

Who In The World:

Genesis Riding High After Eight Years

■ Eight years have elapsed since an embryonic, still teen-aged songwriting collective calling itself Genesis made its first appearance on vinyl. Released in January, 1977, "Wind & Wuthering," the group's fourth Atco album (and ninth lp in all), has already shaped up as the biggest Genesis record to date. Garnering immediate and extensive FM airplay, with sales to match, the album has moved rapidly up **Record World's** album chart, placing this week at #30. In addition, Atlantic has just released the first single from the lp, a special edited version of "Your Own Special Way."

Coinciding with the release of the album, Genesis embarked on a massive "World Tour '77." Following a one-month trek through England, the band arrived in the U.S. on Feb. 2 for the start of a two month solo tour here, with over 40 cities set so far. The itinerary includes some of the largest venues Genesis has played in this country, including this week's debut appearance (23) at New York's Madison Square Garden and an appearance next month at the L.A. Forum.

For the 1977 dates (which will extend through next December), Genesis is carrying all new sound and lighting equipment (including their own patented laser system), plus a specially-designed stage. In addition, drummer Chester Thompson (Weather Report, Frank Zappa) has joined the group for all live shows. As before, there are two drummers on stage, with both Phil Collins (lead vocalist & drummer) and Thompson doing solo parts as well as occasional duets.

The music on "Wind & Wuthering" is ever-identifiable as Genesis—with Phil Collins' masterful vocals & percussives, the orchestral keyboards of Tony Banks, Steve Hackett's uniquely melodic guitar and Mike Rutherford's bass/guitar rhythms. Lyrically, the members of Genesis continue to be expert story-tellers. The group's most varied lp to date, "Wind" encompasses the likes of the rocking opener "Eleventh Earl of Mar," the beautiful melodies of "Your Own Special Way" and "Afterglow," and the whimsical playlet "All In a Mouse's Night."

The growth of Genesis has been a steady, gradual process. The group was conceived as a vehicle for the songwriting of its members, rather than a platform

for irrelevant flashiness; and the Genesis style came to be defined by complex, yet highly accessible instrumental arrangements, strong melodies and fantasy-oriented story lyrics. The band also became known early on for a highly original, very visual stage presentation created to reinforce the music. Thus, soon after their inception, Genesis came to the point where they had to do their own shows in order to perform with the desired sophisticated staging. As a result, they became one of the only headlining acts that "no one had ever heard of," and their audience has grown gradually, but steadily and loyally.

By 1972, Genesis was a major act in their English homeland, and their U.S. cult following had swelled dramatically. In December of that year, they made their U.S. concert debut in New York, headlining WNEW-FM's annual Christmas concert. Full, headlin-

ing tours followed, and thus Genesis has never opened for anyone in the U.S.

Their debut Atlantic lp (on the Charisma label), "Selling England By The Pound," was released in Nov. '73, followed a year later by the double-lp "The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway" (Atco). The latter "musical play" was performed no less than 102 times around the world through May, '75. In March, 1976, Genesis released "A Trick of The Tail" (the first lp featuring drummer Phil Collins as lead vocalist, following frontman Peter Gabriel's departure in Aug., '75). An SRO tour of the States followed, and it was certainly clear that Genesis was no longer simply a major cult band.

Now, Genesis is riding high with "Wind & Wuthering," the ninth chapter in their ever-growing story, and further confirmation of their important position in contemporary music.

Capitol Ups Martini

■ LOS ANGELES — Renny Martini, a 20-year veteran of Capitol Records, Inc., has been promoted to the position of director, special markets, it has been announced by Jim Mazza, CRI vice president, marketing.

Martini joined Capitol in September, 1956, as a branch clerk in the New York office. After attending Brooklyn College, Martini began his Capitol sales career by becoming territory manager for Capitol in the New York area. Martini continued his career in New York as Capitol's special accounts manager, and later as district sales manager. More recently, Martini was upped to the dual role of district manager and executive-in-charge of Capitol's New York office.

RCA To Release 'Porgy and Bess'

■ NEW YORK — RCA Records will release the Sherwin M. Goldman/Houston Grand Opera production of George Gershwin's celebrated American opera, "Porgy and Bess," in March.

Starring in RCA's Red Seal recording are Clamma Dale as Bess, Donnie Ray Albert as Porgy, Larry Marshall as Sportin' Life, Carol Brice as Maria, Betty Lane as Clara, Andrew Smith as Crown and Wilma Shakesnider as Serena. The production was conducted by John DeMain and directed by Jack O'Brien.

The announcement of the album's release was made by Thomas Z. Shepard, division vice president, Red Seal artists and repertoire.

Butterfly Records Bows

■ LOS ANGELES—Butterfly Records, a new label to be distributed independently, has begun operations here, headed by A. J. Cervantes. The company's first signing is the Firesign Theatre, whose latest album, "Just Folks . . . A Firesign Chat," has just been released.

Three other albums are in production and scheduled for release within the next 90 days, according to a Butterfly announcement. The Firesign Theatre will perform together for the first time in two years this week (23) at the Roxy Theatre here to launch the album and label. The performance will be broadcast live on KWST-FM and the Newspace Regional Network.

Cervantes has held marketing and promotion positions for Casablanca and Chelsea Records and Heilicher Brothers, was president of Multi-Media Inc., an advertising agency and production house, and was a producer-news editor for the CBS Radio Network.

He also announced the appointment of Nancy Sain, former national pop promotion director for United Artists Records, as executive vice president and general manager. Sain also worked in promotion at Casablanca Records.

Butterfly's distribution network has been set as follows: ABC Record and Tape Sales (Seattle), All South (New Orleans), Alto Distributing (Phoenix), ARC Jay Kay Distributing (Detroit), Best Record Distributors (Buffalo), BIB Distributing (Charlotte), Heilicher Bros. (Minneapolis, Atlanta, Memphis, St. Louis, Miami, Dallas, Houston), Malverne Distributors (New York, Boston), M. S. Distributing (Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver), Music City Records Distributor (Nashville), PIKS Distributing (Cleveland, Cincinnati), Schwartz Bros. (Washington, D.C., Baltimore), Stan's Record Service (Shreveport) and Universal Record Distributors (Philadelphia).

Celebrating the Line



David Bromberg (left) hosted and headlined the Bottom Line's third anniversary celebration February 12, bringing along his band (center) and inviting such friends as the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, John Hammond, Dean Friedman, Loudon Wainwright III, Paul Siebel and Eric Frandsen to join him on stage in the course of the two-show evening. The first show was broadcast live over WNEW-FM and included, in addition to a variety of solo spots and jams, a banjo solo by the Dirt Band's John McEuen (right), and about an hour and a half worth of Bromberg and company at their best. This was the second year in a row that Bromberg has led the anniversary celebration and he has told Bottom Line owners Allan Pepper and Stanley Snadowsky that he hopes to make it an annual event.