

Pic Assn.'s Nix Gives Antipiracy Advice To Members Of AFMA

By RICHARD KLEIN

Hollywood, Dec. 11. Moving closer to formulating a joint operation with the American Film Marketing Assn. to combat film piracy, William Nix, director of the Motion Picture Assn. of America's antipiracy program, Thursday (6) outlined to AFMA members the steps that have to be taken to control the problem.

Nix pointed to the "great tragedy" that frequently occurs in antipiracy raids — "your product is either being left on the pirates' shelves or returned after inventories are conducted because you were not named parties in the lawsuit." He asked the trade association's membership to begin the fight by fashioning a list of its catalog which the MPA could feed into its computers.

"The important point here is that these are lost opportunities," Nix told the reps of indie firms adding the nearly \$1-billion yearly figure quoted on worldwide piracy losses does not include "calculations of the non-MPAA member losses that you and foreign producers around the world are suffering."

Nix, who said he has been in "specific discussions" with AFMA (Continued on page 28)

U LIMITS ADVANCE 'DUNE' SCREENINGS

In an unusual tactic, Universal has limited advance screenings of "Dune" to New York-based print and broadcast critics who will be producing a review. No other members of the trade (press or otherwise) will be admitted to the unspoolings Wednesday (12) morning and afternoon.

The dictum, per a Universal spokesman, was a joint decision by the pic's producers (Dino and Raffaella DeLaurentiis) and the studio "to let the public find it ('Dune') for itself."

The lack of a so-called "all-media" screening in advance of the pic's Friday (14) opening runs against the prerelease grain followed by most majors, particularly for a pic of "Dune's" high profile and production values.

As for one daily newspaper critic who will see "Dune" Wednesday, a gripe was voiced about the deadline pressure created by the screenings just two days ahead of preem.

No Surprises Expected At MGM/UA Annual Meet

Hollywood, Dec. 11. MGM/UA Entertainment Co. will hold its annual meeting Jan. 12 with mainly routine items on the agenda.

With Kirk Kerkorian holding a decisive 50.1% of the stock, of course, there's little room for suspense and the proxy statement notes he has sole power to carry the items he favors and to defeat one he opposes.

The disfavored item is a proposal for cumulative voting to be put forward by Lewis D. Gilbert, John J. Gilbert and Albert K. Kurtz. Proxy statement shows chairman Frank Rothman earned salary and compensation of \$609,865 last year, plus an "incentive award" of \$425,000. Vice-chairman Frank Yablans reaped \$605,999 plus \$375,000.

Vice chairman emeritus Frank E. (Continued on page 24)

L.A. Permit Fees Upped

Hollywood, Dec. 11. City of Los Angeles location permit fees have been raised from \$100 to \$115, and rider fees (modifications of the original application) hiked from \$20 to \$25.

The action by the Board of Public Works, to be administered by the Motion Picture Coordination Office, comes in the midst of high disability by the city (and particularly Board of Public Works president Maureen Kindel) in campaigning to keep location costs at a minimum in the hope of preventing erosion of production from the city and state.

Dirk Beving, director of the Motion Picture Coordination Office, called the increases consistent with the city's "obligation to recoup costs for various services and permits."

Vestron Prebuys 3 Empire Features

Continuing their ongoing relationship, Charles Band's Empire Pictures and Vestron Video have concluded a presale for worldwide rights to three planned productions.

The three features, scheduled to start shooting in succession in early 1985, are "Zone Troopers," "Shackled" and an untitled youth comedy.

Previous deals between the two companies have included a \$3,600,000 four-pic package arranged last March at the American Film Market. Vestron subsequently picked up homevid rights to "Trancers," scheduled for theatrical release in early 1985. Latest deal was concluded at Miffed last month.

In addition to "Trancers," first of the Empire productions scheduled for domestic release through its own distribution network starting in January 1985 are "Ghoulies," "The Dungeonmaster" and a recent acquisition, "Walking The Edge." Pics will receive a regional rotating (Continued on page 24)

Atlantic Releasing Takes All U.S. Rights To '1984'

Hollywood, Dec. 11. Atlantic Releasing Corp. has acquired all U.S. and Canadian rights to "1984" from the United Kingdom's Virgin Film Group.

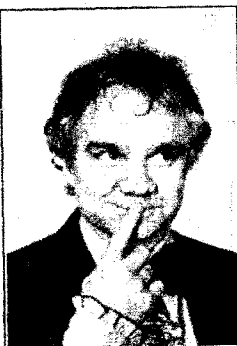
"1984" stars Richard Burton in his final screen performance. It also features John Hurt and soundtrack debut of Eurythmics.

Film will open for seven days in Los Angeles at the UA Egyptian in Westwood Dec. 12 for Academy Awards qualification and will begin its commercial release in New York, Toronto and Los Angeles in late January.

Atlantic topper Tom Coleman, who closed the pickup deal Nov. 30 in L.A. with Virgin's Richard Branson, said he snatched away "1984" from a couple of studios for a "significant" advance that he expects to defray with a homevideo sale prior to the theatrical opening next month.

He said Hurt, director Michael Radford and producer Simon Perry will be flown in for preem promo.

Eurythmics' soundtrack LP was recently released on Virgin/RCA, and a video clip of the single, "Sex Crime (1984)," has also been issued.



ZACK NORMAN'S EX-WIFE'S HUSBAND is MICHAEL J. POLLARD in "AMERICA"

20th Fox Ups Rudin To Prod. Exec Veep

Hollywood, Dec. 11. Scott Rudin, who's been on the Fox lot since January as a producer and an untitled executive associate with production prez Lawrence Gordon, has been named exec v.p., production, for 20th Century Fox.

The appointment, effective immediately, elevates Rudin to equal exec status with recently arrived Larry Mark. Both will report directly to Gordon, who is expected to make additional appointments in the production v.p. area.

Rudin's appointment certainly qualifies as one of the industry's more meteoric leaps. Rudin, 26, came to Hollywood five years ago at the invitation of producer Edgar J. Scherick, for whom Rudin had cast some movies as a casting director in New York. Once here, he made his mark at the age of 22 as coproducer with Sherick of Paramount's "I'm (Continued on page 26)

New Film Starts

DEADLY PASSION
(Deadly Passion Film (Pty) Ltd) 11/12/84. South Africa. PROD., Anant Singh; DIR., Larry Larson; SCR., Singh, Larson; CAM., Vincent Cox; PUB., D.L. Rösch; GEN., Suspense drama; CAST, Ingrid Boultin, Brent Flynn, Erica Rogers, John Maytham, Eric Lynn. Long Johnny Burkes, Harrison Coburn (No distrib).

EMANON
(Alley Kids Inc. Prod.) 11/19/84, L.A. PROD., Dorothy Koster, Hank Paul; DIR., Stuart Paul; CAM., John Lambert; CAST, Stuart Paul, William F. Collard, Cheryl Lynn, Jeremy Miller, Patrick Wright, Joanne Jackson, Robert Hackman, Ellen Gerstein, Shawa Campbell, Hilda Allen, Al Bordighi, B.J. Garrett, Janis Jamison, Stacy Strauss (No distrib).

ENEMY MINE
(Kings Road Prod.) 11/26/84, Munich, Canary Islands. EXP., Stanley O'Toole; PROD., Stephen Friedman; DIR., Wolfgang Petersen; SCR., Edward Khmara, from novella by Barry Longyear; CAM., Tony Inai; GEN., Science fiction adventure; CAST, Dennis Quaid, Louis Gossett Jr. (Dist., 20th Century Fox).

Production Pulse

Prod. Co.	Starts	
	This Yr	Last Yr
Cannon	11	11
Columbia	19	9
Walt Disney	3	3
Embassy	4	2
Hemdale	4	1
ITC	1	1
Ladd Co.	1	2
Lorimar	0	3
MGM/UA	16	9
New World	7	3
Orion	11	15
Paramount	9	13
Sandy Howard	4	3
Thorn EMI	5	1
Tri-Star	13	4
20th Fox	13	15
Universal	12	17
Warner Bros.	13	18
Independent	166	125
TOTAL	312	238

Executives In Turnaround

Corporate

Former Home Box Office chairman and CEO Frank Biondi has been named executive v.p. of the Entertainment Business arm of The Coca-Cola Co ... John Bell has joined The Almi Group as general counsel.

Jonathan L. Doigean will ankle as president of Columbia Pictures domestic operations early next year.

Production

Scott Rudin has been upped to executive vicepres of production for 20th Century Fox ... Kim LeMaster has ankle as Walt Disney Prods. vicepres of worldwide production.

Peggy King has been elevated to director of creative affairs for ABC Motion Pictures.

Distribution

Pamela Pickering will join Manson Intl. as director of international sales Jan. 7.

Marketing

Marsha Robertson will exit her post as publicity vicepres for MGM/UA at the end of the month. No successor has been named ... Ken Stewart has been promoted to executive director of creative services for Paramount Pictures feature film division.

Exhibition

American Multi-Cinema has undergone a corporate facelift in which Joel Resnick and Ron Leslie have been named to the newly created posts of chairmen and chief executive officers of the two divisions they have been running with lesser titles. Both continue as exec vicepres of the parent company, AMC Entertainment. In accompanying appointments, Arnold Shartin was named proxy of AMC Film Marketing and Bill Doeren was upped from vicepres to senior vicepres of AMC Operations ... Ted Cooper has joined Reading, Pa.-based Fox Theatres Management Corp. as head film buyer.

Ken Stewart has been upped to executive director of creative services for Paramount Pictures' motion picture group.

Representation

Leslee Dart has resigned as Tri-Star Pictures' New York publicity vicepres to join the PMK praisery as a partner.

Services

Bill Varney will join Universal Studios early in 1985 as supervisor of sound and recording operations.

A&M Films Out Of The Shadows With 3 Back-To-Back Releases

By RAY LOYND

Hollywood, Dec. 11. A&M Films, a company so low-profile it is one of the industry's best-kept secrets, is stepping into daylight.

Between now and April, the three-year old film arm of A&M Records will make its screen debut with three back-to-back features, and company execs unveiled a list of 15 properties in active development.

Among the latter are projects hitched to director Sydney Pollack, producer Jonathan Sanger and writers Joan Tewkesbury ("Nashville"), Jeremy Lerner ("The Candidate"), Trevor Griffiths ("Reds"), John Hughes ("Mr. Mom") and Tom Rickman ("Coal Miner's Daughter").

Headed by A&M Records and A&M Films prez Gil Friesen and A&M Films exec v.p. Andrew Meyer, the company's stratagem is keyed to packaging a script with a director and then seeking a production-distribution deal with a major.

The company's trim, three-person creative staff — Friesen, Meyer and director of development Sarah Black — quietly made deals for three films, which now are ready for release on top of one another.

First up will be "Birdy" for Tri-Star, directed by Alan Parker from William Wharton's novel, which will open in New York and L.A. Dec. 21 and then go wide in February.

That will be followed by the January release of "The Breakfast Club" for Universal, written and helmed by John Hughes, and "Better Off Dead," written and directed by debuting feature filmmaker Savage Steve Holland, a CBS Theatrical presentation to be distributed by Warner Bros. in April.

"We decided it was about time to tell the world we're here," said Meyer, who, like Friesen, is a veteran A&M Records exec. Actually the diskery had a limited flirtation with film production 15 years ago under Perry Leff, but folded after one year with nothing to show.

Friesen revived the film wing in July 1981, with considerable encouragement from Creative Artists Agency, which became the exclusive agency rep, and the entertainment law firm of Armstrong & Hirsch. "The time was right," said Friesen at his desk in the old Charlie Chaplin Studio on La Brea.

"We sensed that videos were right around the corner" — one of the Chaplin soundstages is used as a video production facility — "but we didn't want to start off as a music film company. We wanted to do strong, dramatic pictures that were unique and not commonplace."

Company's philosophy, added Meyer, is keyed to the selectivity of a few projects rather than to develop with "the shotgun approach." With only a few exceptions, the 18 projects A&M now has (including the three upcoming releases) represent the vast majority of projects A&M has ever spent money on.

Meyer leans toward book material "because then you really have a point of view for the writer to develop. The transition from verbal pitch to idea to script to film is much tougher." Company's development list, nonetheless, is evenly divided between originals and book adaptations.

Also, said Meyer, "we try not to spend more than \$50,000 for a script, although in some obvious (Continued on page 26)