

The Video Revolution — Has It Really Come Of Age

by Nick Nichols

LOS ANGELES — The recent technological developments in the field of video electronics have been heralded by many as the forerunner of a new industry — one that will revolutionize the present recording industry by coupling it to the visual media through the application of video cassette tapes and, in the near future, video-discs. Is it really time for a major realignment of the present recording format? Though no clear cut answer has yet surfaced, some steps have already been taken in this direction. For example, in what appears to be the beginning of a trend, several major arenas across the United States have installed large-screen video equipment for use with all of their various events — sports, business and, of course, music (see **Cash Box**, Jan. 17, 1976). This in itself opens new doors to the performing artist.

Selling By Seeing

Various video techniques have also been utilized in selling products at the retail level. In the record industry, a unit called The Musicom was developed by Visual Systems Corporation to enhance record sales and help artists develop a commercial identity. The unit consists of a small console with a self-contained video screen, several sets of headphones and bins which house about 30 albums. The Musicom was recently incorporated into a marketing program by 20th Century Records (see **Cash Box**, Jan. 24, 1976), but according to Russ Regan, president of the label, the unit was not as effective as he had hoped. Said Regan, "This type of display, which combines video and audio, can be as effective as a promotional device — but only if the artist is already established and you're pushing a product that is, therefore, already in demand. It just doesn't seem to be very effective in breaking the unknown artist at this stage of the game."

Will 20th utilize this type of point-of-purchase promotion in the future? "That's a qualified 'no'," answered Regan, "We aren't planning any employment of this type of sales tool at the present, but I do believe very strongly in the potential of video in this industry — the introduction of software (video-discs) is the key."

No Backing, High Maintenance Primary Drawbacks

Jim Hackett, president of Visual Systems Corporation, expressed a similar feeling when he told **Cash Box**, "The Musicom was a prototype — strictly experimental, and for now, at least, we've scrapped the idea." Hackett noted that the main problem with the system is that to be effective it must be employed on a large scale, that is, an entire market must be blanketed with the units — and Hackett's company is just too small to produce enough of them without a financial commitment from a record company to cover the initial expense. "Furthermore," Hackett elaborated, "the initial expense of a single unit is not prohibitive, it's the maintenance that's the killer. The units require constant attention, particularly for cleaning, and trained video personnel are a rarity

Caribou Signs Wilson

LOS ANGELES — Beach Boy Dennis Wilson has been signed by Caribou Records, a CBS Records Associated Label, as a solo artist. Wilson will continue to record and perform with the Beach Boys, the first time in the group's fifteen year career that any of its members has pacted to record as a soloist.

Wilson's first recordings for Caribou will be released in the fall of 1976, following the Beach Boy's current summer tour.

at this time."

Video — Monitoring An Artist's Career

Video systems are presently being utilized for artist development within the music industry. Girard Landry, president of Landry Video Systems, is currently working in conjunction with Studio Instrument Rentals (S.I.R.) in the production of video cassettes of the many artists that rehearse their shows at S.I.R. Landry itemized the benefits of video to the recording artist at every level of his career: "The aspiring recording artist can make a black and white video of himself for \$35 an hour at this time. Such a tape can then be distributed to the A&R departments of all the major record companies, making the procedure of landing a contract much less painful and time consuming. It is no longer necessary to pry an A&R man away from his duties to catch a show — he can see it in the privacy of his own office."

According to Landry, this is just the beginning. "The newly signed act can now go into the rehearsal studio and improve upon his showmanship and stage presence by video taping his show and reviewing the performance, much the same way a football coach requires his team to review a game and scrutinize its good plays as well as its mistakes. A first-rate color video

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Rock Awards Set '76 Nominations

NEW YORK — The nominations for the second annual "Rock Music Awards" show, which airs on CBS-TV on September 18, have been released in accordance with CBS-TV and executive producer Don Kirshner.

The nominations are as follows:

Personality of The Year: Bob Dylan, Peter Frampton, Elton John, Bob Marley, Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen.

Best Female Vocalist: Aretha Franklin, Joni Mitchell, Linda Ronstadt, Grace Slick, Phoebe Snow

Best Male Vocalist: Elton John, Paul McCartney, Paul Simon, Bruce Springsteen, Rod Stewart.

Best Album: "Born To Run," Bruce Springsteen; "Desire," Bob Dylan; "Fleetwood Mac," Fleetwood Mac; "Red Octopus," Jefferson Starship; "Still Crazy After All These Years," Paul Simon.

Best Single: "Born To Run," Bruce Springsteen; "50 Ways To Leave Your Lover," Paul Simon; "Hurricane," Bob Dylan; "Miracles," Jefferson Starship; "Rhiannon," Fleetwood Mac.

Best R&B Album: "Amigos," Santana; "Breezin'," George Benson; "Gratitude," Earth, Wind & Fire; "I Want You," Marvin Gaye; "Wake Up Everybody," Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes.

Best R&B Single: "Let's Do It Again," Staple Singers; "Low Rider," War; "That's The Way Of The World," Earth, Wind & Fire; "This Will Be," Natalie Cole; "Wake Up

Everybody," Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes.

Best Group: Fleetwood Mac, Jefferson Starship, Led Zeppelin, Rolling Stones, The Who.

Best New Female Vocalist: Natalie Cole, Maxine Nightingale, Mary Russell, Patti Smith, Donna Summer.

Best New Male Vocalist: George Benson, Keith Carradine, Bob Seger, Bruce Springsteen, Gary Wright.

Best New Group: Aerosmith, Hall & Oates, Bob Seger, Bruce Springsteen, Thin Lizzy.

Best Producer: Mike Appel, Jon Landau & Bruce Springsteen, "Born To Run" (Bruce Springsteen); Roy Thomas Baker & Queen, "A Night At The Opera" (Queen); Larry Cox & Jefferson Starship, "Red Octopus" (Jefferson Starship); Fleetwood Mac & Keith Olsen, "Fleetwood Mac" (Fleetwood Mac); Steve Miller, "Fly Like An Eagle" (Steve Miller Band).

Best Composer: Marty Balin, "Miracles" (Jefferson Starship); Bob Dylan & Jacques Levy, "Hurricane" (Bob Dylan); Stevie Nicks, "Rhiannon" (Fleetwood Mac); Paul Simon, "50 Ways To Leave Your Lover" (Paul Simon); Bruce Springsteen, "Born To Run" (Bruce Springsteen).

Outstanding Public Service: Harry Chapin, World Hunger Concerts; Crosby & Nash, Environmental Improvement Concerts; Bob Dylan, Hurricane Carter Concerts; Lynyrd Skynyrd, Saving the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia; Paul Simon, N.Y. Public Library Fund Raising Concert.

Hall Of Fame: The Beatles, Bob Dylan, John Lennon, Elvis Presley, Brian Wilson.

Classics Label Formed By ABC

LOS ANGELES — ABC Records has formed a new classical label called ABC Classics.

An initial 10 albums selected from the Seon series are set for September release on the new label.

The creation of ABC Classics gives ABC Records a full-scale classical operation which includes the Westminster Gold, Audio Treasury and Music Of The Earth Lines.

Elektra/Asylum Sets Promo Convention

LOS ANGELES — Elektra/Asylum national promotion executives meet this week with the company's local, regional and national promotion personnel during the first Elektra/Asylum national promotion convention; initial meetings begin Monday (2) with an informal reception at Harrah's in Lake Tahoe, the site for the first four days of scheduled activities.

NARM Survey Reveals Pop Music Preference

NEW YORK — The National Association of Recording Merchandisers (NARM) has issued an analysis of the pop/contemporary music buyer as part of its expanded Consumer Research Study of the Growing Adult Market. The national survey of 25-45 year old adults, from which the report was derived, indicated that pop/contemporary music was the type most preferred by all respondents (hard rock was included in this category).

According to the study, 44% of all men interviewed stated a primary preference for pop/contemporary music; this was more than twice the corresponding figure for women. The correlation heightened with the inclusion of an age variable; the younger the buyer, the more likely he was to be included in this category. Fifty-five percent of the 25-29 year olds indicated affirmatively; conversely, only 13% of the 40-45 year olds did so. Men who had attended college but did not graduate formed the single largest sub-classification in this study registering 63% of its total membership. As a result of this data, a profile of the typical pop/contemporary music buyer, as constructed from the NARM study is as follows: a male, college educated (no degree) adult, between the ages of 25 and

29, probably unmarried (since 48% of unmarried men responded positively).

6.6 LPs Is Average

The average buyer last year purchased 6.6 LPs, 6.0 tapes, and 5.3 singles. Only age as related to LP buying formed any type of strict correlation among the variables of family income, education and age. The younger the buyer, the more LPs he or she bought: 8.3 for 25-29 year olds; 7.1 for 30-34 year olds; 4.1 for 35-39 year olds; 4.0 for 40-45 year olds. Those people in the 30-39 year old groups purchased the greatest number of tapes, 7.4 each, while 30-34 year olds accounted for 7.4 singles each, the largest group figure.

Males accounted for the greatest per capita purchases of LPs, 8.6 as opposed to 4.1 for women. But women topped both other item categories: 6.4 to 5.8 for tapes, and a substantial 8.2 to 4.2 for singles. Tapes and singles purchases scored highest with respondents who had no more education than some high school (10.2 for tapes and 9.8 for singles) while LPs registered best with those who had some college (9.1). In each case, the second highest total was significantly lower than the front runner's listed figure. For example, those who completed high school

bought only 5.7 LPs. Those who had some college bought 7.5 tapes.

Discount Stores Are Preferred

Discount stores were the first choice of places to buy various recordings (36.3%). Record stores and department stores finished second and third with response rates of 31.3% and 20.0% respectively. Mail orders and variety stores accounted for 9.8%, while all other types of outlets posted a 2.6% figure. Men, however, preferred record stores over discount stores by 40.0% to 26.7%; women, on the other hand, overwhelmingly chose discount stores as their favorite place of purchase by more than two to one (48.6% to 20.0%) over record stores. Geographically, 55.6% of those residing in the northeast preferred to shop in discount stores; 63.6% of those residing in the west chose record stores first.

Fifty-five percent of those surveyed indicated that they do, indeed, compare prices before shopping and this fact remained relatively constant through nearly all variables. Men responded affirmatively at a slightly higher rate than

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Sager Signed To E/A

LOS ANGELES — Elektra/Asylum/None-such Records has signed Carole Sager to a recording contract with the company. The New York-based songwriter is currently readying material for her debut album. Ms. Sager's songs have been recorded by such artists as Helen Reddy and Aretha Franklin.

Atl. Signs Express

LOS ANGELES — The British group Liverpool Express has been signed to a recording contract with Atlantic records. Under terms of the agreement, Atlantic will distribute all future product by Liverpool Express in the United States and Canada exclusively.

"You Are My Love" b/w "Never Be The Same Boy," the first stateside single by Liverpool Express, will be released this week on ATCO Records

The Managers:

Tours, Singles Are Key To Eric Carmen's Success

by Eric Rudolph

NEW YORK — Eric Carmen is one of a few current artists who have achieved popularity among AM, FM and MOR audiences. While this type of crossover is becoming more common as of late, with the widespread success of the Jefferson Starship, Fleetwood Mac, Paul Simon and Paul McCartney, there are still only a few artists who are able to relate to such a wide spectrum of musical tastes. **Cash Box** recently asked Carmen's manager, Stan Poses, if there was any way in which to premeditate or plan for the fusion of those three normally segmented markets. He replied "No,

you can't sit down and decide you're going to hit one market to the exclusion of another, because if you do you're going to destroy yourself, the producer and the record company. You go out for the broadest audience you can hit. You try to make the best records you can. I think the various markets are all starting to fuse together anyway."

Touring Called Crucial

Poses echoed the thoughts of most of the managers **CB** has spoken with during this series of articles, saying that he thought

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