

## Prince George County Library

Gen'l Reference Ctr (Magazine Index)

Article 83 of 160 —

**Billboard**, Oct 23, 1993 v105 n43 p5(2)

**A&M's fresh Perspective.** (A&M Records Inc.'s joint venture with Perspective Records) *Chris Morris.*

**Abstract:** Perspective Records will market the rhythm and blues titles of A&M Records. Their marketing tie-up strengthens a joint venture deal signed by the two firms in 1991. Among the titles which won Grammy Awards as a result of the joint venture were 'Evolution of Gospel,' 'Optimistic' and 'The Pressure Pt. 1.' Perspective has increased its investments into the venture and has hired additional field promotion personnel.

**Full Text:** COPYRIGHT BPI Communications 1993

Label Ups Jam & Lewis Role

LOS ANGELES--Buoyed by an extension of its joint venture with A&M Records and an infusion of new cash and increased manpower, producers Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis' Perspective Records will now promote and market A&M's R&B roster, as well as its own talent slate, under the leadership of Perspective president Sharon Heyward.

The newly solidified Perspective-A&M deal extends a pact first sealed between the labels in 1991.

During the past two years, the relationship bore fruit with Sounds Of Blackness' Grammy-winning "Evolution Of Gospel," which spawned two top 10 R&B hits, "Optimistic" and "The Pressure Pt. 1"; Mint Condition's bow, "Meant To Be Mint," which contained the gold top 10 pop single "Breakin' My Heart (Pretty Brown Eyes)" and the top 10 R&B single "Forever In Your Eyes"; and Lo-Key?'s "Where Dey At?," which featured the top 30 pop hit and No. 1 R&B smash "I Got A Thang 4 Ya."

A&M president Al Cafaro describes the current deal as a "long-term, multi-million-dollar" commitment.

Explaining Perspective's expanded mandate to push A&M's R&B artists in the black marketplace, Cafaro says, "Jimmy and Terry have creative expertise in this area and an enormously successful track record. Everything they've done has had some level of success. The addition of Sharon Heyward !who joined Perspective this year^ gives us the highest level of expertise we could possibly want.

"Splitting resources makes no sense. For the maximum utilization of resources, it makes sense to throw those resources behind the joint venture."

While Perspective will be in charge of its own destiny in the R&B sector, Cafaro says "the staff picks up responsibility for the crossover reality of those artists." Senior VP/GM Jim Guerinot will oversee pop campaigns for Perspective's acts.

"Perspective is becoming a small, nearly full-service record company," says Heyward. "We still share creative and pop promotion and sales !with A&M^, but everything else we'll do now."

"It's a perfect utilization of executive talent and resources," Cafaro says. "The consequence will be that Sharon gets to increase her staffing to a level that will be competitive."

In what many saw as a foreshadowing of Perspective's new responsibilities, Miller London, senior VP/GM of A&M's urban division, departed the company a month ago. A&M senior VP of urban promotion Don Eason will now move to Perspective.

Concerning other similar moves, Cafaro says, "A&M people will be absorbed into the Perspective operation."

A total of five A&M employees were let go, including national director of R&B promotion Larry Davis. Heyward will oversee the existing A&M urban staff of two national promotion people and 11 field reps. Darrin Fashaw, product manager, is moving from A&M urban to Tuff Break, A&M's recently established rap imprint.

According to Heyward, Perspective ultimately will employ 25-30 full-time staffers, including eight field promotion reps. The company currently has eight staff members.

"I'm shooting to have everybody hired and on board by Nov. 15," Heyward says.

The first new Perspective appointment is VP of top 40 promotion Randy Spendlove, who was previously A&M's Northern California promotion manager. Heyward says senior promotion VP Rick Stone will continue to spearhead pop efforts.

Perspective expects to fill executive positions in business, finance, and publicity, as well as appoint product managers and L.A.- and New York-based A&R reps.

The A&R team will be geared to working at the street level, Heyward says. "We want to add some flava. We want to add rap, and young people have got to do rap."

Heyward adds that the A&R reps also will seek new writers for a new joint venture between the Jam-Lewis team and PolyGram Music Publishing, called New Perspective Publishing. Neither Cafaro nor Heyward could supply additional details about the publishing arm, saying that the deal is not yet complete.

The Perspective team is moving to larger offices on A&M's Hollywood lot. The company's East Coast staff will work out of A&M's Manhattan office.

The fresh cash and bolstered staff at Perspective also will result in an expanded release schedule: Heyward says that the company will release seven to nine albums in 1994, versus the three or four it would have issued with a smaller team.

Plans for next year call for new albums from Sounds Of Blackness and Lo-Key?; the solo debut of Sounds Of Blackness lead vocalist Ann Nesby; and debuts by the Gerald Levert-produced act Drama, the New York-based harmony-oriented quintet Solo, reggae-R&B singer Rajanee, positive-rap trio the Sewer Brats, and R&B-popsters Krush.

Cafaro emphasizes that R&B acts currently on the A&M roster will continue to be released under the A&M logo, and new R&B acts will be signed "very selectively" by the company.

He says that A&M R&B acts with albums expected in the first quarter of 1994 are the gold-selling diva CeCe Peniston, longtime superstar Barry White, and the quartet For Real.

Tuff Break will continue to go through the label's pop division.

Article A14534038

**View other articles linked to these subjects:**