

# The Billboard

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THE AMUSEMENT INDUSTRY'S LEADING NEWSWEEKLY



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## Novelty Acts Slice Record '53 Melon in All Show Fields

### NBC Forms 'Creative' Cadre In Drive to Grab TV Lead

By SAM CHASE

NEW YORK, May 2. — The pacting this week of Adrian Samish to an NBC "creative group" executive contract is regarded as a significant move by program veepee Charles C. (Bud) Barry to put NBC in the lead in the development of fresh talent, ideas and shows for video. The move was followed up immediately by the reclassification of five key NBC producers into similar status, bringing the total to eight in the web's creative group.

The creative group personnel is regarded as the network's top working brain trust in the fashioning of raw material. Each member operates independently,

and if his projects are successful, he participates in the profits. The group members report to Barry via his lieutenant, Tom McAvity.

The two original members of the group were Bob Welsh and Ed Beloin. The five others, who besides Samish also are being promoted into the select circle, are producers Sam Fuller, Pete Barnum, Joe Bigelow, Dee Engelbach and Al McCleery.

#### Great Hopes

Barry is known to be placing great hopes in the creative group, which he has been developing ever since he took over TV programming responsibilities last fall. He has been assessing the creative abilities of the web's production personnel, with a special eye on freshness of commercial approach. The five were chosen largely for their work along this line.

Samish recently resigned from the Dancer-Fitzgerald-Sample agency, where he was radio-TV veepee. Previously, he was program veepee at ABC, where Barry was his successor. Of the five who were reclassified, McCleery has been widely lauded for his two-hour production of "Hamlet" with Maurice Evans, which aired for Hallmark cards last Sunday. Fuller has been executive producer of the Colgate "Comedy Hour." Bigelow has been a leading light in Barry's comedy development pro-

gram, while Barnum also is an old hand with talent, having come to the web from Music Corporation of America. Engelbach was responsible for the development of Tallulah Bankhead as a broadcasting personality, first via Barry's radio "Big Show" and then via La Bankhead's video outings this season.

The further development of NBC's creative group is being looked upon by the trade as constituting something of an invitation to top production brains both inside and outside the trade to come to the web with their ideas. In effect, the web is pointing out that it can offer two highly desirable conditions: the chance to work in an atmosphere favorable to the incubation of experimental commercial ideas, and the oppor-

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### NEW WRINKLE PAYS OFF AT NARTB MEET

HOLLYWOOD, May 2. —

Marc Frederic, the Teevee Company general manager, knows what'll attract a convention. He proved his point hands down here this week during the 31st annual National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters convention—he gave away the famous Marilyn Monroe calendars.

The calendar, originally titled "The New Wrinkle," took on added significance at Frederic's hands. He'd successfully engineered a teaser campaign using that title. It paid off at the conclave for at least 1,500 delegates took advantage of the offer. Not only did they go away with a personal souvenir of the stunt, but got a private showing of an enlarged photo of the same pose of Miss Monroe—in color.

### \$16,000,000 Is Estimated Yield Over Year Span

Video Seen Filling Winter Lull After Boom Fair Season

By JIM McHUGH

NEW YORK, May 2.—A booming outdoor talent market will pay off an estimated \$8,000,000 for live performers alone within the four-month fair season and will contribute at least as much again in any 12-month period for the novelty acts appearing in such diverse fields as circuses, amusement parks, arenas, celebrations and television.

Paradoxically, television, the new home entertainment medium, which was viewed at its birth as a threat to the financial well-being of performers mainly identified with outdoor show business, has worked exactly the reverse, with the result that performers now face a theoretical 52-week work potential for the first time. Video's use of such talent is at its height during the cold weather months—a lay-off period without hope that many acts had to survive in the past.

The industry gains in work and earnings are reflected mainly in terms of new outlets rather than in stepped-up budgets. Fairs, the best single market, set their dollar allotments for talent at a record high after the war and there they remain with little hope of

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### Pressure Builds For Tax Relief

WASHINGTON, May 2.—The House Ways and Means Committee, which recently staged a quickie hearing on legislation to exempt movie theaters from the federal 20 per cent admissions tax, is getting proddings from an increasing number of spokesmen from other parts of the amusement industry seeking similar relief. Latest to go on record with the House Ways and Means Committee this week was the National Ballroom Operators' Association and the Arena Managers' Association, represented by J. A. Osher-

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### Book Larry Adler For Philly Nitery

NEW YORK, May 2. — Larry Adler, harmonica player, will open at the Latin Casino, Philadelphia, later this month. Dave Duschoff, co-owner of the room, said he's willing to sit down with the American Legion and prove that Adler has been unjustly maligned as a disloyal American.

The William Morris office had offered Adler to Duschoff for no money. Duschoff declined and is paying him \$1,000.

### May Ax Census In Show Field

WASHINGTON, May 2.—Commerce Department's 1953 Amusement Business Census, the most complete ever undertaken by the government, faces a serious threat of being called off as the result of a House Appropriations Subcommittee report this week completely wiping out a \$21,000,000 outlay for all of Commerce Department's business censuses in the fiscal year starting July 1. Since preparations for the business censuses are already well under way, there is a fairly strong chance that Congress will reverse the House Appropriations Subcommittee, which explained its budget-trimming as based on the belief that "there are many more urgent needs to be provided for at present" and declared that "the taking of these censuses can be deferred without causing any undue difficulty." The subcommittee's action came as a shock to Commerce Department, which had amassed plans for taking the first exhaustive census of the TV film production industry since the development of the TV broadcast industry. Census Bureau's plans also embraced exhaustive assembling of information on the indoor and outdoor amusement industries and the coin-operated machine

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### Juke Ops Kick Off Birthday Campaign

All Segments of Industry, Plus Suppliers To Celebrate 65th Anniversary Month

By DICK SCHREIBER

CHICAGO, May 2. — Music operators, their trade associations, suppliers and equipment manufacturers plan to make the 65th Anniversary of the Music Machines Industry the most impressive public relations project ever sponsored by the juke box industry.

Kick-off of what is developing into a month-long promotion came yesterday (1) when the Cleveland Press carried a feature

story detailing the growth of the juke box, announced that the Hit Tune Party sponsored by the Press and the Cleveland operators' association would be

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### MOONDOG

### Will Pound 'Oo' & 'Utsu' At Concert

NEW YORK, May 2. — Moondog, the blind, itinerant composer whose Mars album, "Moondog on the Streets of New York," is now creating some deejay excitement, is already set for a number of concert appearances. The scholarly percussionist is scheduled to do a concert at the Kaufman Auditorium May 25.

Described by informants as "an Evening of Percussion," the concert will be devoted to a history of this art. The lobby will have a display of drums, tom-toms, bongos and other percussive instruments, of which Moondog has invented seven.

The composer, who plays the "oo," the "utsu" and the samisen, is also expected to beat around

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### CAFE DIPLOMACY

### To Get Cream Talent Op Must Use Butter

By BILL SMITH

NEW YORK, May 2.—About 10 names can pick their spots and work no more than a couple of months each year. And because there are only these few who can do business in cafes, out of thousands of performers willing to work, they are wooed and catered to by cafe ops, who are anxious to keep their good-will.

To get a Jimmy Durante, Tony Martin, Martin and Lewis, Danny Thomas, Joe E. Lewis, Sophie Tucker, Johnnie Ray or Frankie Laine, buyers today must offer more than money. Money is no longer the lure that'll get these people to work their rooms. It requires a combination of courtesy, diplomacy, tact and other attributes with which few cafe operators are endowed.

The days when the boss of a club was the boss with a capital "B" is gone. If the op wants to play the big names, he has to do more than outbid his competitors for the few weeks a year he might get him.

Jules Podell, known as a rough quick-tempered man, recently gave Johnnie Ray a Cadillac convertible as a present. Danny Thomas, who recently played the Copa for Podell, had the use of Podell's car and chauffeur, all through his four weeker.

Dave Duschoff, of the Philly Latin Casino, who plays the biggest each season, uses still other

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### TO CATCH THE FISH you've got to BAIT THE HOOK!

And right now you can get some high-class, hybrid, red-worm wigglers to bait your hook, together with spawn and materials for growing your own. All cheap, according to a bargain offer in this week's Billboard classified section.

Yes, sir, to catch the fish you've got to bait the hook. And that applies to selling, too. Bait the hook with a good bargain offer, then go fishing in well-populated waters like The Billboard's three weekly classified sections, where the buyers are waiting in droves for a chance to snap up your offer!

See pages 43, 65, 85. What Do You Want To Buy or Sell?

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