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## Arts, Briefly

Compiled by LAWRENCE VAN GELDER  
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### Labor Troubles at Washington Ballet

Labor issues at the Washington Ballet threaten to disrupt performances of "The Nutcracker." The dancers' union, the American Guild of Musical Artists, says overly strenuous rehearsals have exhausted and hurt the performers. "They are getting injured at an alarming rate," said Eleni Kallas, the union's local representative. The company canceled rehearsals on Tuesday and yesterday, but refused to sign an interim agreement proposed by the union. The company said that it had not suspended any performances and would try to resolve differences to avoid a strike. Without at least an interim agreement, Ms. Kallas said, the dancers plan to perform this morning for a group of students, but not during the evening as scheduled. Dancers are seeking a new contract with the company in an effort, they say, to protect their jobs, safety and health. Among other issues, dancers want more control over rehearsals and how management handles dismissals. The company canceled a tour of Italy this year in a dispute related to per-diem allowances for the dancers to pay for meals. The company's production of "The Nutcracker" is scheduled to run through Dec. 24 at the Warner Theater.

JOHN FILES

### Eminem's Fourth No. 1

New albums by Eminem, Lil Wayne and Korn top the Billboard chart this week. Eminem's "Curtain Call: The Hits" (Aftermath), a compilation with three new songs, became his fourth album in a row to reach No. 1. It sold nearly 441,000 copies, according to Nielsen SoundScan. "Tha Carter II" (Cash Money) by Lil Wayne, the New Orleans rapper, is No. 2 with 240,000 in sales, and Korn's "See You on the Other Side" (Virgin) was a close third

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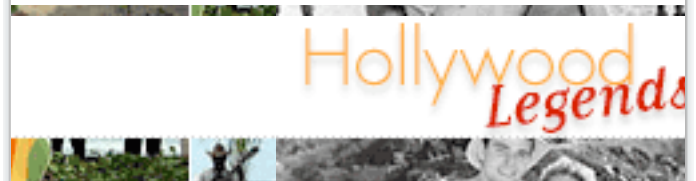
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with 220,000. In a relatively strong week at record stores in which almost every title in the Top 20 that was not new had big sales gains, the 20th volume of "Now That's What I Call Music!" reached No. 4 in its sixth week out; Carrie Underwood's "Some Hearts" (Arista) is at No. 5; and Nickelback, Mariah Carey and the Black Eyed Peas continue to hold strong in the lower rungs of the Top 10. "The Legend of [Johnny Cash](#)" (Hip-O/Universal), a 21-song sampler released in October, has been a strong seller. It rose two spots this week to No. 12, with 103,000 copies, and in its seven weeks in stores has sold a total of 447,000 copies. BEN SISARIO

### The Saga Ends for 'Sweet Charity'

When [Christina Applegate](#) goes, so will "Sweet Charity." The revival of the musical inspired by the 1957 Fellini film "Nights of Cabiria" will play its last performance at the Al Hirschfeld Theater on Dec. 31, when Ms. Applegate's scheduled run ends. With a score by Cy Coleman, lyrics by Dorothy Fields and a book by [Neil Simon](#), the show about a hopeful dance-hall hostess will have played 279 performances and 25 previews since April 11. The road to Broadway was bumpy after Ms. Applegate broke a bone in her foot during a performance in Chicago. She was replaced by [Charlotte d'Amboise](#) in Boston. The producers decided to close the show. Ms. Applegate insisted she would be ready in time for a delayed Broadway opening and helped raise money to ensure that it took place. She was nominated for a Tony Award, and the show was nominated for Tonys for best revival of a musical and best choreography.

### The Diamond Dances

Seven choreographers, including Alexei Ratmansky, the artistic director of the Bolshoi Ballet, will create works to be presented by the New York City Ballet in its Diamond Project festival in the spring, from April 25 through June 25 at the New York State Theater. Other works will be created by Eliot Feld, artistic director of Ballet Tech; Mauro Bigonzetti, artistic director of Aterballetto of Italy; Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, a former City Ballet principal dancer who is the artistic director of North Carolina Dance Theater; Jorma Elo, the resident choreographer of the Boston Ballet; Christopher Wheeldon, resident choreographer of the New York City Ballet; and Peter Martins, City Ballet's ballet master in chief. Mr. Martins conceived the Diamond Project in 1992 as a festival for new choreography. Since then, 26 choreographers have created 47 works. The project draws its name from Irene Diamond, whose foundation has supported the development

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of choreography by City Ballet.

### **Ex-Manager Sues Dave Chappelle**

Dave Chappelle's former manager, Mustafa Abuelhija, has filed a breach-of-contract suit against the comedian. This news comes just days after Comedy Central announced that it would begin broadcasting a third season of "Chappelle's Show" next year. According to court documents posted on [www.thesmokinggun.com](http://www.thesmokinggun.com), Mr. Abuelhija contends that Mr. Chappelle owes him at least \$864,500. In the suit, Mr. Abuelhija says he helped negotiate deals that earned the comedian at least \$10 million. He says that he was fired after Mr. Chappelle returned from an impromptu sabbatical in South Africa in June. The suit alleges that Comedy Central paid Mr. Chappelle \$4.5 million when he opted to continue his hit show through 2006 and also agreed to pay him \$275,000 for each episode and \$25,000 for each repeat. The agreement, the suit says, also guaranteed that Mr. Chappelle would receive 50 percent royalties from the show's DVD's. LOLA OGUNNAIKE

### **When You're Smiling ...**

Forget "The Da Vinci Code." A computer at the University of Amsterdam has figured out the content of the Mona Lisa's smile: 83 percent happy, 9 percent disgusted, 6 percent fearful and 2 percent angry, Agence France-Presse reported. The computer used emotion-recognition software to analyze the enigmatic Leonardo masterpiece, according to Saturday's issue of the British weekly New Scientist. The calculations, developed in collaboration with the University of Illinois, seek to assess mood by examining such features as the curvature of the lips and crinkles around the eyes and assigning a score to six basic emotions.

### **CBS Finishes Strong With 'Amazing Race'**

The members of the Linz family are reality television's newest millionaires. On Tuesday's episode of "The Amazing Race," the athletic, toothy clan - three brothers and a sister - won the show's family edition. The two-hour conclusion of this eighth season drew an audience of 11.37 million in Nielsen's estimates and helped CBS win the night in total viewers and 18-to-49-year-olds. Although that total represented this season's largest audience, it paled in comparison with ratings for the previous installment's finale, which delivered 16 million viewers. On Tuesday the first hour of "Race" was solidly beaten by Fox's "House" (14.52 million viewers) at 9 p.m., but was able to win the 10 p.m. hour among total viewers against a repeat "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" (11.14 million) on NBC and a new "Boston Legal" (9.92 million) on ABC. CBS's average

was bolstered by its leadoff show, "NCIS," which brought in 16.77 million viewers. Fox placed a solid second for the night over all. KATE AURTHUR

## Here Come the Telenovelas

Why should Latin Americans have all the fun? Telenovelas, the popular Latin American serialized soap operas, will be remade for the American market for broadcast next year under the label "Desire" on Fox television stations, Reuters reported. Bob Cook, the president of 20th Television, a News Corporation sibling of Fox Broadcasting and the syndicator of the project, said the telenovelas would be "Americanized without destroying the integrity of the story." A minimum of three telenovelas a year, each consisting of 65 hourlong episodes to be shown over a 13 weeks, will be presented. Two have been chosen: "Table for Three," a Colombian series, tells of the tragic destruction of a family when two brothers compete for the same woman, and "Fashion House," from Cuba, focuses on glamour and unscrupulousness in the fashion industry.

## Footnote

Because the seven previously announced Billy Joel shows at Madison Square Garden in January and February have been sold out, an eighth - on Feb. 27 - was added yesterday. Tickets go on sale on Saturday at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) and [www.rondelsenerpresents.com](http://www.rondelsenerpresents.com). Any remaining tickets will be available at the box office on Sunday.

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