

MCA Stages 1st Music Fest; Maitland Comments On New Talent

UNIVERSAL CITY—It took well over a year for MCA Records to set itself up and consolidate as a west coast-based company. Label president Mike Maitland, the man who engineered the move, will still, in a moment of candor, describe the process as being "almost complete." But the recent three-day MCA Music Festival was, in his own words, meant to say to the industry as a whole that "here we are, with all our people, a west coast operation, headquartered here in Universal City, on two floors in the Universal Tower."

To give substance to this position, MCA brought some 100 members of its "family"—branch managers, branch operations managers, sales managers and promotion men, as well as factory personnel, to southern California for a series of daytime meetings and three evenings of music by artists both old and new to the three MCA labels, Kapp, UNI and Decca.

First Reunion

"It was the first time since our reorganization that we've brought that family together," said Maitland last week after it was all over, "and officially recognized the fact that we've really come together as a company."

MCA's guests at its first "music festival" included leading buyers, owners of major retail outlets, representatives of independent distributors, various radio personalities and an impressive contingent of working press, many from the east coast. Company delegates from Canada and England also attended.

Most gratifying to Maitland was the presence on opening night (Jan. 12) of Jules Stein, board chairman and founder of MCA, Inc., along with Lou Wasserman, president and chief executive officer.

Maitland's remarks later that evening stressed the record company's determined effort to concentrate on product by its own artists, severing ties with outside labels previously distributed by MCA and dropping its audio lines.

Roster Trimmed

"As a result," he said later, privately, "we had a terrific year. By trimming our artist roster by something like a third to 40%, we accomplished two important things. We effectively reduced our release schedules, which in turn reduced the burden on our sales and promotion staff, just in terms of sheer numbers. We also decreased the burden on our promotional budget while increasing the

amount we were able to spend on the acts we kept. So you can see we fully intend to keep that artist roster as tight as possible."

Which will not preclude, obviously, the signing of outstanding new talent. Decca has just picked up an act from Air London's George Martin: Parrish & Gurbitz. UNI has just signed the six-man rock group Geronimo Black and is putting together what Maitland described as a "black concept album" by Love Unlimited. The festival itself showcased several new acts. Kapp's Uncle Jim, a Texan group, and singer Tom Ghent, a Decca group called Ratchell, and an attractive UNI duo, Thomas and Richard Frost, among them.

"I like the idea of being able to present talent, especially new talent, and that was one of the purposes of this convention, or festival. It likewise gave each of the three labels an opportunity to establish some kind of identity which will always reflect the tastes of one or another of the general managers. UNI is basically a contemporary, singles company, and undoubtedly reflects Russ Regan's style. Kapp, perhaps more of a middle-of-the-roader with Sonny and Cher, and Roger Williams, is personified by Johnny Musso, though that doesn't mean he will turn down a group like Uncle Jim. Decca is really without anyone at the top. Joe Sutton is its acting general manager: the two of us, I guess, play a role there.

Label Format

"Historically, you might say, Decca never paid its dues. It never was a very promotion-minded operation, or as promotion-minded as it had to become to be part of our operation, seeking new forms of promotion, exploitation and press.

"So it's time to pay our dues. And that's another of the purposes of this convention."

While MCA's guests were treated to the races at Santa Anita, a trip to Disneyland and screenings of Universal films, label staffers and field personnel convened during the day for product presentations and meetings involving detailed release schedules.

"Over the past year we've done a lot of work at the field level," Maitland stated, "instituting a new salary structure and improving compensation and sales incentive plans. We've cut the number of full-inventory
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Brown Moves Hdqtrs. To Home Town

AUGUSTA—James Brown recently opened his James Brown Enterprises here in his Georgia home town. The move "back home" began a year ago when Brown bought an estate in suburban Augusta. In June, 1971, he began the gradual procedure of moving his varied enterprises and by Dec. 1,



BACK HOME BOOKING — Man's World president Johnny Terry discusses new booking with tour director Alan Leeds (seated).

a new office building known as Man's World Enterprises Inc. was opened downtown.

President of Man's World, Johnny Terry, also serves as office manager and director of Brown's booking agency Be Proud. Alan M. Leeds, Brown's tour director of three years continues to negotiate all the star's personal appearances. Also included in the staff are road manager Freddie Holmes; agent Bobby Jackson and exec secretary Mrs. Emma Austin. Terry's agency handles booking of numerous artists (even though the agency is but two months off the ground) including Hank Ballard, Lyn Collins and the Soul Twins, Clay Tyson, Bobby Byrd, Jackie Moore, The JB's Blues Band, Vicki Anderson and Geator Davis.

Brown's many business negotiations and holdings are all headquartered in Augusta now; the singer was officially welcomed to the city by the Mayor and other civic officials during a recent visit of United States Marshall James Palmer, a close friend of Brown's.

The 'Bangla Desh' Movie To Hit Theatres In 70 MM

NEW YORK — The "Concert For Bangla Desh" saga which may be considered by most to be an event of the recent past, is only now about to become an important event of the future.

The films of the concert are now being re-shot from 16 mm onto 70mm film and a 20 minute rush of the 70 mm version was run for people involved with the movie last week at a theatre in New York.

It is understood, incidentally, that this is the first time a full length feature has ever been transferred from 16mm to 70mm.

The general consensus of those in attendance was that the film version came off more excitingly than the concert, since it affords everyone an opportunity to see some of their favorite stars close-up, something that the concert didn't offer its audience no matter how good the seats were.

The photographers caught such tight close-ups of George Harrison, Bob Dylan, Leon Russell, Ravi Shankar, Eric Clapton, Billy Preston that one could see the beads of perspiration gliding down their faces, a quality that was un-noticed even from the best seats in the house.

The film, which is expected to run 99 or 100 minutes, and which will be offered to audiences at general admission prices, is expected to premiere some time around Easter of 1972. Negotiations with distributors for re-

lease of the film are still under way. Profits from the film will also go to the "Bangla Desh" Charity.

Allen Klein, president of Abkco Industries, which photographed the concert, said that the film was transferred to 70mm for two reasons: one, to capture the panoramic view of the entire broad stage across which all the entertainers were strewn; and, two, because the sound track recorded on three 16 channel stereo units could be transferred onto the 70 mm film with absolutely no diminution of the fidelity of the original tracks. (Transfer to 35 mm from the recording equipment, the filmmakers advised, results, normally, in a 20% loss of fidelity from the original track. While transfer onto 70 mm results in no loss at all.)

The film will be shown in theatres with special set-ups for 6 channel stereo reproduction.

A number of people at the screening commented that the effect of the film on the sale of the "Bangla Desh" album should also be monumental, giving the album a tremendous second surge in April. As the observer put it, "one gets turned on by this film and if so many hundreds of thousands of albums can be sold at present with only some 38,000 or 40,000 people witnessing the concert, imagine what could happen when millions see the film."

Columbia Revamps Marketing Dept; Altshuler, Wynshaw, Teller Promoted

NEW YORK—In a move designed to deal more effectively with product output and to provide more intensive and coordinated product support, Bruce Lundvall, Columbia Records vice president, marketing, has announced three promotions that reorganize marketing responsibilities in the areas of press and information services, merchandising and artist relations.

Robert Altshuler has been named to the newly expanded position of director, press and information services and will be responsible for the planning and development of all press and field communications for Columbia, Epic and the Columbia Custom Labels. These responsibilities will include the literary service department, which is in charge of liner notes, the field communications department and the continued direction of the press and public information department. Altshuler joined Columbia in 1965 from Atlantic Records where he was director, publicity and advertising and wrote many of their liner notes. He most recently served as director, press and public information.

Al Teller has been appointed to the

newly created position of director, merchandising. In his new role, he will be responsible for the planning and placement of all national print and radio advertising, directed retail advertising and point-of-sale merchandising materials. He will also serve as project coordinator for all new artist exploitation planning and will continue to supervise the College Rep Program. Teller joined Columbia Records in 1969 as assistant to the president and was most recently director, marketing development. Prior to joining Columbia he was director, corporate development for Playboy Enterprises.

David Wynshaw is appointed to the expanded role of director, artist relations and special events and in that position will be responsible for the direction of artist relations, concert and TV booking coordination, artist tour activities and the planning of company functions and company-stage shows and concerts, such as the recent Madison Square Garden MOR Show. Wynshaw joined Columbia in 1960 and was formerly director, artist relations. Messrs. Altshuler, Wynshaw and Teller will all report directly to Bruce Lundvall.



Altshuler

Wynshaw

Teller