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MCA adding to Net 10 woes with \$38 million lawsuit

By JACQUELINE LEE LEWES

SYDNEY, Australia — MCA International B.V. — the overseas arm of Japanese-American media conglomerate MCA Inc. — has launched a legal suit against Northern Star Holdings Ltd., owner of Network Ten, and its bankers.

The claim against the struggling network concerns an agreement for rights to screen in Australia top-rated programs such as "Murder, She Wrote" and blockbuster Universal Pictures films including "E.T. — the Extra Terrestrial," "Back to the Future" and "Born on the Fourth of July."

MCA filed a statement of claim — continued on page 22

Theater chains won't roll the Dice

By GREG PTACEK

Several of the largest North American theater chains have declined to play "Dice Rules," the concert film by controversial comedian Andrew Dice Clay being released next weekend by Seven Arts, a division of Carolco.

On Friday, Loews Theatres, the fifth-largest theater chain in the country, took the unusual step of issuing a statement from chairman A. Alan Friedberg to announce it was passing

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Disney may bring 'Beauty' to Cannes

By JAMES ULMER

CANNES — High-level talks were in progress Friday between executives of the Cannes Film Festival, Euro Disney and Buena Vista International about bringing Disney's upcoming animated musical feature "Beauty and the Beast" to Cannes next year.

The event would not only help — continued on page 2

Stone Group slate fortified by Schlesinger, Edwards, Kaplan

• More Cannes Film Festival coverage on pages 3, 6 and 7. Cannes film reviews on pages 5, 6, 7, 10 and 17.

By JEFFREY JOLSON-COLBURN

CANNES — Stone Group Pictures revealed a five-picture slate of films scheduled to start principal photography before the end of the year, including a John Schlesinger film and a new offering from Blake Edwards.

Stone Group has also cemented

deals with Jonathan Kaplan ("The Accused," "Heart Like a Wheel") to direct the suspense film "Last Soul," and Richard Grieco to star in the car-racing picture "Born to Run."

Columbia Pictures handles domestic releases for Stone Group, which is chaired by actor-producer Michael Douglas and was formed as a partnership with Epic Prods. and his Stone Bridge Entertainment. Vision International distributes overseas.

Stone Group president Rick Bieber and partner Moshe Damant unveiled the 18-month-old company's new slate in Cannes and said the Schlesinger, Edwards and Kaplan films would have budgets of between \$15 million and \$20 million each, while the two other pictures would be "under \$15 million."

"In 18 months, we have put together a slate of studio-competitive films for the international marketplace," said Bieber, citing the three major releases the company has already produced: "Stone Cold," starring ex-pro footballer Brian Bos — continued on page 18

Bennett buys out partners in Trans Atlantic Pictures

CANNES — Former Metromedia head Robert Bennett has bought out partners Larry Kuppin and Harry Sloan to take control of Trans Atlantic Pictures, the company formed with the extensive New World Entertainment libraries.

American Film Market Assn. chairman Bill Shields will remain president and CEO of the firm, and

Both sides calling for moderation in Buchwald damages

By JOHN VOLAND

The third and final phase of the long legal dispute between Paramount Pictures and humorist Art Buchwald and his producing partner, Alain Bernheim — the damages phase — began Friday with the filing of opposing briefs for Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Harvey Schneider.

In a mildly surprising development, both sides' briefs call for moderation in the damages assessment, which will be made by Schneider after he hears both parties. No date has been set for this hearing, but — continued on page 23

will obtain a minority equity share as part of the deal, which will see the firm renamed as Trans Atlantic Entertainment. Also getting a minority ownership position will be Murray Shultz, who has been promoted to senior vp.

Kuppin and Bennett will remain teamed in a new company, Pan Pacific Entertainment. It will get control of certain music, sequel and other rights from Trans Atlantic.

Bennett had roughly one-third of the company and has purchased the two-thirds he did not already own. Financial terms were not disclosed.

Trans Atlantic was formed in 1989 when the trio purchased New World Entertainment's 180-film — continued on page 2

Dalton to sail as Columbus in film

CANNES — Timothy Dalton will discover the Americas when he stars in the Alexander and Ilya Salkind epic "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery," a representative of the Salkinds has confirmed.

Set for release on the 500th anniversary of the discovery on Oct. 12, — continued on page 2

MGM-Pathé vows payment in full

By GREG PTACEK and JEFFREY DANIELS

An out-of-court settlement was reached Friday between MGM-Pathé and a group of creditors that had petitioned for an involuntary Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

MGM-Pathé agreed to pay in full the claims made by the creditors' — continued on page 2

Abdul unleashing Captive Records

Paula Abdul may be forever your girl, but she's forming her own record label, Captive Records, which will be distributed by her established label, Virgin Records.

The multi-Platinum ex-Laker Girl will serve as Captive Records' — continued on page 2

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MUSIC NOTES

Stephen King's stock in Hollywood has always been a bit less than blue-chip — films of his books generally haven't fared as well as the books themselves. But that didn't stop the Master of the Macabre from putting in his 2 cents on the casting of the film version of his book "The Stand": He wants singer-songwriter **Marshall Crenshaw** to play Larry Underwood, a key character. Crenshaw's no stranger to the screen: he played Buddy Holly in "La Bamba" and had a plum role in Francis Ford Coppola's "Peggy Sue Got Married."

Turnabout is fair play for Atlanta-based neo-blues rockers **the Black Crowes**. Having been booted off the opening spot on the mega-sponsored **ZZ Top** tour for criticizing the notion of corporate sponsorships while onstage, the Crowes have now booted **Maggie's Dream**, the Crowes' own opening act, off their tour because the band discovered that Maggie's Dream had recorded some radio spots for Miller Beer (which also underwrote the **ZZ Top** shows). Lead singer **Chris Robinson** said, "I think it's a little slimy, to say the least that no one told us about this... If you're gonna sing in commercials, do it. If you wanna play rock 'n' roll, you can come sing with us." A spokesman for Maggie's Dream said that the band is not financially supported or sponsored by Miller Beer or any other corporation.

Todd Rundgren and **Warner Bros. Records** have parted ways after a 19-year association.

Rundgren's leaving had "nothing to do with the performance of any of the product. We just came to the expiration of a fairly long-term deal and we decided it might be time for Todd to move on," Eric Gardner, head of Panacea Entertainment Management & Communications and Rundgren's manager said. "The split was amicable and it saddened us both to end it."

Rundgren is currently finishing the U.S. leg of his **Second Wind** tour, which ended Saturday. He will take two weeks off and then begin the Japanese leg on May 27.

While in Japan, Gardner said, Rundgren will meet with Japanese conglomerates that could finance, develop and license Rundgren's multimedia interests.

On the termination, Gardner said, "It's the end of an era, Todd and I have known no other home. It is the most difficult mutual decision that I've been a party to."

Former Hollywood Bowl general manager **Wayne Shilkret** has been named executive director of the **Pas-**

adena Symphony Assn., effective July 1. Shilkret has been a significant arts administrator since 1976, when he took over the directorship of the performing arts programming of Pasadena's Ambassador Auditorium and commenced to bring in a steady stream of celebrated performers to that hall, including Vladimir Horowitz and Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

Rick Scott has announced the formation of his **Great Scott Prods.** management and PR company, based in L.A. near Beverly Hills. Scott was formerly an account exec at McMullen-Dozoretz Associates. He counts among his clients the Hollywood Records act the Party and the West Hollywood nitery Bar One.

Pyramid Entertainment Group will serve as the official booking agency for **Hush Prods.**, replacing the William Morris Agency. Pyramid will now be the exclusive worldwide representation for such performers as **Freddie Jackson**, **Melba Moore**, **Najee** and **Stacy Lattisaw**.

2 Live Jews are back with, this time, **Kosher Records'** "Fiddling With Tradition," which contains seven songs from "Fiddler on the Roof," albeit with the group's own sendups. The act made some noise with its first album, "As Kosher as They Wanna Be," a takeoff on the sound and rap fury of **2 Live Crew**.

"**Scenes From Gift**," a one-hour special that will feature the music of **Jane's Addiction**, will be aired on MTV on May 21. The special will include interview footage conducted by MTV's Kurt Loder with **Perry Farrell**, Jane's Addiction vocalist and songwriter, as well as a glimpse of the upcoming feature film-cum-home movie "Gift," the video creation of Farrell. The full 90-minute video will be released this year.

Gold Castle Records has recently signed a long-term distribution agreement with **Run River Records**, a 3-year-old English label featuring folk and acoustic acts.

Guitarist and band leader **Carlos Santana** says that he'll resume work on a planned concert to aid American Indians as soon as he wraps up his current tour.

He hopes to stage the event at the Grand Canyon in October 1992, the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in America. The purpose of the concert is to raise awareness and "celebrate 500 years of surviving Christopher Columbus," he said.

Concert reviews

Steve Winwood

Great Western Forum
Saturday, May 11

By IAN BLAIR

It's hard to believe that Steve Winwood has been around for over a quarter of a century. Like some Dorian Gray figure, his distinctive voice and even his looks appear to have remained relatively unscathed by the passage of time since he first burst upon the British music scene in 1964.

Back then, as the frontman for the Spencer Davis Group, Winwood hit the top of the charts with such impassioned singles as "Gimme Some Lovin'" and "Keep On Running," songs that showcased his rich melodic gifts, R&B roots, and extraordinary white soul vocals.

His subsequent career in Blind Faith, Traffic and then as a successful solo artist can be viewed as a logical development for this musician's musician, although, ironically enough, Winwood still seems to be happiest while performing within a

group context.

Despite his prodigious musical gifts, which were amply displayed during the course of this long show — Winwood played Hammond organ, synthesizers, guitar, mandolin and even vibraphone — the singer-songwriter has never been a truly charismatic performer. In fact, in past solo tours, Winwood was pushed uncomfortably into the spotlight throughout the evening, a role he clearly didn't relish.

By contrast, this current tour tends to feature Winwood as a more integrated member of a very tight six-piece band who also happens to do all the singing, and the arrangement obviously suits him better.

Mixing the old with the new, Winwood roared through versions of "I'm a Man" and "While You See a Chance" before seguing into some material off his latest album, "Refugees of the Heart," including a version of "Another Deal Goes Down"

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Peggy Lee

Raymond Theater
Friday, May 10

By TONY GIESKE

"I'm glad I was never afraid of mice," laughed Peggy Lee, who was seated center stage in her patented platinum bangs, her long French eyelashes, and a mummy-like black costume that had her immobilized in writhing, feathery black boas.

She flicked the tip of one of the boas, cocked her head and grinned. No mouse appeared, which was a good thing, because as everyone in the glittering Pasadena audience knew, the 69-year-old singer couldn't very well get up from her chair and flee should one get on her.

But of course they also knew about her recent victory over the Mickey Mouse folks, so they knew she wasn't scared.

She began with several tasteful

and intelligent ballads from deep in her cedar chest of memories. Typical was "I Love Being Here With You," the opener, a finely wrought but seldom-heard song that displayed her easy phrasing and her knife-sharp intonation.

With Max Bennett's light-stepping, brassless band behind her, she quickly got two of her monster hits, "Fever" and "Is That All There Is," out of the way.

But they were done more or less as run-throughs; it was the tune that followed, "Amazing," that turned into the show's first real haymaker. "We danced once, I kissed you, and now I can't resist you." While the tiny string section got busy, Lee just reached out and grabbed the heart with that simple ditty.

She then sailed regally through

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Guns N' Roses

Pantages Theater
Saturday, May 11

By MARC POLLACK

The wait is nearly over. Guns N' Roses, whose "Appetite for Destruction" is the largest-selling group debut album in history, is back.

And when a group of this stature decides to do a warmup show at the rather tiny 2,000-seat Pantages Theater problems should be expected.

However, the band implemented an organized way of selling tickets in which scalpers were completely cut from the mix. The Pantages handed out wrist bands, made the customers

buy and sign vouchers and then, three hours later, gave them tickets and escorted them directly into the theater.

Announcement of the "surprise" show came at noon Saturday, but word had been out in Hollywood for well over a week, and the band's followers turned out in droves.

It's been 1½ years since Guns N' Roses has performed as a band in its hometown, and its last shows, the four with the Rolling Stones in October 1989, were stormy at best.

At this gig, however, band camara

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'Rhapsody'

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selling point for the film which, at least in the United States, looks to have a very tough time making a successful theatrical tour, even with Kurosawa's name attached. That's because "Rhapsody" ultimately becomes a very serious testament about America's dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki in 1945.

No one, of course, argues the implications of that action; what's missing here, however, is even a passing reference that it was the Japanese who had initially started the war that the Nagasaki action brought to a halt. (No mention, either, of the thousands killed by Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 or during the four years preceding Nagasaki.)

Kurosawa has the grandma lay the atomic bomb tragedy less at the feet of Americans and more at war in general, but the overall premise of the movie clearly points a shameful finger at the United States and none at Japan itself. That'll be a sore point, especially in American areas getting particularly weary of having the stars and stripes bashed (yet again).

When focusing on less controversial matters, "Rhapsody" is pleasurable to watch, as the two sets of young cousins (Tomoko Ohtakara

and Mitsunori Isaki, Hidetaka Yoshioka and Mie Suzuki), very much of the 1990s generation, work to manipulate ol' granny into a trip to Hawaii to meet an ailing brother she hasn't seen for years. They, of course, hope to join granny on the trip, to escape the lingering days in the country.

The plans take on alternate colors when they discover their long-deceased grandfather died in Nagasaki, the city that sits just over a hill from granny's small home; also that the relatives in Hawaii, including an uncle played by Richard Gere, are Japanese-Americans, not necessarily an appealing thought under the circumstances.

As in all Kurosawa films, the technical credits are first-rate (except, in this case, a couple of views of sky by art director Yoshiro Muraki that look far too influenced by a paintbrush to be convincing). But the cinematography by Takao Saito and Masaharu Ueda, the music by Shinichi Ikebe and the sound by Kenichi Benitani are all outstanding.

Besides Murase's seamless performance, the kids are very natural and effective in their roles, especially Mitsunori Isaki as the youngest of the boys. Gere, the only recognizable name for selling the film in the United States, is in for only a few minutes and injects his limited footage with no more than a movie star turn.

Winwood

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that featured some killer slide guitar playing.

Hardly surprisingly, however, another side trip down memory lane, this time for such Traffic classics as "The Low Spark of High-Heeled Boys" and "Glad," had most of the audience waxing nostalgic. An accompanying video display of vintage Traffic footage and '60s "happenings" only served to deepen the mood as Winwood also included a feel-good cover of that '60s staple,

"Feelin' Alright."

With a barely perceptible change of pace, or indeed attitude, Winwood completed the circle by closing up the show with rousing versions of such recent hits as "The Finer Things," "Roll With It" and "Higher Love," the last providing a fitting climax to the evening and what should have been the final song, at least in terms of pacing.

Winwood returned for a gentle, low-key rendition of "Back in the High Life," and then cranked out "Gimme Some Lovin'" to send everyone home happy.

Gronich

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Managers and European Board of Television Continental Managers and served as the U.S. representatives on Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development dealing with film and audiovisual trading practices.

Gronich was also U.S. board member of the International Film Rights Collection Society, responsible for negotiating national contracts for film producer payments from television concerns and cable systems.

Prior to joining the MPEAA in 1951, Gronich spent five years with RKO Radio Pictures.

"I consider Fred a devoted col-

league and personal friend and I will personally miss him as will the association," said Jack Valenti, MPEAA's chairman and CEO.

Lundgren

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"We're hoping this film will be more than just an action movie, that it will be a showcase for Dolph's real acting abilities," said Schectman.

The executive added that the "outside time frame" for determining the other two Fox films, which Filmstar would distribute, is 18 more months, but that Filmstar expected to finalize the selection "long before then." He said Fox had offered "a couple of films so far that we felt weren't as strong internationally as we'd hoped."

'Rebels'

continued from page 17 —

him, may be the very same gent who did the slaying in the park.

Plotting is not the strong point here but Julien's storytelling tactics are. The movie vibrates with a youthful vigor that's contagious, aided enormously by cinematographer Nina Kellgren's slashing views of back-street London.

Sophie Okonodo is excellent as his girl friend while Sesay often steals the show as the big, burly gay half of the disc jockey team. Jason Durr also makes a vivid impression as the street boy who may or may not be a murderer.

Although the plot line takes many conventional turns (too many at times), Julien's movie includes several scorching scenes that are anything but standard. They'll irritate some, titillate others but definitely cause talk, all of which will only be a boon to the boxoffice. The single "Rebels" scene that will cause most tongues to flap will be one in which the black Mr. Sesay and the white Mr. Durr hit the bedsprings, au naturel, for extended activity that doesn't include sleep.

Guns N' Roses

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derie was high, and for the first time in a long time the group seemed to actually enjoy being onstage together.

Taking the opportunity to introduce new members Matt Sorum on drums and Dizzy Reed on keys, and debut material from its highly anticipated forthcoming dual releases "Use Your Illusion I and II," Guns N' Roses slammed through 13 new tunes in an attempt to work out the creases before they embark on a stadium tour, which insiders say will last two years.

The new material, a lot heavier and less hooky than anything the group has done before, was showcased throughout the set. In fact, almost 70% of the songs performed do not appear on either of the band's previous two releases.

On "Don't Cry," a new tune, Rose was joined onstage by pal Shannon Hoon, lead singer for Blind Melon, a new band recently signed by Capitol Records. Hoon and Rose perfectly complemented each other's vocal styles, making the song one of the highlights of the evening.

The show itself was just a bit too long. Considering the band had no formal set list and seemed to be pulling songs out from its collective hat, the pacing of the show was way off. Long guitar change breaks, Rose's minimal banter and the members' instrumental solos really slowed the 2½-hour set.

The band will be playing July 29 with opening act Skid Row at the Great Western Forum.

NAB

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The Media Group represents 15 companies. Of those, only one opposed the Inouye missive, and that was Gannett, the only member that doesn't have cable interests.

The Media Group said in its letter that the Inouye proposal "has serious practical complications," including a "possible impact on consumers' cable rates" and on the "complex issues involving alternative access of cable systems to broadcast network programming."

"We have presumed for some time that the Media Group has been acting as an extension of the NCTA (National Cable Television Assn.)," said NAB president Edward Fritts in a statement Friday.

"Having read the letter and knowing that Mr. Mooney was a participant in the meeting when the position was adopted, our original presumption is now validated," said Fritts, referring to NCTA president James Mooney.

NAB spokeswoman Lynne McReynolds said the letter was a last-ditch attempt by cable to squelch the legislative momentum toward cable reregulation that the Inouye proposal kicked off at the convention.

"A lot of people considered cable reregulation to be dead, largely as a result of the messages the Bush administration has been sending," she said.

Lee

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the Basie-like "Just One of Those Things." Then she decked the assembly once more with the slow New Yorky ballad, "There'll Be Another Spring."

After that, there was no more resistance.

Lee's gently devastating comic moments like "He's a Tramp" and "Big Spender" were set-ups for the heart-breakers like "Folks Who Live on the Hill" and "Where Can I Go Without You," whose bittersweet stories she drew out in her lazy, silken way for all the world like Lester Young.

As her confidence built, that easy touch of hers grew surer and sweeter, and by the time she got to "See See Rider," rendered as a waltz in the style of "All Blues," she could do no wrong.

"As Time Goes By" would have made Dexter Gordon weep. It was so good that you had to forgive the maudlin "Johnny Guitar," which she sang as though it, too, were pure gold. Then "I Just Want to Dance All Night," which could have been written by Ingmar Bergman, prepaid the candor deficit of "Wind Beneath My Wings."

And the choice of Hildegarde's old theme song, "I'll Be Seeing You," for the finale — Euroblues! — told the world that Peggy Lee, who's been killing us softly for better than 50 years, knows how to spring that mousetrap.