

OBITUARIES

Chet Baker

Jazz trumpeter Chet Baker died Friday in Amsterdam after falling from his third-floor hotel room window under the influence of heroin, authorities said.

Baker, 59, was skedded to make several appearances as part of a Netherlands tour. He was reputed to have had a drug problem earlier in his career but claimed in recent years that he had stopped taking drugs and had begun recording again with Elvis Costello.

Baker earned renown for his cool brand of trumpet playing, setting standard for what came to be known as the "cool school." He worked with Charlie Parker and later baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan, with whom he made some of his most famous appearances.

After that, Baker started his own quartet, developing cult following for his boyish good looks, considered reminiscent of James Dean. Career suffered in the late '50s, however, as trouble with narcotics and arrests made headlines.

Paul Osborn

Paul Osborn, Tony-winning playwright and screenwriter, died Thursday in Manhattan's Mount Sinai Hospital, where he had been for two months suffering from several ailments. He was 86.

Osborn received Tony in 1980 for best revival of "Morning's At Seven," which originally opened on Broadway in 1939. He also wrote "The World Of Suzie Wong" in 1958, one of several of his plays (such as "On Borrowed Time" and "Should Ladies Behave?") later adapted to film.

Other Broadway credits include "A Ledge," "Oliver Oliver," "Tomorrow's Monday," "The Innocent Voyage" and "A Bell For Adano."

Robert Emmerich

Lauderdale Lakes, Fla., May 15 (AP) — Pianist and composer Robert D. Emmerich, who played with the Tommy Dorsey band and wrote songs for Fats Waller, has died at age 83.

Emmerich died Friday at Florida Medical Center, and a funeral was held Sunday.

Emmerich wrote more than 100 songs, including "Beat It Out," "Woe Is Me" and 10 others for Waller. He wrote "Our Love," first sung by Dinah Shore, and "No. 10 Lullaby Lane," introduced by Kate Smith.

Emmerich, who collaborated with Buddy Bernier and Joseph

Meyer, wrote a song called "The Big Apple" in the 1940s, said his wife, Miriam.

Eugene Lapple

Eugene Lapple, 34, writer, editor and announcer, died May 2 in Long Beach from injuries sustained in an automobile accident in 1986.

West coast editor of High Times magazine, Lapple wrote and produced "Hollywood Highs," wrote and announced numerous tv commercials and was cofounder of Video General in Long Beach.

He is survived by his mother, brother and sister.

J. Richardson (Dick) Loughrin

J. Richardson (Dick) Loughrin, 69, broadcasting account executive, died May 1 in Palos Verdes of a heart attack.

Loughrin began his sales career as an account executive for NBC national sales in his native Chicago. He later joined CBS-TV spot sales in New York and managed the CBS-TV national sales and the TVAR (Westinghouse) offices in Los Angeles.

He is survived by his wife, three sons, a daughter and 11 grandchildren.

Atlantic Merger With Prism To Be Completed In 2 Weeks

(Continued from Page 1, Column 3) theatrical marketing and distribution.

Atlantic chairman Tom Coleman is expected to be chairman/chief exec of the new entity, while Prism topper Barry Collier will act as chief operating officer. Indication that the merger process is still ongoing occurred at the press gathering.

When Coleman responded that a company name had not been chosen, Collier chimed in that the surviving entity listed on the American Stock Exchange will be billed Atlantic Entertainment Group.

Both exes agreed that no "heavy" staff cuts are anticipated, as, per Collier, there's "almost no management overlap." Coleman noted, however, there "will be some overhead savings in marrying the two companies."

New company is slated to receive a cash infusion of around \$60,000,000 in new financing arranged via L.F. Rothschild Ladenburg Thalman and CL Global (a division of film financing fixture Credit Lyonnais). Actual merger will be in the form of a stock swap between the two companies. Ratio of shares exchanging hands is "close to being determined," per L.F. Rothschild managing director Joel Reader, who was on hand for a post-announcement interview. He said the company is looking at a number of financing options, including junk bonds, preferred stock or offering equity investment via private placement.

Collier, who said there will be no additional public offering, said Prism cofounder and chairman Paul Levinson "won't be actively involved" post merger. Plans call for

a new nine-member board, he added.

Directly affected by the merger is Paramount Pictures, which had deals to handle homevid release on many Atlantic pix in the can; they're also tied to broadcast and nontheatrical distribution of Atlantic pix. Par pact, which was supposed to run three years, "basically ran to term," according to Atlantic film/tv prez Jonathan Dana, who said contract terms with Par foreclose any disclosure of the end of the agreement.

Last titles Paramount Home Video will handle are Atlantic titles produced "roughly before the end of last year," per Dana. That includes "1969" and "Patty Hearst," an official competition pic at the festival here.

It's understood, however, that Paramount's rights to already licensed titles are sown up at least two years hence.

Outlining new company's homevid strategy, Collier stresses that with the current emphasis on "depth of copy" in "A" titles at the retail end, company will have the luxury of a considerably larger library with Atlantic's pix in the larder. He's mulling two separate labels — Atlantic will supply "A" titles, while Prism will continue to carry lower-priced "B" titles.

On the international side things will remain more or less status quo, with Atlantic's v.p. Jules Stein, who'll continue to handle placements of product to offshore distributors. On the video end, Prism only has offshore vid distribution in Japan, a joint venture with Gaga Communications.

Coleman insisted a big part of the merger strategy is a concerted thrust into tv production and distribution, in which both companies already have entre via subsids. Prism's Fox/Lorber Associates goes with it, and per F/L prez Richard Lorber, his entity will continue to handle international tv and homevid rights that are available, and noted it'll "likely" launch a new domestic tv syndication effort with the Atlantic titles that become available.

Atlantic also owns 50% of television producer Atlantic/Kushner-Locke. Coleman admitted, "We've been discussing selling (A/K-L) to a third party, but it's not decided. If we don't sell (their half), we may continue the status quo."

CORRECTION

Obituary for silent screen star Billie Rhodes did not mention that she is survived by four sisters, six brothers and 11 nieces and nephews.

Cannes Briefs

Nastassja Kinski replaced Isabella Rossellini as a jury member of the festival. "Kinski was always our first choice but she had declined. Rossellini accepted but then couldn't get out of a filming commitment. As it worked out, Kinski was in France and free," said fest topper Pierre Viot.

Italo director Michelangelo Antonioni, inactive for several years, will be going back to work in 1989 on a new project, "La Ciurma," to be produced by Italian government film unit Istituto Luce. Martin Scorsese will act as exec producer and Roy Scheider will have one of the leads, per Ivo Grippio, head of Ente Gestione Cinema and charged with promoting Italo pix here.

Production on "City Blue," produced by Germany's Lisa Film, is slated for a June start in West Berlin under producer Karl Spiels and director Peter Patzak. Cast includes Michael York, Frank Stallone, Morgan Fairchild, German thesp Armin Mueller-Stahl and Allegra Curtis, 21-year-old daughter of Tony Curtis and Christine Kaufmann.

Avenue Entertainment's debut feature, the competing entry "Passion's Island," will have its theatrical debut July 15 in an exclusive booking at Cinema 1 in New York, with two Aussie pix, "Ground Zero" and "The Year My Voice Broke" to follow from the fledgling distrib.

Andy Sidaris' adventure film "Savage Beach" is set to roll in July. Pic will star Dona Speir, who previously toplined in Sidaris' "Picasso Trigger," set to open on showcase in New York in early June.

"Chocolat," French competition entry, has been acquired by Shani Films from MK2 for Israel before the fest.



JOE LERER

Co-starring as Oz Stevens

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- Loni Anderson • Joe Penny • Chris Nyby
- Hans Proppe • Judy Polone • Jody Paonessa
- Suzy Beugen • Abra Edelman
- Craig Jones/Actors Exchange, S.F.
- The Phoenix Entertainment Group
- and the rest of the cast & crew of

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Parretti Recharges Cannon

(Continued from Page 14, Column 3) this year, Globus and Parretti noted the hefty expenses associated with legal hassles and the expensive debentures taken on to finance the acquisition for \$275,000,000 of Thorn-EMI's Screen Entertainment Ltd. subsidiary (a company Globus described as five times bigger than Cannon at the time of acquisition).

Globus also attributed some problems to the intransigence of the U.S. banks, which he said would not allow Cannon to open its own video company; "they wanted us to continue relying upon presales," according to Globus.

The Cannon Entertainment president estimated that Cannon had lost (as an opportunity cost) about \$100,000,000 since 1979 by not selling its own videos worldwide.

(Company was briefly in the video business as a 50/50 partner with HBO in HBO/Cannon Video, inherited when it bought Screen Ent. Ltd., but its own productions were committed to rival video distributors and Cannon subsequently sold its half interest in the firm to HBO.)

Globus announced plans for Cannon, following restructuring, to open its own video companies, beginning in the U.S. and United Kingdom, spreading later internationally. "We can get double ourselves via video compared to presales," he declared. Both he and Golan emphasized that despite varying theatrical results, Cannon titles were consistently performing well in homevideo both in the U.S. and abroad.

Peter Besas and Hank Werba contributed to this report.