came from RCA and were raised that way. ■



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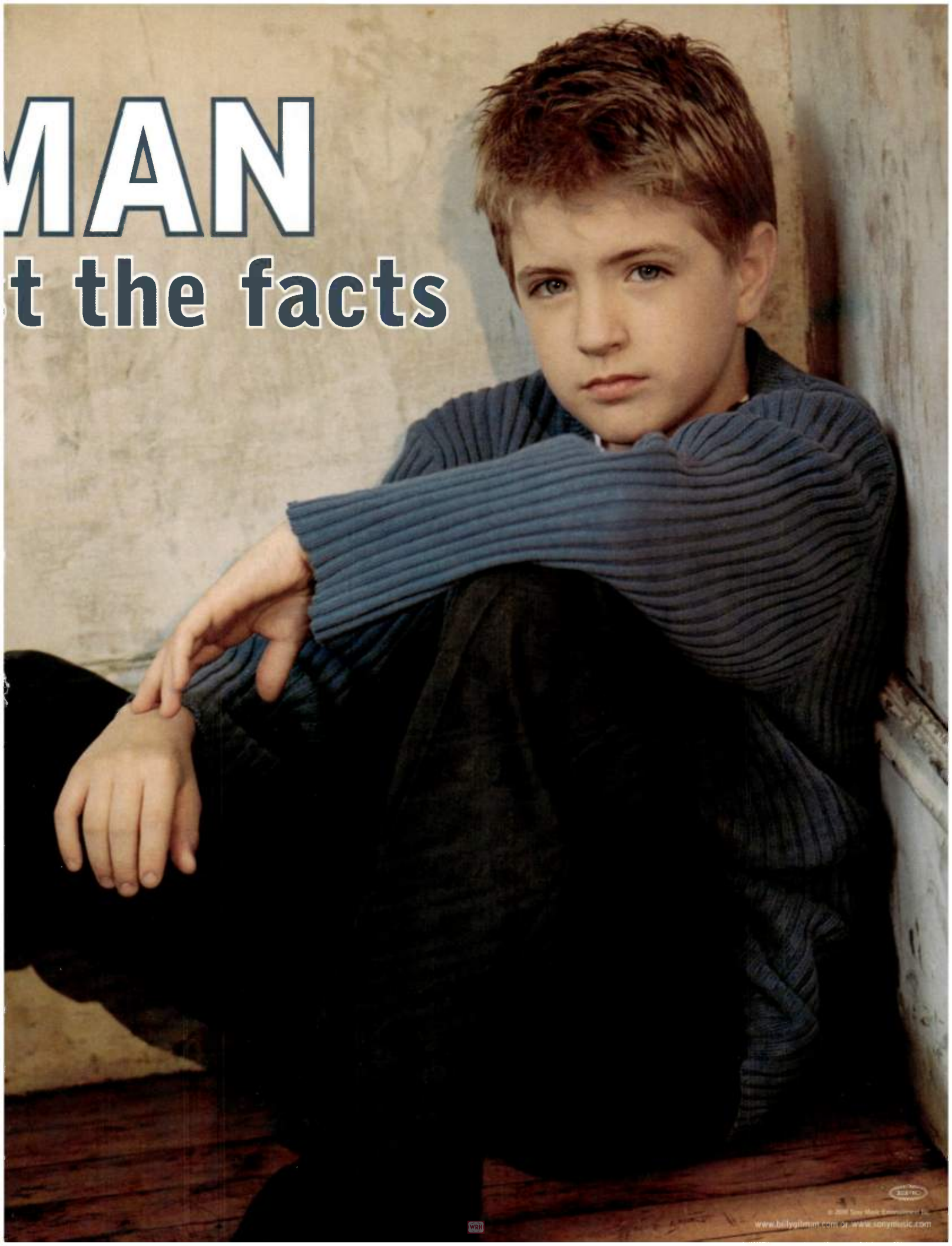
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# MAN

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## Some Warm Winter Sounds



It's a winter wonderland out there, so let's get warm and cozy with some new sounds, shall we?

For your big-label country singles, I direct your attention to Music Row's weekly fax/e-mail editions. But that doesn't mean there isn't quality work being done elsewhere. The five-song sampler by Mark McGuinn on VFR Records is one of the greatest things I've heard in years. Somebody hand that boy a DISCOVERY Award.

Mark had some competition, mind you. Lend your ears to Ellen Britton, Scott Carter and Wordd for new sounds that are almost as fresh.

It was an especially good listening session for instrumentalists. How could it not be with talents like Jim Horn, Matt Flinner, Glenn Keener and Barbara Lamb in the mix?

Disc of the Day? That would be the Kate Campbell-goes-gospel-in-Muscle-Shoals release from her new label home, Eminent.

And speaking of gospel, that's where the Label of the Day resides. The durable Myrrh Records imprint scores again.

### COUNTRY

#### EDDY RAVEN "Living in Black and White"

Writer: Frank J. Myers/Gary Baker/Tracy Lawrence; Producer: Ron Chancey; Publisher: Dixie Stars/Zomba/SLL, ASCAP; Row (track).

Island-y. It sounds fine, but it may be a little too close to the type of material he's done before.

#### LISA BROKOP "I'd Like to See You Try"

Writer: Lisa Brokop/Ryan Reynolds; Producer: Paul Leim/Lisa Brokop; Publisher: Sony ATV/Nick N'Ash/Songs of Note/Ensign, BMI; Cosmo (Canada) (track).

Brokop's new collection north of the border is all self-written. And she's adopted a edgier "attitude" sound. It's almost a dance-mix kinda groove.

#### BETH PROFITT "The Boy Next Door"

Writer: B. Ouliette/M. Lloyd; Producer: Mick Lloyd; Publisher: Secret Agency/Service Winner, SOCAN/ASCAP; Relentless (Canada) (track).

The production recalls Mutt and Shania. Her voice recalls the high-school talent show.

#### ROSHA "One Shirt"

Writer: Darrin Rosha/Adam Jaros; Producer: Ron Cornelius; Publisher: Rosha, ASCAP; RunStone (track) ([www.darrinrosha.com](http://www.darrinrosha.com)).

The track is tasty. He's pretty much a lightweight as a vocalist.

#### KEN SPOONER & DAVID BALL "Buzz & Pee Wee, Butchie & Me"

Writer: Ken Spooner; Producer: Godfrey/Adler/Spooner; Publisher: none listed; Spoonytunes (615-662-2456).

Ken should have left more of the singing to David and spent a little more time on production values. The tune is a tribute to the late Walter Hyatt.

#### MARK MCGUINN "All About the Ride"

Writer: Mark McGuinn/Bobby E. Boyd/Billy Davidson; Producer: Mark McGuinn/Shane Decker; Publisher: WB/Neon Mule/Boyd Where Prohibited/Swingin' Buckle, ASCAP/BMI/SESAC; VFR (track).

This is a major new talent. McGuinn's penetrating, heartfelt tenor is enough to make him a star. As it happens, he is also a brilliant songwriter. Wait, there's more. This is also a head-spinningly wonderful production that marries everything from electric guitar to lilting banjo touches. I cannot begin to tell you how much Music Row needs this man.

#### MIRANDA "Never Alone"

Writer: D. Tyson/R.E. Orrall; Producer: Larry Lelli; Publisher: none listed; LLM Entertainment (615-254-2893).

Beauty-pageant performance.

#### BOBBY MOORE "Let's Talk About Love"

Writer: Bobby Moore; Producer: Kenny Royster/Bobby Moore; Publisher: North American Metatron, ASCAP; NAMM (track).

Sorry. Back to woodshed as a songwriter, buddy. You're not quite ready yet.

#### VERALYNN "Doggone Broken Heart"

Writer: Zack Turner/Randy Albright; Producer: Brent Maher/Jimmie Young; Publisher: none listed; Kachina (track).

First class production. A-Team players. Top-shelf song. But she wobbles all over the place as a singer. You can dress 'em up, but you can't take 'em out.

### POP/ROCK

#### FAIR VERONA "The Downfall"

Writer: E.G. Cameron/Leah Nicholls; Producer: none listed; Publisher: Unfair, ASCAP; i.v. (track) ([sbrennan@ivrecords.com](mailto:sbrennan@ivrecords.com)).

The winners of the 1999 Nashville Music Award as Best Independent Label act have issued this teaser track from their forthcoming collection. The fascinating fusion is of the pop-chick/Go-Go vocals with redhot, grinding guitar and furious percussion. In other words, this seriously rocks. These kids are going places.

#### SHANE & THE MONEY MAKERS "I Need Some Money"

Writer: Eddie Harris; Producer: none listed; Publisher: none listed; Live (track) ([www.band-net.com/shane](http://www.band-net.com/shane)).

These regular Nashville club giggers have recorded a live CD. The title tune sums up their

funk-a-delicious approach. The stuttering "raunch" guitar, steady backbeat and thumping bass groove work for me.

#### ELLEN BRITTON "Peace in My Heart"

Writer: Ellen Britton/Kim Parent; Producer: Bobby King; Publisher: Bro N Sis/Zomba, BMI; EB (track) ([www.ellenbritton.com](http://www.ellenbritton.com)).

Music City's Britton has a delightfully unclassifiable collection of tunes to showcase. There are both folkie and jazzy elements to her style, but the overall tone of the disc is blue-eyed pop/soul, as exemplified by this track. Call me nuts, but I think this lady's songs could be huge hits. At any rate, she's well worth your attention.

#### BARBARA LAMB "Blue on Dakota"

Writer: B. Lamb/E.S. Esbeck; Producer: E. Scott Esbeck; Publisher: Let 'er Buck/Goodrun, ASCAP/BMI; Lots of Coffee (track) ([www.barbaralamb.com](http://www.barbaralamb.com)).

A rock 'n' roll fiddle record? Believe it.

#### KATE CAMPBELL "The Last Song"

Writer: Kate Campbell/Walt Aldridge; Producer: Kate Campbell; Publisher: Large River/April/Waltz Time, BMI/ASCAP; Eminent (track) ([www.eminentrecords.com](http://www.eminentrecords.com)).

Longtime Americana favorite Campbell has recorded a fascinating disc that reflects her Southern-gospel upbringing and her love of the Muscle Shoals sound. I loved this story song about the Last Supper. But I loved the tasty, swampy soul groove even more.

### JAZZ

#### JIM HORN "In My Life"

Writer: McCartney/Lennon; Producer: Jim Horn; Publisher: none listed; Pathfinder (track) ([www.jimhorn.com](http://www.jimhorn.com)).

Sax star Horn has recorded a dandy tribute album to the music of The Beatles. I particularly like the way he "stretched out" on this old fave, toying with the melody and improvising lines, then returning to "home base."

#### GLENN KEENER "I'll See You in My Dreams"

Writer: A.J. Pasqua/Mark C. Handy; Producer: Glenn Keener; Publisher: Handy Bros., ASCAP; Keener Productions (track).

The new CD by longtime Nashville sessionman Keener is a salute to Chet and Merle. It's a guitar lover's delight.

#### JIM FERGUSON "Deep Summer Music"

Writer: Willard Robison; Producer: Jim Ferguson; Publisher: Chappell, ASCAP; A-Records (Netherlands) (track) ([www.jimfergusonmusic.com](http://www.jimfergusonmusic.com)).

Jim's bass playing is on all kinds of Music City jazz discs. Who knew he could sing, too?

This has a velvety, Mel Torme kinda vibe. Featuring very cool piano (Stefan Karlsson), tenor sax (Chris Potter) and brushed drums (Jim White), this may be the best Nashville jazz album of the year.

## GOSPEL

### MICHAEL W. SMITH "Freedom"

Writer: Michael W. Smith; Producer: Michael W. Smith/Bryan Lenox; Publisher: Milene/Deer Valley, ASCAP; Reunion (track).

The sticker on the CD says this is his "long awaited" instrumental album. Long awaited by whom? People who crave overblown movie soundtrack music?

### NATALIE WILSON & THE S.O.P. CHORALE "Act Like You Know"

Writer: none listed; Producer: Joe "Flip" Wilson; Publisher: none listed; Gospo Centric.

Don't be misled by the "chorale" billing; it's a rap/R&B thang.

### SHIRLEY CAESAR "You Can Make It"

Writer: Michael E. Mathis; Producer: Bubba Smith/Shirley Caesar/Michael E. Mathis; Publisher: Jamdo Jamdo, ASCAP; Myrrh (track).

Miss Shirley stirs up a steaming helping of soul food, then Bobby Jones & The Nashville Super Choir come shouting in with the dessert. Stay tuned for all 6 minutes and 28 seconds of testifying, then say "Amen."

### THE ISAACS "Stand Still"

Writer: Rebecca Isaacs Bowman/Sonya Isaacs Surret/David Marshall; Producer: none listed; Publisher: R.I. Bowman Music, BMI; Horizon (track) (1-800-651-1535).

I am a complete sucker for old-time Southern gospel. And no one sings it sweeter than this angelic family. From the celestial harmonies to the tender fiddle, guitar, mandolin and Dobro work, this is acoustic-music perfection.

### WORDD "This Is a Party"

Writer: Tony Rich; Producer: Tony Rich; Publisher: Moby-Am, BMI; Myrrh (track).

Produced and written by Tony Rich ("Nobody Knows"), this r&b/rap duo commands you to get out of your seat. And you best listen, because they look like they weigh about 250 pounds apiece and could seriously kick your tail.

### THE TOMMIES "Real"

Writer: none listed; Producer: Derek Allen/Percy Bady/Asaph Award; Publisher: none listed; Myrrh/Epic (track).

This is the famed Thompson Community Singers choir adopting an r&b persona. It's got just the right touch of funk.

## AMERICANA

### SCOTT CARTER "Calliope"

Writer: Scott A. Carter; Producer: Steve Tveit/Scott Carter; Publisher: Amphibious Music, no performance rights listed; Amphibious Music (track) (615-227-8377).

Scott is a regular at the Radio Cafe in East Nashville. His first collection of tunes is guaranteed to transport you, because the guy is a first-class craftsman. This one is a gentle, acoustic gem. His tenor voice conveys the sweet/sad lyrics with enormous wistfulness and the tender production is sheer poetry. If you're into James Taylor or Paul Simon, run don't walk, across the Cumberland and get this album.

### MATT FLINNER "Latitude"

Writer: Matt Flinger; Producer: Todd Phillips; Publisher: Found Sounds, BMI; Compass (track).

Nashville continues to be the headquarters of "New Acoustic Music," the style that has contributed such world-class performers as Mark O'Connor, Bela Fleck and Jerry Douglas to the scene. Make room for one more. Mandolinist Flinger will flip your lid. Bluegrass programmers could probably get by with this, but there's a heckuva lot more than mountain melody going on here.

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### Jeff Gregg

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Jeff Gregg always had aspirations of working in showbusiness. Working behind-the-scenes, however, wasn't exactly what he had in mind. "I was going to be a rock star," says Gregg. "I was in kind of a country rock band and we called ourselves Stolen Property. I was the singer and keyboard player. Of course, we weren't very good," he laughs, "that's why I'm an agent."

Gregg was raised in Dallas, Texas, and got his first taste of Nashville as part of family trips to see the Grand Ole Opry. "I remember we came right before they left the

Ryman, and we had to drive there that night because Roy Acuff was going to be there," he says. "It's funny, people always ask how I know so much about the Opry."

He later attended SMU and Texas Tech, earning a degree in Business Administration in 1986. During his college years, Gregg would often take trips to Los Angeles to pursue another passion—acting. His acting skills even landed him on the daytime soap opera *All My Children*. He recalls, "I was one of Gregg's buddies during the Jenny and Greg days on the show."

As for his path to becoming an agent, it happened quite by chance. "I just had buddies who were in bands that couldn't get gigs," he says. "They'd say, 'Oh, you know people and you're great on the phone.' So I'd help them out. And then you start actually making money at something and you're like, 'Hey, I need to do this.'"

Yet it's not just the money for Gregg, who started and ran his own agency for several years before joining CAA in 1997. "I love this job," he says. "When I got the call and someone said, 'You want to talk to us about joining CAA,' I almost dropped the phone."

His enthusiasm for his occupation is still present as he displays a Jerry Maguire-esque zest for his clients. "I'm friends with my acts," he says, listing Shane McNally, Alecia Elliott and Jars of Clay among his acts. "One of my bands, Emerson

Drive, I saw them at a showcase a year ago. They didn't have a record deal. I really liked them, so I helped them shop for a deal and get one. They'd come down from Canada and stay at my house in my basement."

Gregg describes his average workday as "packed" and full of after-hour functions, which usually keep him out six days a week. In his free time, he says he likes to take part in something very dear to his heart—the CAA Foundation. "In Nashville, we adopted an elementary school. We have about eight people that go over every Thursday and read to the second graders, one-on-one and help them grow their reading skills. I try to go there every week." Besides his charity work, the laid-back agent enjoys buying and restoring homes as well as his hobby of collecting Hot Wheels cars.

—Richard McVey II

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## The Elusive Art of Tracking Album Sales

"How many albums have I sold?" A straightforward sounding question for which, unfortunately, there is no simple answer. Tracking the success of an album is a matter of considerable interest to artists, songwriters, publishers, record companies, manufacturers and retailers, among others. But there are *sales* and then there are *sales*. The answer depends on which of several possible measures of album sales is used.

Consider the understandable confusion felt by an artist/songwriter who returns home from a party celebrating his current album just certified platinum (1 million units sold) to find a fax from his personal manager containing: the latest SoundScan figures showing 600,000 units sold to date; his artist royalty statements reporting that he has been paid on U.S. sales of 470,000 units; and his songwriter royalty statements reporting that he has been paid on U.S. sales of 400,000 units.

"What gives?" the artist may ask. The differences among the numbers lie in the definitions (what transactions are included in each sales amount) and timing (what sales have occurred but have not yet been included on royalty statements.) Stay tuned and we will briefly examine how each of these four "sales" numbers is derived.

**RIAA "Sales"**—Gold and platinum awards represent certifications by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) of 500,000 or 1,000,000 in "sales" under this organization's definition. The figures used for the certification are provided to RIAA by the record label, and include net domestic shipments to the label's customers (distributors, chain stores, PX outlets) plus units shipped by record clubs.

**SoundScan "Sales"**—Generally albums are "sold" twice, at the wholesale level by the record company to its distributors, and at the retail level to the consumer. Unlike the RIAA, SoundScan measures domestic retail transactions, and excludes club and PX sales. Thus, units for which the first (wholesale) sale has taken place but not the second (retail) sale are "on the shelf," which can mean literally in the record store's racks, in a warehouse, or in transit between wholesaler and retailer.

**Artist "Sales"**—As is the case with RIAA certifications, artist royalties start with wholesale shipments; but the units on which they are based are calculated quite differently. Under a typical artist contract the chief differences are:

|                                               | RIAA             | SOUNSCAN       | ARTIST STATEMENT | WRITER STATEMENT |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>NET DOMESTIC SHIPMENTS TO DISTRIBUTORS</b> | 700,000          |                | 700,000          | 700,000          |
| <i>Songwriters reporting delay</i>            |                  |                |                  | (70,000)         |
| <i>Non-royalty bearing free goods</i>         |                  |                | (140,000)        | (65,000)         |
| <i>Units held in reserve</i>                  |                  |                | (240,000)        | (300,000)        |
| <b>NET SHIPMENTS BY U.S. RECORD CLUBS</b>     | 300,000          |                | 300,000          | 300,000          |
| <i>Songwriter reporting delay</i>             |                  |                |                  | (30,000)         |
| <i>Non-royalty club "bonus" units</i>         |                  |                | (150,000)        | (135,000)        |
| <b>RETAIL SALES (excludes club and PX)</b>    |                  | 600,000        |                  |                  |
| <b>TOTAL "SALES"</b>                          | <b>1,000,000</b> | <b>600,000</b> | <b>470,000</b>   | <b>400,000</b>   |

- shipments through "normal retail channels" are royalty bearing sales only after the subtraction of "free goods" or physical units which are not invoiced to the customer, which can amount to 20% of units shipped
- many labels withhold a percentage of otherwise payable units in reserve, reporting them for royalty purposes up to two years after the sale actually occurred
- royalty bearing club units can be 50% or less of the total units distributed, due to free records shipped as "joining bonuses" and other marketing plans

**Songwriter "Sales"**—The method by which record companies calculate payable units for mechanical royalty purposes is generally similar to that used for artist royalties, with some key differences. First, for artist/writers the payment on normal retail channel "free goods" is covered by the artist's controlled composition provision; a common arrangement is for payment on 50% of these units. Secondly, for mechanical royalty purposes,

substantially more units are held in reserve, particularly during the initial periods after an album's release. Also, songwriter mechanical royalties often experience a time lag of one or more calendar quarters, since sales are first reported by record labels to publishing companies, who must in turn process and re-report the sales activity to their songwriters.

### An Example

The table above traces shipment and sales activity of our artist's album to demonstrate the various meanings of "sales" under four definitions. The example is fictitious but plausible; depending on the circumstances, the disparities between sales figures from these sources can easily be as great as the table indicates. Thus while individually none of the four methods provides the complete picture, studied together, and taking their differences into account, they can give us the best currently available measurement of an album's sales success. ■



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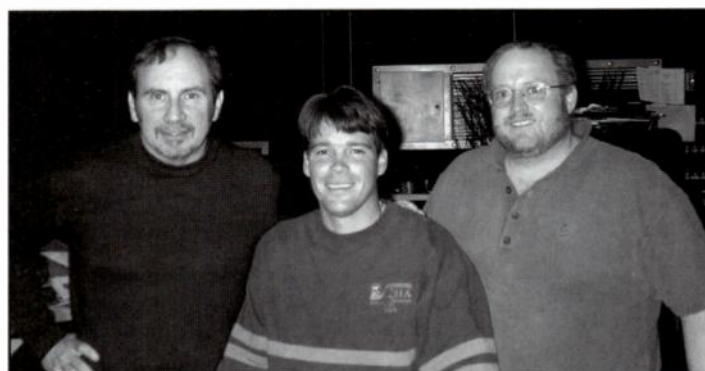
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# Bravo to Ocean Way; Dolly, Amy and Clay Hard at Work

The Bravo Channel's Dec. 4 profile on Billy Bob Thornton had a Nashville studio connection. The show looked at Thornton's birthplace in Arkansas and then traveled with him to Nashville to document his recent recording sessions at Ocean Way...Scruggs Sound Studio recently installed the Radar II E Series with 48 tracks...Mark Vie joins East Iris as their new Staff Engineer and Client Service Coordinator...Gary Paczosa has been mixing Dolly Parton's upcoming album, *Little Sparrow*, at Seventeen Grand Recording. The album, to be released on Sugar Hill in late January, was produced by Steve Buckingham with Assistant Engineer Thomas Johnson...Amy Grant was at The Bennett House working on tracks and overdubs with Keith Thomas producing and Bill Whittington engineering...Brad Paisley has been laying down tracks at Castle Recording with his producer Frank Rogers.



Clay Walker was recently in Emerald's Tracking Room working on his new album. Pictured are (L-R): Producer Byron Gallimore, Walker, and Engineer Julian King.

## Artist      Producer      Engineer      Label      Project

### 615 MUSIC

|   |                 |              |               |               |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| — | Snider/Wachtler | Aaron Gant   | HGTV          | holiday promo |
| — | 615 prod.       | "            | NBC           | network ID's  |
| — | Snider/Wachtler | "            | WKRN          | "newsonic"    |
| — | 615 prod.       | "            | Fisher Broad. | news music    |
| — | Snider/Wachtler | "            | WTHR          | "Rainmaker"   |
| — | Rossi/Wachtler  | Drew Rydberg | History       | Texas Rangers |

### AUDIO PRODUCTIONS

|               |                   |               |              |                       |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Rascal Flatts | Westwood One      | Travis Turk   | Lyric Street | "Country Cntdwn"      |
| Lonestar      | SFX               | "             | BNA          | Christmas Special     |
| Faith Hill    | Westwood One      | Joe Hand      | WB           | "Country Cntdwn"      |
| Tim McGraw    | Tri Entertainment | Scott Goudeau | Curb         | Greatest Hits Special |
| SheDAISY      | Westwood One      | "             | Lyric Street | "Country Cntdwn"      |

### BAYOU

|                    |                   |                |                |       |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| Johnny Law         | Col. Buster Doss  | George Clinton | CBD Music      | trax  |
| Kenny Beard        | Kenny Beard       | "              | Big Tractor    | demos |
| Robert Orr         | PJ Parks          | "              | Track          | trax  |
| Martin Laight      | Martin Laight     | "              | —              | mix   |
| Frank Lowe         | Frank Lowe        | "              | Morgan England | trax  |
| Gilles Godard      | Gilles Godard     | "              | Curb           | mix   |
| Aaron Barker       | Aaron Barker      | "              | Skymonkey      | demos |
| B. House Rockets   | Gary Sudker       | "              | Red Ridge      | trax  |
| Johnny Tolley      | Tolley/Ryles      | Barry Senter   | —              | demos |
| Lisa & John Wesley | John Wesley Ryles | George Clinton | —              | "     |
| Mark Riddick       | Mark Riddick      | "              | —              | trax  |
| Nikki              | Ryles/Waldrop     | "              | —              | "     |

### BENNETT HOUSE

|            |              |                  |              |           |
|------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Hue        | The Faction  | The Faction      | Rising Storm | trax/od's |
| Amy Grant  | Keith Thomas | Bill Whittington | ATM Records  | "         |
| Mercy Bell | Mercy Bell   | "                | Interscope   | mix       |
| "          | Mark Moffit  | —                | "            | trax/od's |

## Artist      Producer      Engineer      Label      Project

### CASTLE RECORDING

|                   |                |                 |              |               |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Hezekiah Walker   | H. Walker      | Jaszcz/Greene   | Verity/Jive  | mix           |
| Jamie L. Thurston | Gregg Brown    | Feaster/Purcell | Revelator    | mix/od's      |
| Lane Brody        | Eddie Bayers   | Janas/Greene    | Medallion    | od's          |
| Demos             | Gordon O'Brien | Janas, Waters   | Tower One/WC | trax/mix/od's |
| Kenna             | Kenna/Chase    | Serban Ghena    | Interscope   | od's/mix      |
| Me & The Boys     | Paul Buono     | Mike Janas      | —            | od's          |
| Rob Robinson      | Rob Robinson   | Chad Brown      | —            | "             |
| Brad Paisley      | Frank Rogers   | Barrow/Short    | Arista       | trax          |

### CREATIVE RECORDING

|        |                |                |             |   |
|--------|----------------|----------------|-------------|---|
| —      | Denny Dawson   | Bradley/Skaife | Prism Music | — |
| Mari   | Charley McCoy  | E. Paul        | Flying Harp | — |
| —      | Jon McElroy    | Paul Skaife    | Hamstein    | — |
| Animus | Archie Jordan  | Alan Schulman  | Major Bob   | — |
| —      | Stewart Harris | E. Paul        | Peer Music  | — |

### DARK HORSE

|                    |                 |               |               |           |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Twila Paris        | John Hartly     | Jim Dineen    | Sparrow       | trax      |
| Audio Adrenaline   | Mark Stewart    | Aaron Swihart | —             | od's      |
| Shenny McPherson   | Dennis Patton   | Richie Biggs  | Autumn        | "         |
| Cindy Morgan       | Brent Bougeouis | Dave Schober  | Word          | trax/od's |
| Blue Highway       | Jerry Douglas   | Gary Paczosa  | —             | trax      |
| Jesus Our Emmanuel | —               | —             | —             | —         |
| —                  | Marty Parks     | Brent King    | Lillenas Pub. | mix       |

### EAST IRIS

|             |                 |                |         |          |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|---------|----------|
| Color       | Serletic/Golden | Thoener/Dobson | Melisma | mix      |
| Angie Aparo | Matt Serletic   | Dobson/Golden  | "       | trax/mix |

### EMERALD ENTERTAINMENT

|                 |                  |                |              |           |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|
| Morgan/Kershaw  | Wilson/Tankersly | Billy Sherrill | RCA          | trax/od's |
| Silver Burdette | Buddy Skipper    | Dan Ruden      | BR Prods.    | trax      |
| Kortney Kayle   | Mark Bright      | Rowe/Kidd      | Lyric Street | mix       |

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# STUDIO REPORT

## Writer's Notes

### Deanna Bryant



**BIRTHPLACE:** Childress, Texas

**PUBLISHER:** Warner-Chappell

**YEARS IN NASHVILLE:** 7

**HITS/CUTS:** "Forever Love," Reba McEntire; "Unconditional," Clay Davidson; "People Miss Planes," Deana Carter; "Easy To Love You," Randy Travis; (Upcoming) "A Rose Is A Rose," Meredith Edwards; "29 Again," Lorrie Morgan

**FAVORITE SONG YOU WROTE:** "When You Find Love" with John Scott Sherrill

**FAVORITE SONG YOU DIDN'T WRITE:** Too many to choose from...maybe "You Don't Know Me."

**ON WHAT INSTRUMENT DO YOU WRITE:** Piano, guitar, drums, whatever's close to me at the time.

**INFLUENCES:** Gospel, classical, Elvis, Johnny Cash, R&B, The Beatles

**ADVICE TO WRITERS:** Try not to be obstinate when receiving criticism from a credible song critic. Stay positive and work consistently.

**LITTLE KNOWN BIOGRAPHICAL FACT:** I had a pro sports management company in Dallas. I played Jerry McGuire with NFL clients.

**ISSUES FACING SONGWRITERS TODAY:** All the basic issues today are the same as they've always been.

Deanna Bryant grew up in Childress, Texas, where her father was a cotton farmer. Her creative nature blossomed young, born out of a necessity to keep herself occupied. "It was a perfect situation for a songwriter," says Bryant, "because we lived 30 miles out in the middle of nowhere. There were no close neighbors to play with, so I had to entertain myself."

By her high school years, she was writing songs and skilled on the piano, drums and guitar. After graduation, she attended Texas Tech and earned a degree in accounting. Her career took off as she went to work as a corporate accountant with Ross Perot. Later she started a prosperous sports business management company in Dallas, where her high-profile clients included Karl Malone and Irving Fryar. However, she soon grew tired of the corporate rat race. "My dad got sick, and I was at the hospital all the time. It was a real life-altering event," she recalls. "I realized, I don't know who I'm living for, but I need to be living for myself. In '91, I let the rest of my clients go and said, 'OK, I'm going to do this.'"

Although she had been making trips since 1985, she didn't officially move to Nashville until 1994—February 23, to be exact. "I worked hard from '91 to '94 to get a group of songs together and to write as much as possible to work that muscle out. In December of '93, I finally showed my songs to somebody and they said, 'Come on.'"

She says her actual move to Music City was not an easy one. "I drove straight through from Dallas to Nashville because I was so scared and wanted to get here in one day. It was 12 hours. By the time I got to town I was so stressed it felt like someone took a screwdriver to my forehead and screwed it to the back of the seat. Also, I didn't know there was a 98 percent occupancy rate in Nashville. So I stayed with friends for the first four months."

Her talent was ultimately recognized when Starstruck Writers Group signed her to a publishing deal nearly a year after her relocation. Her recent transfer to Warner-Chappell comes as part of their acquisition of Starstruck. **What was it like the first time you heard one of your songs on the radio?** It was "Forever Love." It was like an out-of-body experience. It's a freaky thing. It happens every time. You almost can't be there. **Is it awkward co-writing with a new writer?** It's like meeting somebody for the first time and you're supposed to have sex and make it the best they've had. I used to think the whole chemistry thing was BS, but it's true. There's got to be a lot of respect and trust and openness. **What does your family think of your success?** They are flabbergasted. I have a bit of "I told you so." **If you could have anyone record your songs, who would it be?** Linda Ronstadt. **What do you do for fun?** Gardening. It's been awesome because I can get out of my head and get into nature. **What would people be surprised to know about you?** Most people crack up when I tell them I was head cheerleader in high school. And I'd love to write for *Saturday Night Live*, that's kind of a secret desire.

—Richard McVey II

| Artist           | Producer             | Engineer        | Label      | Project       |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|
| Elbert West      | Scott Miller         | Frizell/Piske   | Broken Bow | trax/od's     |
| George Jones     | Emory Gordy Jr.      | Martin/Piske    | Asylum     | "             |
| Uncle Sideshow   | Cotton/Carr          | Cotton/Carr     | "          | trax/mix/od's |
| Alecia Elliott   | Dann Huff            | Balding/Hackett | MCA        | mix/od's      |
| Lonestar         | "                    | Balding/Hagen   | RCA        | trax/mix/od's |
| George Jones     | Emory Gordy Jr.      | Justin Niebank  | Asylum     | mix           |
| Clay Walker      | Byron Gallimore      | King/Cobble     | Giant      | trax/od's     |
| Coley McCabe     | Williams/Bright      | Williams/Kidd   | RCA        | trax/mix/od's |
| Del Beatles      | Leo/Lee              | Ben Fowler      | —          | mix           |
| Wynonna          | Shep Crawford        | Fowler/Bickel   | Universal  | od's/voc's    |
| Kelly Price      | "                    | "               | —          | "             |
| Trace Adkins     | Dann Huff            | Balding/Hackett | Capitol    | mix/od's      |
| Wilkinsons       | Mac MacAnally        | Seay/Saylor     | Giant      | trax/mix/od's |
| Tracy Byrd       | Billy Joe Walker Jr. | Steve Tillisch  | RCA        | trax          |
| Rick Huckabee    | Butch Carr           | Carr/Piske      | —          | "             |
| South Sixty-Five | Cannon/Wilson        | Billy Sherrill  | Atlantic   | trax/od's     |
| Tim Rushlow      | David Malloy         | Guess/Murphy    | "          | mix           |
| Tracy Byrd       | Billy Joe Walker Jr. | King/Cobble     | RCA        | trax          |
| Point of Grace   | Nathan Nockels       | Laineey/Saylor  | Word       | mix/od's      |

### GREY HOUSE

|                 |                 |              |           |       |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|-------|
| Stephany Delray | Stephany Delray | Wendy Mazur  | High Seas | demos |
| Daro Cupp       | Billy Herzig    | Billy Herzig | —         | CD    |
| James Hinds     | "               | "            | —         | demos |
| Dalton Kent     | —               | Dalton Kent  | —         | "     |
| Frankie Moreno  | Moreno/Herzig   | Herzig/Mazur | Primo     | CD    |

### MONEY PIT

|                 |                |                      |            |           |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|-----------|
| Alecia Elliott  | Brown/Worley   | Schleicher/Hellerman | MCA        | od's      |
| Jennifer Hicks  | Paul Worley    | "                    | Sony       | "         |
| Martina McBride | Worley/McBride | "                    | RCA        | trax/od's |
| Joanna Janet    | Paul Worley    | "                    | DreamWorks | "         |
| Robin English   | Kim Patton     | "                    | Sony       | trax      |
| Lukas Juke      | Lukas Juke     | Hellerman/Hachler    | Roundtown  | mix       |

### RECORDING ARTS

|                  |                 |                |             |               |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Anointed         | Chris Harris    | Shiek/Shipen   | Myrrh       | mix           |
| Tim Philen       | Jeff Teague     | Hall/Tutco     | SGR         | "             |
| Cindy Wheeler    | Scott Rouse     | Gary P/Johnson | GrooveGrass | "             |
| Camille Harrison | Harrison/Chenev | "              | —           | trax/mix/od's |
| Tait             | Tait/Stewart    | Shiek/Shipen   | Forefront   | mix           |
| Rick Stevens     | Bob Bullock     | Bullock/Hanson | Broken Bow  | "             |

### SCRUGGS SOUND

|                 |              |                |   |       |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------|---|-------|
| Sea Gayle/EMI   | Frank Rogers | Richard Barrow | — | demos |
| "               | Chris DuBois | "              | — | "     |
| Warner Chappell | Wynn Varble  | "              | — | "     |

### SOUND EMPORIUM

|                 |                 |                   |                 |               |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Kim P. Johnston | Kim P. Johnston | Mike Wrucke       | Jody Williams   | trax/mix/od's |
| Al Anderson     | Al Anderson     | Baggett/Jaskowiak | Windswept       | trax/od's     |
| Steve Mandile   | Steve Mandile   | Matt Andrews      | Extreme W.G.    | trax          |
| Graham Patrick  | Jeff Dayton     | "                 | Glen Campbell   | trax/od's     |
| Elizabeth Cook  | Steve Fishell   | Mike Poole        | Bro & Sis Music | trax/mix/od's |
| Chelan Hunt     | Stelluto/Hagen  | Clark Hagen       | MOD Prod.       | "             |

### SOUNDSHOP

|             |             |               |            |          |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------|----------|
| Joe Diffie  | Cook/Wilson | Bradley/Capps | Sony       | trax     |
| K.T. Oslin  | Raul Malo   | "             | RCA        | trax/mix |
| Mike Walker | Cook/Stroud | "             | DreamWorks | trax     |

### STUDIO 23

|                   |               |               |            |      |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|------|
| Lynsey Bostick    | Bryan Cumming | Bryan Cumming | Boss Prod. | CD   |
| Chris Donohoe     | "             | "             | —          | demo |
| Jack Curry        | Curry/Cumming | "             | —          | "    |
| Della&Scott Stacy | S. Stacy      | "             | —          | CD   |

## Bobby Karl...

Nostalgia was the prevailing mood at the Pickin' Parlor on Second Avenue across from the Wildhorse. That's where they held a 70th birthday party for legendary A-Team bass player **Bob Moore** (11/30). It was so cool to see all the old studio gang together—**Pig Robbins**, **Louis Nunley**, **Ray Edenton**, **Scotty Moore** and the like, plus such groovy guys as **Jerry Kennedy**, **Shelby Singleton** and **David Skepner**. Some of the younger set turned up as well, notably **Rosie Flores** and **Richie Owens**.

As many of you know, the 1999 Nashville Music Awards were conducted without a big concert event this year. We finally got around to presenting them at a BMI reception (11/14)

that was way too sparsely attended. **Mike Henderson** did attend to pick up his Blues Album and Club Act statuettes. **Jean Mayer** collected her Children's Album NAMMY. **Wilma Jensen** was presented with her Classical Musician of the Year honor. **Fair Verona** was handed a well-deserved Independent Recording award. Members of Group of the Year **Sixpence None the Richer** were around, too. Top session drummer **Paul Leim** was one of the only studio pros who was present to win.

The rest of us schmoozed anyway. **Buddy Mondlock**, **Robert Reynolds**, **Jay Orr**, **John Hood**, **Carol Ponder**, **Michael Kurek**, **Steve West**, **Will Byrd**, **Glenn Middleworth**, **Nancy**

## Works The Room

**Russell**, **Kira Florita**, **Chuck Bader** and **Tracy Gershon** were among those working the room.

"We are so lucky to have the wealth of talent in this community that we do," said **Gershon**. "I want to thank them for making this a better place to live."

"God bless Nashville, Tennessee," said **Henderson** more succinctly.

Onward to merrier events. The delicious wit of columnist **Molly Ivans** was the attraction at this year's ACLU benefit soiree at the Vanderbilt Faculty Club (11/19). On the sound system we were entertained by the new *Freedom Sings* CD. Produced by **Bill Lloyd**, this Bluebird Cafe project benefits the First Amendment

It was the party of all parties when *la creme de la creme* arrived at the **Frances Preston** manse to pay homage to **Roger Sovine** (11/28).

No one said it out loud, but we will miss this retiring BMI exec terribly. **Roger** could pull off the elegant Southern gentleman and the rowdiest redneck jokester with equal aplomb. He kept one foot in the "old school" charm of Music Row while gliding with ease through the community's ever trickier politics of today. He did it because he knew how to smile. He did it by reminding us that the reason we got into the music business in the first place was to have fun.

As he leaves, he takes a little piece of all of us with him.

That's why the guest list looked like the contents of "In Charge." There were record-label titans like **Joe Galante**, **Luke Lewis**, **Tony Brown**, **Tim DuBois**, **Mike Dungan**, **Allen Butler** and **Bruce Hinton**. There were publishing moguls like **Tim Wipperman**, **David Conrad**, **Tom Collins** and **Pat Higdon**. There were entertainers like **Randy Owen**, **Merle Kilgore** and **Delbert McClinton**. There were management gurus like **Larry Fitzgerald**, **Stan Mores**, **Dale Morris** and **Bob Titley**.

Look! Over there! There were Hall of Fame members **Brenda Lee**, **Harlan Howard** and **Jo Walker-Meador**. Look! Over in the other corner! Omigod, it's **Billy Sherrill**, **Norro Wilson**, **Glenn Sutton**, **Curly Putman** and **George Richey**.

I mean, get a load of these legendary characters—**Bob Beckham**, **Ron Chancey**, **Jimmy Gilmer**, **Don Light**, **Bob Thompson**, **Bill Denny** and **Joe Sullivan**. Then mix them with **Thom Schuyler**, **Wayne**

**Halper**, **Gary Overton**, **Brian Williams**, **Jody Williams**, **Doug Williams**, **Doug Howard**, **Perry Howard**, **Sharon Howard**, **Clay Bradley**, **Patsy Bradley**, **Doyle Brown**, **Bob Saporiti**, **Kay West**, **David Corlew**, **David Preston** and **David Ross**. Toss in **Ed Benson** and **Nancy Shapiro**, plus the BMI seasonings of **Joyce Rice**, **Thomas Cain**, **Ellen Wood**, **Ann Booth**, **Del Bryant**, **Caroline Davis**, **Mark Mason**, **Alison Smith**, **Faye Smith**, **Harry Warner**, **Ima Withers**, **Paul Corbin** and **Colleen Staudt**. Now that's what I call an A-list event.

It was a splendid affair. We drifted through **La Preston's** elegantly decorated rooms into a white heated tent over the tennis courts out back. Everything looked lovely and the camaraderie couldn't have been better.

But I couldn't help feeling a twinge of sadness. "Don't leave me, **Roger**!" I pleaded. "You're on your own, pal," he replied with a grin.

**Frances** showed slides of **Roger** and **Shirley** down through the years, complete with ad-libbed quips. Then they unveiled a cute two-seater golf cart for the **Sovines** to enjoy in their retirement down in **Gulf Shores**. Don't worry: **Don Cook** has offered **Roger** a trailer to get it there.

The food was fabulous. Would you believe chilled lobster tails? For 200? As an appetizer? Then came the succulent lamb chops and the tender braized beef medallions. I'm not even going to speculate on what the bar bill might have been. Like I said, it was the party of all parties.

And no one deserved it more than the King of the Party, himself. I sure will miss him.



Paul Corbin and Frances Preston with Roger Sovine.



Roger and Shirley Sovine in their new "Gator."

Center. Participants include Jonell Mosser, Greg Trooper, Tommy Womack, John Kay, Dan Baird, Kevin Welch, Rodney Crowell, Beth Nielsen Chapman, Rodney Foster, Don Henry, Kim Richey, Tammy Rogers, Chip Taylor, Stone Deep and Steve Earle.

The sardine-packed dining room included Robin Mitchell & Mike Joyce, Erika Wallom & Roger Nichols, Amy Kurland, Sheldon Kurland, John & Delores Siegenthaler, Linda Quigley, Steve Bass, Nancy Saturn, Jane Eskin, John Bridges, Jack Hollis, Abby Rubinfeld, Tom John, Kirk Loggins, Charles Earle and Hedy Weinberg.

The Belcourt Theater was the site of the premiere of Wynonna's TV special *Music in High Places* (11/13). This is part of a series for DIRECTV being produced by our own TBA Entertainment. The idea is to showcase music people in intriguing international sites, sort of a travelogue/performance concept. Previously produced episodes featured Alanis Morissette on a Navajo reservation in Arizona and Brian McKnight in Brazil. Upcoming are Shawn Colvin in Tahiti, Wyclef Jean in Egypt and Collective Soul in Morocco. Wy was supposed to go to Israel, but Middle East tensions forced a relocation to Italy.

"It's a National Geographic Explorer for the MTV generation," explained TBA's Marc Oswald. A portion of the proceeds benefits the Grammy Foundation. Radio Shack is the principle sponsor.

Katie Gillon, Terry Choate, Ed Thies, Mary Ann McCready, Pat Rolfe, Lisa Harless, Jane Braddock and Virginia Team joined Wy, her road crew and her vocalists Bob Bailey, Vicki Hampton and Kim Fleming at the screening. Naomi Judd and Larry Strickland were there, too. They're evidently trying to work things out.

Let the record show that Wy sang her face off in the piazzas and cathedrals of Italy. The special was a triumph.

Other spots to spot the fabulons in recent weeks included two bashes for the return of Travis Tritt to No. 1. One was at the Flying Saucer (11/15) and the other was at BMI (12/5). Marshall Dyllon and Titans team members costarred at Planet Hollywood for Toys for Tots (12/5). Lonestar was on a roll at the Brentwood Skate Center (12/4) to celebrate three million. Gary Allan went Gold at a party at Atlantis (11/9). Chris Cagle strutted his stuff at the Wildhorse (12/2).

Lisa Angelle's CD release bash was at Borders (11/1). Ellen Britton's was at the Bluebird (11/15). The Great Divide's was at the Exit/In (11/7). Sonya Isaacs autographed at Tower (11/4). Aaron Tippin's No. 1 with "Kiss This" and Harley Allen's chart-topping "The Little Girl" were both celebrated at ASCAP (11/2).

The music industry's Christmas parties are now underway. But I'll save that for next time. ■



Pictured at the Leadership Music party to celebrate the Nashville Music Awards are (L-R): DreamsWorks Nashville's Wayne Halper, High Seas Music's Tracy Gershon, and BMI's Roger Sovine.



Travis Tritt supporters were on hand to help him celebrate his first multi-week No. 1 single with Monument Records, "Best of Intentions." The song, off Tritt's *Down the Road I Go* album, held the top spot for three weeks. Pictured at the party are (L-R): Managers Gary Falcon and John Goodman; Ed Benson, Executive Director, CMA; Tritt; Ted Wagner, VP National Epic Promotion; Allen Butler, President Sony Nashville; and Jack Lameier, Senior VP National Country Promotions Sony Nashville.



Lonestar celebrated the triple platinum success of *Lonely Grill* with a party at a Nashville skating center. Pictured are (L-R): Lonestar's Michael Britt; BNA Promotion VP Tom Baldrica; RLG Senior VP Butch Waugh; RLG Chairman Joe Galante; Lonestar's Keech Rainwater and Richie McDonald; and Producer Dann Huff.

## Will Technology Shrink Album Costs?



Scott Hendricks



Paul Worley



Mark Wright



James Stroud

Despite rising marketing and radio promotion costs, album production remains the largest single line item on most budgets for new and established artists. Over the years, that figure has risen substantially (although studio rates have not). Several decades ago it was not uncommon to record Nashville albums for less than \$50,000 but today's major label producers routinely spend \$150-\$200,000 and more. Success stories of non-country artists recording inexpensive albums at home using new generation affordable gear have surfaced in some cases achieving gold and platinum status. Have Nashville budgets shot up out of control, or is that what it takes to get the job done right?

"I can't make albums for any less," says MCA's Mark Wright. "Lately, I've gotten more into trying to create something new musically to help expand our format's popularity by working on tracks more than I used to. We have such versatile musicians, but by cutting too many tracks in too short a time we have been encouraging sameness. Perhaps we need to setup differently for every song and work harder on arrangements. Unfortunately, experimentation and originality can be costly when you have a room full of double scale musicians."

"Most record companies are too concerned and driven by marketing and promotion," says producer Paul Worley. "But most of the big success stories in this town involved spending extraordinary amounts of money on recording. When Mutt Lange rang up a half million-dollar tab on Shania's second album, everyone snickered and winked. But look what happened. The Dixie Chicks spent almost \$400,000 on their first project. People need to be responsible not wasteful, but constricting budgets for major label projects headed for the mainstream usually results in something that misses the mark and just isn't good enough." (Worley admits he will soon record a project for BR5-49 that will likely come in around \$50,000, but explains the bargain basement pricetag as the result of having a great amount of donated resources for the project.)

"People are making records cheaper," contrasts Virgin Records head/producer Scott Hendricks. "Chris Cagle's project cost us less than a \$100k. The cost of gear is coming down dramatically and it's hurting the studios because the value of their stuff is going through the floor. But despite the falling gear costs, we're spending more time in the overdub phase than in the past. When

you get into doing those technical things you can make a better record but it takes longer. That's where costs have risen." Hendricks also sees a new paradigm where country acts will emulate other formats and record more at home. "We're already seeing artists do a lot of the process at home," he continues. "It's a scary time to be in the studio business. It doesn't matter where it was recorded as long as it's a hit song. There are all kinds of pop records done for next to nothing that have been big hits and I think we'll see that happen in country, too. On more than one occasion I've said, 'Why try to beat that demo?' Songwriters are building their demos to the record stage more and more. So instead of trying to recreate it, I've simply bought the demo and upgraded it. If I like what I hear, I don't care where you recorded it—at home or at Emerald."

"There are two ways to look at it," offers DreamWorks label head/producer James Stroud. "Yes, we are spending too much money and no, we're not spending enough. There are two factors, one is the artists and their creative process and the other is financial—getting to the bottom line. I'd say that now we are spending too much on our albums because of the market being so soft. Marketing dollars are so high that both labels and artist are having a hard time making a living based on huge recording costs. However, when you look at the other side of it, real successful artists like a Tim McGraw, do have the financial flexibility to go and be a bit more creative with regard to musicians, tape, engineers and studio time." Stroud also sees the recording process being changed by technology. "It's already happening. We have our class A studios where we go to mix and tracking rooms, but nowadays the majority of our overdubs and vocals are done in home studios or less expensive studios because the technology (ProTools for example) allows us to create quality product for less cost. Ten years ago we didn't have that technology, so you had to go to the big studios and stay there all the time. The difference now is that studios and musicians have to up their prices, and those are fixed costs that you can't change (and don't want to). But when you talk about making records now as compared with five years ago, it's going to have to change because we have to get work done in a cheaper environment or we are not going to be able to get to that profit line and that's trouble." ■

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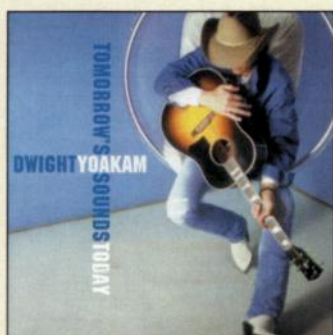
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# ALBUM REVIEWS



## DWIGHT YOAKAM

### Tomorrow's Sounds Today

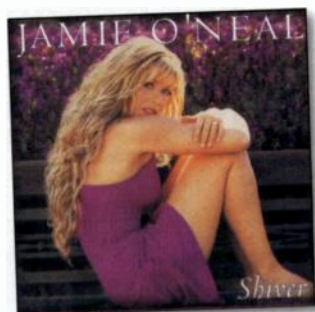
(Reprise) Producer: Pete Anderson

**Prime Cuts:** "For Love's Sake," "I Want You To Want Me," "Alright, I'm Wrong," "Free To Go," "Dreams of Clay"

**Critique:** It's amazing how good country music can be when it's left to its own devices, far from the Nashville music machine and country radio influences. Here's an album that incorporates traditional sounds, honky-tonk attitude, rockabilly style, modern flavors, and infuses it with the genius of Yoakam and producer/

guitarist Pete Anderson. Yoakam's honky-tonk side shines on the opener, "Love Caught Up To Me," one of 11 Yoakam-penned songs on this mostly upbeat album. On the traditional "The Heartaches Are Free" he whines out a bridge that would make Hank jealous, and gives a hip-swiveling performance with "A Place To Cry." The album's most exciting cuts, however, are the ones where he throws convention out the window, like "For Love's Sake," with its reggae beat highlighted by a piercing steel and fiddle. Then there's the tejano vibe of "Alright, I'm Wrong," a duet with Buck Owens, which sounds like it's straight off a Texas Tornadoes album. And let's not forget Yoakam's take on the Cheap Trick classic "I Want You To Want Me," that makes you swear Trick guitarist Rick Nielsen had a country record on when he wrote it. Vocals, lyrics, production, style, you name it, this album has it. In short, this is the year's best. **Grade: A+**

—Richard McVey II



## JAMIE O'NEAL

### Shiver

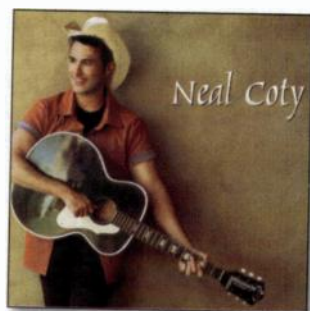
(Mercury) Producer: Keith Stegall

**Prime Cuts:** "There Is No Arizona," "I'm Still Waiting," "She Hasn't Heard It Yet"

**Critique:** Campy pop production lay the foundation for an album that showcases Jamie O'Neal's exceptional Martina McBride-esque vocals. O'Neal leaves a strong impression, whether she's making the chorus of songs like "There Is No Arizona" sound effortless or pulling the listener into the anguish of "I'm Still Waiting." A solid tunesmith, she co-wrote nine of 13 cuts that focus on the subject of love in all its phases, epitomized by the power ballad "Where We Belong" and the upbeat opener, "When I Think About Angels." Yet for her hits, the album misses with songs like the Mark Wills duet, "I'm Not Gonna Do Anything Without You" and "You Rescued Me," which feel uninspired. The album's shining star is a phenomenal voice and just enough solid

material to make this a worthy debut that should attract an audience. Nevertheless, a hint more diversity and a few surprises could have made all the difference. **Grade: B-**

—Richard McVey II



## NEAL COTY

### Neal Coty

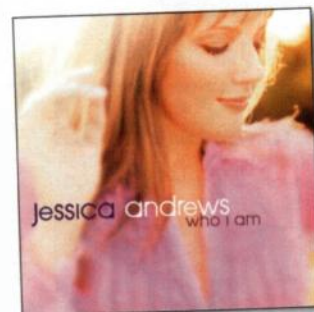
(Mercury) Producer: John Kelton

**Prime Cuts:** "Right Down Through The Middle Of Us," "Legacy," "Sad Eyes," "South Texas Night"

**Critique:** Coty's first album, *Chance And Circumstance*, was a nervy little number that defied country conventions and introduced a promising, distinct new voice in what was rapidly becoming a genre filled with sound-alike male singers. Unfortunately, that album didn't burn up the sales chart, which surely influenced the making of Coty's new, self-titled album. While he takes a few chances, such as covering Tom Petty ("You Got Lucky") and a soulful, heartfelt rendition of Bruce Springsteen's "Sad Eyes," this is mostly

middle-of-the-road mainstream country fare. It's not a bad album, the songwriting is uniformly strong throughout, especially the Coty and Randy Van Warmer co-writes ("Black Heart Of Texas," the tejano-flavored "South Texas Night," "Legacy" and "The Worst Way")—it just seems so safe and bland in comparison to his first effort. Of course this format has never really been cutting edge, so perhaps the quiet elegance of "The Worst Way" and the gentle observation of love in "Legacy" will help Coty find a larger audience. The countrified version of "You Got Lucky" is may already be too adventure-some for country radio, but if chance and circumstance don't combine to make Coty a star this time around, perhaps he'll revisit the verve and vigor that made his debut so compelling. **Grade: B**

—John Hood



## JESSICA ANDREWS

### Who I Am

(Dreamworks) Producer: Byron Gallimore

**Prime Cuts:** "Karma," "Good Friend To Me," "Show Me Heaven"

**Critique:** Like her debut, teenaged Jessica Andrews' sophomore effort is impeccably produced, deftly arranged, professionally written and skillfully performed. Nothing is left to chance. There's not a power chord out of place; even the intimacy in Jessica's voice during softer passages seems studied, precisely calculated to push the right listener buttons. There's little sense of real risk, and a singular lack of freshness—one quality you'd at least expect to find on an album by a sixteen-year-old. True, the harmonic structures are fairly adventurous, but the lyric themes are overly familiar (lost love, head-over-heels romance, sexual discovery, etc.). Even the title song, a well-intentioned attempt to define Jessica's personality, blends in with almost everything else on the album (and many other albums). Only the delightfully high-spirited "Karma" and the refreshingly revealing "Good Friend To Me" (Jessica's sole writing credit) jump out from the stable of meticulously crafted



## SONYA ISAACS Sonya Isaacs

(Lyric Street) Producers: Vince Gill, Michael D. Clute, Shelby Kennedy

**Prime Cuts:** "I've Forgotten How You Feel," "Barefoot In The Grass," "Healing Hands," "Just Go," "The Battlefield"

**Critique:** She stands with one foot planted in the church, one in bluegrass, and sings like a

sanctified country angel. A gospel performer since the tender age of three, Sonya Isaacs' career took a different turn when she befriended Vince Gill through her family band's Grand Ole Opry performances. Like many, Gill fell under the sway of the young

Tennessean's musical gifts—so much so that he agreed to produce her debut country album. Shaded with echoes of Lee Ann Womack, Dolly Parton and Sara Evans, Isaacs' voice swells with heart-in-the-throat ornamental flutters and pure mountain soul. She can write 'em, too. Her "I've Forgotten How You Feel" is a hooky uptempo, and "Healing Hands" is a lovely slice-of-life ballad. Shaye Smith's and Ken Harrell's "Barefoot In The Grass," a moving story of a doomed child, is laden with poignant detail and honest pathos, touching the heart without the obvious emotional manipulation that mars so many similar songs. "The Battlefield," an old hymn arranged by Gill and Isaacs, is stark and haunting, with Isaacs' a cappella voice gradually joined by fiddle, tin whistle and accordion, as well as Gill's keen harmony. It's a graceful way to end the album, and to introduce this important new artist to an industry that badly needs her. **Grade: B+**

—Larry Wayne Clark

tunes. Her voice is supple and flexible but not terribly distinctive; sometimes she sounds like a throatier Dolly Parton, other times like a less contemplative Amy Grant. She's a fine singer but not yet a great artist. Give her time, though—judging from this album, she has the talent and confidence to establish her own musical identity and forge a substantial body of work. **Grade: B-**

—Johnny Norris

## THE GREAT DIVIDE Afterglow (The Will Rogers Sessions)

(Broken Bow) Producers: Danny Miller, The Great Divide

**Prime Cuts:** "Days Go," "Cut Of Here Tonight," "Wild Horses," "Wildflower"

**Critique:** Formerly signed to Atlantic, Oklahoma-based quartet The Great Divide is



enjoying a second lease on life thanks to Broken Bow Records, one of the feisty independent labels to spring up in new millennium Nashville. Recorded at The Will Rogers Theater in Oklahoma, *Afterglow* is the band's debut on the label. The good news is that it's an impressive offering, rootsy roadhouse fare played with energy and attitude. Lead

singer/songwriter Mike McClure's gravelly blue-collar baritone paints pictures of unraveling highways, smoky bars, seedy motel rooms and the pain of long-distance love, though it's no less effective conveying the soft wistfulness of "Wildflower." The bad news is that, although the band is already a hot live act, there's little here we're likely to hear on today's country Top 40, and that's a shame. Radio could use a little of this grit to cleanse its palate of all that pseudo-pop sugar. The title track, written just after the Atlantic marriage soured, says: *And I don't ever want to hear I told you so/Cause I ain't about to lie down/No, my wheels are still spinning around.* Let's hope those wheels don't stop, and that there's still an audience out there who prefers real musicianship over cleverly layered studio concoction. **Grade: B**

—Larry Wayne Clark



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The screenshot shows the MusicRow website layout. At the top, there's a banner for 'Full Court Press' with the tagline 'Industry News Releases Posted Daily'. Below this is the 'MUSICROW' logo and a navigation bar with links like 'Home Page', 'Article Archives', 'Album Country', 'The Directory', 'Press Releases', 'Calendar Of Events', 'CD Releases', 'Advertise With Us', and 'About MusicRow!'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'CURRENT NEWS' featuring a story about Gaylord Digital, 'PHOTO OF THE DAY' with a photo of Kenny Chesney, 'Sohler Joins MCA', 'Get Leci! Napster Users', 'Latest Releases From Our Press File', 'AROUND THE WEB' with various industry links, 'COLUMNS' with a piece by Keith Follse, 'ALBUM REVIEWS' for Chris Cagle and Kenny Rogers, and 'ROW FILE' with a bio of Peter Cooper. There are also sidebars for 'MUSICROW STORE' and 'ROW FAX'. The footer contains contact information and a copyright notice for 2000 Music Row, Inc.

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**Album Reviews, Writers Notes, Financial and Row File** keep you informed about the music and the people making it.

# Class Of 2000

Here it is, the best Perimeter albums of 2000.

Only local artists, or acts on Nashville-based independent labels were considered for this list.

**LOUIE SHELTON/Urban Culture/Nuance**—World class and noted session guitarist, Shelton serves up an album full of smooth jazz, exploring modern life by joining R&B and jazz into a new urban groove.

**FEDERAL WEIGHTS AND MEASURES/Waiting In Your Backyard/Groovetone**—The upper Midwest is a breeding ground for jangly, intelligent, roots pop (The Replacements, Uncle Tupelo, Gear Daddies). Add Federal Weights and Measures to that list. Brawny, smart, raw and just a little bit loose and sloppy. In other words, great rock 'n' roll.

**CAROL PONDER/Little Journeys/TrueSongs**—An emotion-drenched album of mostly traditional ballads and folk songs that also exhibits a sly, contemporary wit ("Bless Me, Barbie," "Mercedes Benz"). Ponder's singing is a selfless outpouring of emotion. Without reserve, she gives of herself, both to the listeners and to the music. Count Ponder as one of Nashville's most treasured musical gifts.

**SCOTT CARTER/East End Journal/Amphibious**—The debut album from this Kerrville New Folk winner is an engaging blend of folk, blues and jazz. The contemporary folk scene just found its first new star of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**TODD SNIDER/Happy To Be Here/Oh Boy**—Witty with a sardonic bite, this album finds Snider returning to his acoustic roots. Who else could pull off a love song about a prenuptial agreement ("Just In Case")? Smart-ass never sounded so good.

**STEVE EARLE/Transcendental Blues/E-Squared**—The most consistently brilliant songwriter of the '90s kicks off the new millennium with a rockin' album that runs the gamut from Beatles-esque pop to traditional bluegrass.



**JASON WHITE/Shades Of Gray/Hanging Vines**—This album falters because of the production—too flat to capture the vitality of White's muscular songs or the energy he exhibits in his live show—otherwise it would have landed even higher on this list. Despite the production, this establishes White as a songwriting force to be reckoned with.

He brings to mind Dylan with the staccato lyrical delivery in "At The Alibi," and fearlessly tackles subject matter ranging from rape ("99") to abortion ("Red Rag Top") without becoming morose or somber. In fact, "Red Rag Top" takes a feeling of wistful regret and marries it to a sing-along pop chorus, capturing a moment of startling poignancy. It's my favorite song of 2000.



**BILL MALLONEE AND VIGILANTES OF LOVE/Audible Sigh/Compass**—Mallonee's distinctive voice highlights an album full of insightful, melodic pop. Emmylou Harris provides guest vocals on "Resplendent," but the band is at its best on numbers with a little more kick like the opening "Goes Without Saying."



**WITHOUT RUTH/Circus Girl/Vertical**—With inspiration ranging from Baudelaire to the Beatles, these rockers deconstruct pop conventions, but never at the sacrifice of melody. Sometimes soulful—"When I See You Crying," sometimes darkly compelling—"Delilah," Without Ruth always manages to sound original. The highlight is "Stuck Inside," a brutally honest look into the depths of addiction that finds lead singer John Reynolds degenerating into schizophrenic scattling. It's a mesmerizing performance indicative of the band's courageous willingness to push musical boundaries.



**FAIR VERONA/Fair Verona/i.v.**—The three young gals who front this band rock harder, with more punch and attitude than any other band in town. Think post-grunge punk, with one foot planted in melodic pop and the other planted squarely in in-your-face crunchy, thrasher rock. This six song EP is garnering serious major label interest on both coasts and it's easy to hear why. The highlight is "The Downfall," a radio ready single with aggressive guitars and a driving melody. I've never heard a Nashville rock band sound so poised for mainstream success. This could, and probably will, be the band that puts this town on the hard rock map.



**KEVIN GORDON/Down To The Well/Shanachie**—The album kicks off with the title track, a duet with Lucinda Williams. Like Williams, Gordon writes poetic songs steeped in southern imagery with a musical style that combines blues, roots, soul, country and rock. His whiskey-soaked voice details lives on the fringe and battered American dreams, with his guitar wailing and weeping in accompaniment. Gordon has a knack for adding blues muscle to his rootsy style, showing an ability to rock out that many of his Americana contemporaries lack. The title tune, "Marina Takes Her Aim" and Gordon's caustic blues interpretation of the traditional gospel song "Shoes (Walk All Over God's Heaven)" are standout tracks.



**TERRY RADIGAN/Radigan/Vanguard**—This is a gorgeous collection of moody pop songs. Both aching and haunting, "My Love Is Real" slithers under the skin riding a funky beat that hypnotizes the senses. "Everything Starts Out Small" is an orchestrated bit of melancholy jazz/pop. A bouncy ode to love, "When I Get Around You" is a perfect drop-the-top, crank-up-the-volume, cruise-around-town, sing-along summer tune. It's a hit waiting to happen. With this album, Radigan reinvigorates a music tradition which has almost faded away—that of the pop stylist. An important album from an artist who should be a star.



**JOSH ROUSE/Home/Slow River/Ryko**—This is an album. Remember those? Those things you used to stick on the record player and let play all the way through? Rouse's voice, subdued and honey-smooth, weaves a hypnotic thread through horns, strings and melancholy guitars. An album of elegant simplicity, *Home* is pop songwriting at its understated best.



**WILL KIMBROUGH/This/Waxy Silver**—Guitar-slinger Kimbrough, known for his work with Kim Richey, Matthew Ryan and Allison Moorer, as well as stints in the Bis-quits and his own Will & The Bushmen, steps into the spotlight with his first solo release. This finds Kimbrough maturing as a vocalist and songwriter. He sings with confidence and nuanced passion. The music ranges from the sparse acoustic "Down In My Mind" to the Crowded House-ish "Nobody Loves Me," before closing with the quiet lullaby "Goodnight Moon." If for no other reason, hear this album for "Chimayo," an exquisite rural pop tune with guitar, cello and trumpet swirling underneath a hook that goes on for miles. It's the best pop song to come out of Nashville this year.

And it was a dead heat for the top two albums.



**TRENT SUMMAR & THE NEW ROW MOB/Trent Summar & The New Row Mob/VFR**—Trent Summar and his band steamroll through a country, pop and soul landscape. Whether it's the countrified soul of his cover of "It Never Rains In California" or the straight-up country anthem, "I'm Country," or the sexy, mournful pop/rock of "Be So Blue," Summar exudes vocal charisma. If country music is really looking for a new sound, one that will appeal to a broader and younger demographic, it need look no further than Summar. Radio should jump all over the new country swagger of "I'm Country," "New Money" and "The Beat Don't Ever Stop." This is an innovative, hip record that could help reinvigorate the country genre. Make it the hit record it deserves to be.



**MARAH/Kids In Philly/E-Squared**—A raucous symphony of guitars, harmonica, banjos, horns and vocals, *Kids In Philly* finds Marah exploring the seedier side of urban living. Stylistically, the album is all over the place. There's a Philly soul undercurrent in "My Heart Is Burns On The Street" and ragged acoustic pop in "Barstool Boys." "Point Breeze" is bar-band rock at its euphoric toe-tapping best. Even with the disparate styles, the album is surprisingly cohesive, building layer upon layer of sound into a cacophony of musical energy that crackles with vitality. It's beautiful noise. It's rock 'n' roll. Long live Marah.

## INDUSTRY CALENDAR EVENTS

### January

- 4 Winter Arbitron Period Begins (ends 3/28)
- 4 NSAI Guest Speaker Night w/Jerry Vandiver, 11 Music Circle N., 6:30 p.m., 256-3354
- 8 28th Annual American Music Awards, ABC, 7-10 p.m.
- 11 NSAI Critique Night w/Denny Sarokin & Barbara Cloyd, 11 Music Circle N., 6:30 p.m., 256-3354

### February

- 28 CRS 2001, Nashville Convention Center, (2/28-3/3)

### March

- 4 NSAI Song Camp 101, (3/4-6)
- 5 Song Camp 101 Faculty Showcase, Douglas Corner Cafe, 8 p.m.
- 28 Winter Arbitron Period Ends (began 1/4)
- 29 Spring Arbitron Period Begins (ends 6/20)

Events are listed free of charge. Please send e-mail or fax listing to [news@musicrow.com](mailto:news@musicrow.com)/615-329-0852.

## LETTERS (Letters have been edited for space)

### THINGS CHANGE

Aimee Mayo Lindsey's comments in the November issue of *Music Row* beg a reply. I wish Harley Allen had been a little more courageous in his piece, but I understand the need to be politically careful. As for me, I'm just a no-name writer in Utah with a history of holds but no cuts. ("Not positive enough," or "too adult," or even "too sophisticated!") So I guess I have nothing to lose.

I agree that there is only good music or bad music. I don't think the argument is a question of production. It's not really pop vs. traditional. To me, it's substance vs. fluff. No rule prohibits pop songs from being substantive. It's just that they so rarely are. They're mostly melt-in-your-mouth cotton candy country.

I also understand the root cause of this situation. I understand the 13-year-old female consumer is the prize demographic for the labels. And the demo is getting younger as we speak. It's telling that country artists are now prominent on the soundtracks of animated children's movies, and that a country artist will perform the feature song on a children's Christmas show. And it's interesting to see ads on CMT for Fisher-Price toys. You can tell a lot about a station's target audience from the commercials. What's next? Country music on the soundtracks of Saturday morning cartoons? I'd bet George Jones isn't ashamed about today's pop production as much as he is about the sheer adolescence of the format.

Yes, things change, but not always for the better. So if you want to write for the kiddie audience, go ahead. That's obviously where the cuts are. But don't try to tell me it's great music.

Steve Bigler, Provo, Utah

### MOTIVATION (Re: @MusicRow No. 46)

Country music radio is boring, period. It's not that the songs and artists aren't good—I think there is a lot of good writing and singing going on—it's that the rotation is too narrow and too heavy.

I understand the premise of what's going on in radio, but is that premise appropriate for adult audiences? When I was a kid, I bounced around from station to station to hear my favorite "hits" and to make sure that I was on top of what's happening. I wanted to be "in." A kid NEEDS to know "the latest." Heavy rotation ensured that I heard the top songs and bands. I get that. But now, as an adult, I bounce from station to station because I'm bored. I don't get that.

I've read about radio research and consultants and the like in *Music Row* magazine and other publications. But the professionals seem stumped. As a member of the targeted country radio audience, 35+ female, I have conducted my own completely "unofficial radio research," the results of which I am sharing with you know.

### THE RESEARCH

Do adults listen to radio the same way that youth listens to radio? If the conglomerates and consultants are programming adult radio based on teenage top 40 pop formulas and it's not working, maybe it's because adults don't listen to radio the same way teens do or for the same reasons!

I am not a music industry professional, but I don't have to be to know that my 14-year-old cousin, who is chasing the latest fads and striving to be "in the know," is listening to her radio stations for reasons very different from me.

I want to hear songs that are fun and uplifting, yes, especially in the morning, but I also want to hear songs

that speak to other aspects of my life. That's why I love country music.

With the changes in programming, I hardly have the chance to hear new artists! How many more are out there (with record deals that will die) that I'll never have the opportunity to hear? How wonderfully diverse country radio could be!

### MOTIVATING ME TO BUY:

**Motivation:** As a member of the targeted audience for current country radio, I DO have to hear a song to buy the product.

**Key:** The more artists I hear on radio, the more likely I will be to purchase their CDs.

**Motivation:** Unlike teenagers, I do NOT run out to buy the latest song or artist (or download it from Napster) to be "in." I buy because I've heard a song that moves me or entertains me.

**Key:** It may take time to GET to the store because I'm a busy adult.

**Motivation:** Do videos compel me to buy? Yes, when I hear a song on CMT that I don't hear on radio (like Dwight Yoakam).

**Key:** We don't get CMT. I have to be at a friend's house with satellite to be "touched" by this medium.

**Motivation:** Internet? Can't figure it out yet.

**Key:** Not yet.

### UNOFFICIAL RESEARCH RESULTS:

The problem here is that, unlike a teenager who spends half of her life in a mall, it may take me months to get around to buying CDs. Because the only commercial country music stations in my region are top forty, I can assure you that hearing a song till I'm bored to tears does NOT compel me to buy the product. So when I finally DO get to that store, I'm bored with what I hear and often won't buy the CD.

### RESULT: NO SALE

Spend some time learning about the audience and maybe we can restore country radio to becoming a useful tool again for all of us, audience, labels, radio, artists—and let's not forget the songwriters!

—Anne Freeman, Volunteer Coordinator  
The Princeton NJ Chapter, NSAI

### PASSIONATE ABOUT MUSIC

(Re: @MusicRow No. 46)

My love goes on and on and on and on...for you.

I had to respond to "don't work projects you don't believe." You are absolutely right. Is this not what everyone knows but few are doing? We have been having this exact same discussion around here in regards to Chris Cagle's next single.

It was true then and has always been true that we need to release the music that we are passionate about. Don't we all get paid to do this for a living because, at least at some point in time, we were in it for the music? Does our own taste and gut instinct not count for something? I know we depend almost entirely on radio to sell our records. I hold radio partially responsible for the decline, but I hold our industry much more responsible. If we send them shit, then all they can play is shit. If we only send them great music, then great music is all they can play unless they decide to get into the record business themselves.

—Lorie Lytle, Virgin Nashville

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