

Import Records Ships Series of Rock 'Classics'

By BARRY TAYLOR

■ NEW YORK—Import Records, the new label launched by Jem Record Importers, has shipped its first six releases through a system of independent distributors and Jem outlets.

The Ips, "Mainhorse" by the group of the same name, "Mass Media Stars" by Acqua Fragile, "Tomorrow," "Music From The Body" by Roger Waters and Ron Geesin, "Brown Out" by Morgan and "Mourner's Rhapsody" by Czeslaw Niemen will each carry a \$6.98 list price. The Tomorrow album is the only record which was previously released in this country while Morgan's "Brown Out" is being made available for the first time anywhere.

"These are all classic albums that have been lost in the vaults," Jem's Ed Grossi told **Record World**. "There is no reason why they should have been deleted, some as long as four or five years ago." The purpose of the Import label, according to Grossi, is to put back into active circulation certain albums which otherwise could not be offered through Jem. It was expected that collectors would be interested in the discs for their intrinsic historical value, but in some cases, the material stands up to contemporary standards.

"The advance mailings we did to radio stations elicited a very favorable response," Grossi explained. "Stations such as WIOQ and WYSP went on some of the records right away—as if they were waiting for them to arrive. The reaction looks like it will be as favorable from the radio stations as it has been for the record collectors."

One album in particular, "Mainhorse," a group formed in 1971 by keyboardist Patrick

Moraz, who was later to replace Rick Wakeman in Yes, has shown signs of taking off. Moraz, whose first solo album, "i," was released earlier this year, wrote all of the material on the Mainhorse album and sings, but his talent is clearly in the textures of keyboard work which highlights the only recorded effort by the Swiss group.

Another album in the series which should receive some attention is Acqua Fragile's "Mass Media Stars." The Italian group disbanded shortly after this, their second album, with lead singer Bernardo Lanzetti currently a member of P.F.M. Their music blends acoustic and electric guitar work with synthesizers and a rhythm section which will be compared favorably to the intricate and compelling work of Genesis.

"Tomorrow" is an album of historical interest in that it featured the work of another future member of Yes, guitarist Steve Howe, who shines on a version of "Strawberry Fields Forever." The group was fronted by Keith West, a singer who was at the peak of his popularity at the time of this lp in 1967. His single, "Excerpts From A Teenage Opera," a former top five U.K. hit, is included here exclusively.

"Brown Out," the second album by Morgan, the group formed by Morgan Fisher who is

now with Mott, was recorded in 1972. Its existence was unknown until the keyboardist mentioned it in a recent interview which was brought to the attention of Jem.

"Music From The Body" is a joint effort from Roger Waters of the Pink Floyd and avant-garde artist Ron Geesin. The music is the soundtrack to the film, "The Body" and has traditionally been a popular import item.

Polish keyboardist Niemen recorded "Mourner's Rhapsody" in New York in 1974, attracting leading fusionists to the session such as John Abercrombie, Rick Laird and Jan Hammer.

Grossi explained that Jem Records and Jem Records West will supplement the Import label's network of independent distributors across the country in reaching areas not normally covered. "We are not in competition with the independents, but there are some places that just aren't reached and we intend to work in conjunction with them to distribute and promote the albums," he said.

Those distributors already named include: Heilicher Bros., Minneapolis, Dallas, St. Louis, Atlanta, Florida; Acquarius, New England; Transcontinent, Buffalo; Piks, Cleveland; Universal, Philadelphia; Apex Martin, New York, New Jersey and Zamoiski, Washington, Baltimore.

Buddah Pushes New Gladys Knight LP

■ NEW YORK—Buddah Records has announced the release of "Pipedreams," the soundtrack album of the movie starring Gladys Knight. The album, performed by Gladys Knight & The Pips, was produced by Merald "Bubba" Knight, Michael Masser and Dominic Frontiere. "So Sad

The Song," the first single from the album, was released in advance of the movie and lp.

Radio stations have been running Gladys Knight & The Pips contests, featuring "Pipedreams" as well as their catalogue of lps.

The Buddah Group has planned an extensive merchandising and marketing campaign for the album. Collateral materials are being made up and shipped to distributors and retailers—mobiles in the shape of snowballs, ski caps that have "Gladys Knight in Pipedreams" knitted into the design, and multi-purpose stickers. In addition, small "available now" posters are being packed with albums for retail display. Trade and consumer ads and billboards in Atlanta, Los Angeles and several other cities are also being bought.

In addition, there will be a double impact program as the movie opens across the country. The world premiere is in Atlanta, followed by Baltimore, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago.

Gato's Roxy Stand



After one of his four performances at the Roxy last week, A&M's Gato Barbieri was greeted backstage by Herb Alpert, who produced Gato's current album, "Caliente."

Ellis Joins Gemini

■ NEW YORK—Exactly one year after its formation, Gemini Artists is expanding. Gemini president Mike Martineau has announced that Steve Ellis is joining the agency. Ellis comes to Gemini from William Morris where he was a department head.

Martineau said that the hiring of Ellis is a major move for the agency and completes the expansion Gemini began two months ago with the hiring of Mark Alan to the agency. Ellis will report directly to Martineau and will be involved primarily with contemporary music. Alan is specializing in rock and roll and folk, while Rand Stoll continues to head up the theatre and special events division.

CBS Intl. Names

Senkiewicz Promo Dir.

■ NEW YORK—Joe Senkiewicz has been named to the newly created position of director, promotion, CBS Records International, by Allen Davis, CRI vice president, creative operations.

In his new post Senkiewicz will be responsible for coordinating promotional activity in the U.S. market on behalf of artists signed to CRI companies overseas. In so doing he will maintain a close working relationship with the Columbia, Epic and Portrait Records promotion staffs and with management firms here and abroad.

Senkiewicz comes to CRI from the Columbia Records promotion force, which he joined nine years ago. He has been based in Elmhurst, New York, branch where he has served in various promotional capacities, most recently as promotion coordinator. He previously served as a promotion manager for Philips Records and for various independent distributors in the New York area.

Troy's Time



RCA Records introduced newly signed artist Roger Troy to the company recently when they held a cocktail party for him in the company's New York City offices. Troy's debut RCA album, "Roger Troy," has just been released. Seen here with Troy are, from left: Mel Ilberman, division vice president, commercial operations; Ken Glancy, president, RCA Records; Roger Troy; Mike Berniker, division vice president, popular a&r, and Mike Lipskin, RCA staff producer who did Roger's album.