

▶ A LITTLE BIT OF...

Madonna reunites with *Ray of Light* producer William Orbit for a tentative late 2000 release. In the meantime, listen for her straight-from-the-Super Bowl cover of "American Pie" on the soundtrack for her latest film foray, *Next Best Thing* (Spring)... Peek-a-boo fashion queen **Li'l Kim's** *The Notorious K.I.M.* (March) offers a guest appearance by **Mary J. Blige**.... **Lauryn Hill** may reeducate the masses in late 2000.... **Trisha Yearwood** returns with *Real Live Woman*, a collection of vintage songs penned by the likes of Bruce Springsteen and Mary Chapin Carpenter (March).... **Wynonna Judd** will juice sales of a new solo album by giving early buyers a limited-edition bonus disc featuring four new Judds tunes.... Plan for a very **Shania** Christmas: *Shania Twain's Xmas Album* will likely be one of the season's biggest sellers. Twain is also one of several artists being considered to do the music for the big-screen version of *The Grinch*, starring Jim Carrey.



HOT BOYZ

The Dave Matthews Band are recording their next record at a studio they've just built in their hometown of Charlottesville, Va.... Funk-soul brother **Fatboy Slim** (a.k.a. Norman Cook) is laying down tracks in Brighton, England.... **Fugee Wyclef Jean** isn't waiting on Lauryn Hill. Expect cameos aplenty on his *Two Sides of*

a Book: Eclectic, which he describes as a fusion of hip-hop with country, folk, and jazz. (Spring).... According to **Rufus Wainwright**, he's "totally selling out. Everything's going to be written by Puff Daddy, and I'm going to try to become a black woman." Actually, his second release is being produced by Pierre Marchand (Sarah McLachlan) and promises, says Wainwright, "a wonderfully romantic and esoteric [album] with lots of strings and songs about affairs that never happened."

OLD FAITHFULS

The Smashing Pumpkins' *MACHINA/the machines of God* is out Feb. 29 (tour to follow with ex-Hole bassist **Melissa Auf Der Maur**)....

Pearl Jam are slated for a spring release.... The late **Michael Hutchence's** posthumous CD documents his flirtation with moody electronica (February).... **Oasis'** bratty, brooding Gallagher brothers will release the lush-sounding *Standing on the Shoulder of Giants* (Feb. 29).... **U2** have rounded up the usual suspects (producers **Brian Eno** and **Daniel Lanois**) for a tentative summer release....

POMO ROCK

Everclear has two records on the way this year. The first, *Songs From an American Movie, Volume I (Learning How to Smile)*, comes in April, while the second, *Songs From an American Movie, Volume II (A Good Time for a Bad Atti-* ▶

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no



doubt

photograph by ALISON DYER

NO DOUBT Hoping for a 'Return' to form

So there was, okay, just a little doubt whether No Doubt would ever finish the follow-up to 1995's smash *Tragic Kingdom*. But two years after starting it—and one year after hooking up with producer Glen Ballard (Alanis Morissette)—*Return of Saturn* is all but in the can. "We recorded two albums' worth of material. The B-sides record will be pretty good," jokes singer Gwen Stefani. "The new songs are more eclectic and thoughtful." Stefani, 30, even longs to settle down in "Simple Kind of Life." Are fans ready for maturity? Stefani isn't sure. "The same people who liked our last record are a few years older, like I am."

Trend

ABBA

The most enduring Swedish import since the Saab

ABBA revivals have come (Erasure's 1992 EP *Abba-esque*) and gone (1994's *Muriel's Wedding*; 1999's star-studded cover album, *ABBA—A Tribute: A 25th Anniversary Celebration*). But if the current hysteria in Britain over anything involving the '70s Swedish hit machine is any indication, 2000 promises to offer the mother of all ABBA resurgences this side of Waterloo. April 4 sees the release of *The ABBA Generation*, the debut CD from the cover band A*Teens, four Gen-Y Swedes who mimic (from left) Björn, Agnetha, Anni-Frid, and Benny's harmonies on top of Britney-ish synth-pop beats. After *Generation* topped the charts and went triple platinum in



Sweden last year, its first single, "Mamma Mia," broke in the U.K. and reached No. 12. Adding to A*Teens' fuel was the record-breaking response to the London stage musical also called *Mamma Mia!*, a light romance set entirely to ABBA hits. Since opening last April, *Mamma* has resulted in endless lines and nightly sellouts. In May 2000, the musical will hit Toronto, after which a run on Broadway is being planned. "In the past it was [fans] becoming reenergized," says MCA Records president Jay Boberg, who signed A*Teens unaware of the hit musical. "Now, 9-, 10-, 12-, and 14-year-olds are discovering it. A great song's a great song," he adds, "whether it's Elton John, Lennon & McCartney, or ABBA." The Fab Four and ABBA in the same breath? *Mamma mia!* —Dave Karger