

'Partridge Family' Rings the Bell



Larry Uttal

■ NEW YORK—Television and motion pictures have played an integral part in the continuing success story of Bell Records. The fantastic record sales of TV's "The Partridge Family" resulted in one of the biggest singles of 1970. "I Think I Love You," now over the three million mark, and "The Partridge Family Album," which sold over one million units.

Film soundtracks have contributed many valuable additions to the growing Bell album catalog. In the coming months Bell will be releasing the soundtracks of "Vanishing Point" and the re-issue of "Lawrence of Arabia."

Larry Uttal, President of Bell, sees the key to the successful promotion of television and movie music totally dependent on the "degree of involvement." According to Uttal, that is the crucial factor.

Enthusiasm First Essential

"The first essential," Uttal says, "is our enthusiasm for the project. The next steps are to spread that excitement to everyone we will be working with, come up with a program and stay with it."

Perhaps the best example of this technique in action is "The Partridge Family."

"From the moment we first were told of the concept of 'The Partridge Family,'" Uttal stated, "we had the feeling that it was a winner and that its potential was staggering. We believed that Wes Farrell was the producer perfectly suited, by inclination and ability, to 'The Partridge Family' and we were elated when his enthusiasm matched ours.

"We did a series of teasers mailings, one week apart, that went to disc jockeys, music editors and distributors. The fan magazine publicity was un-

believable. Every one of them was filled with photos and stories on David Cassidy, building an advance demand that later surprised everyone by its enormity.

"We knew that the best promotional people that we could put on the road for 'The Partridge Family' were Shirley Jones and David Cassidy and that the best sales tool for the show was the program itself. We arranged with Screen Gems and ABC Television to give Shirley and David enough time off from filming to allow us to tour them to major cities along with a pilot of the first show. We arranged for massive press, deejay and retailer parties, complete with a screening, at each stop. We distributed records and press kits.

Advertising Extensive

"Our advertising was extensive both in and out of the trade, on radio and in print, and we provided in-store promotional aids to all retailers and rack jobbers. A special four-color sleeve was designed to cash in on the identification that was building through publicity."

Uttal added: "All of this was going before the show was ever seen by the public. We were totally involved because we were completely enthusiastic. We sincerely believed that we had a hit property.

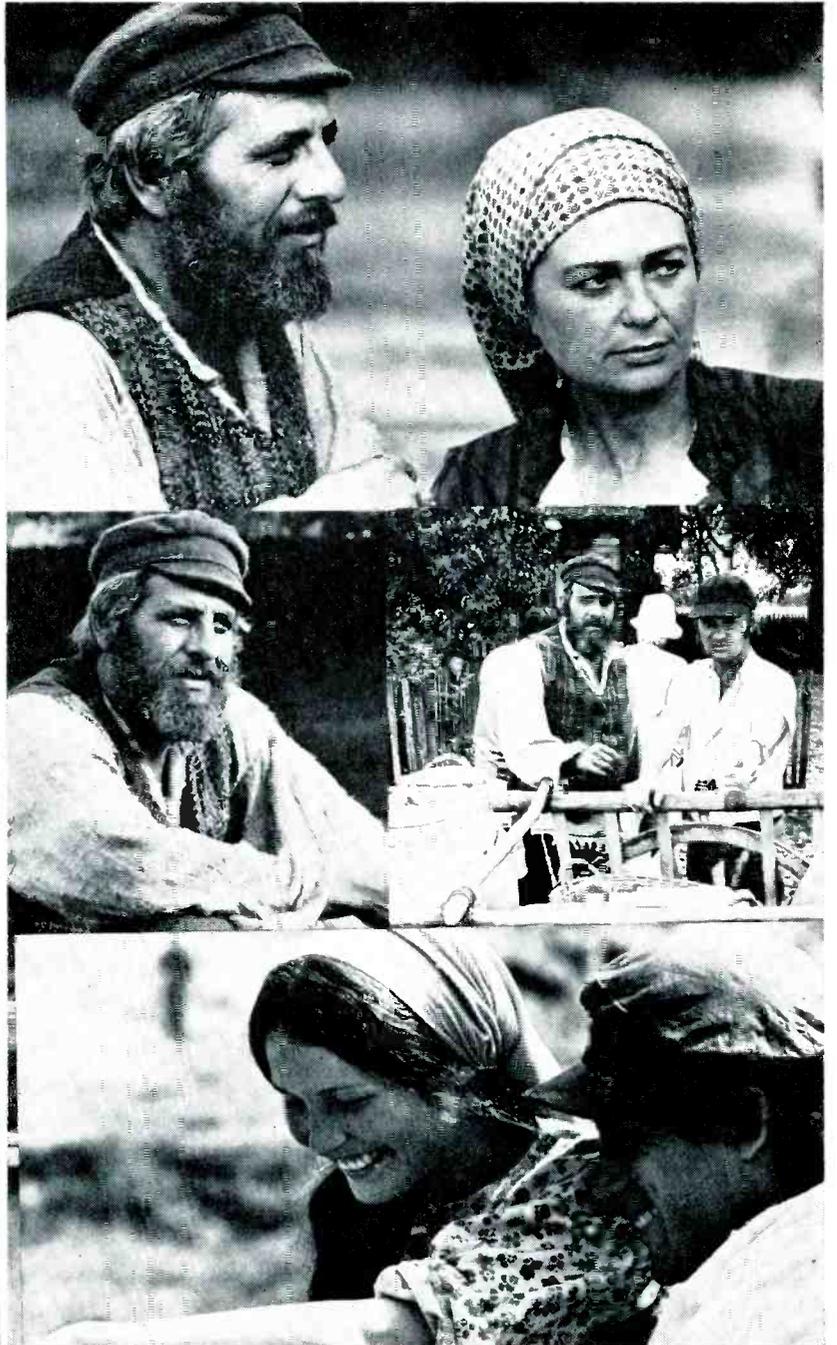
"Campaigns vary. We have never done exactly the same things twice, and I don't believe we ever will. The thinking of our promotion and sales departments is far too creative for that. We analyze a film or TV show and after we have determined the market it is going to reach and the nature of its appeal, we start making our plans. What will always be a constant—if it's on the Bell label—is our total involvement and enthusiasm."

Leonetti Back in U. S.

■ After nearly a three-year absence from America, Tommy Leonetti is back and opened March 3 at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas.

Leonetti has been spending his time Down Under where he was star of "The Tommy Leonetti Show" and became Australia's top-rated television personality and highest paid performer.

Tevye and His Friends



Above, scenes around the "Fiddler on the Roof" set in Hollywood. The United Artists film (and soundtrack album) of the Bock and Harnick Broadway smash is set to have its world premiere on Nov. 3, 1971. Pictured, from top left: Topol, Norma Crane, the leads; Topol; Topol and director Norman Jewison; and couple from the picture.

RCA Releases Japanese 'Hair' LP

■ NEW YORK—Late in 1970, RCA Records' Japanese licensee, the Victor Co. of Japan, Ltd., recorded and released the Tokyo production of the Tribal Love-Rock Musical, "Hair." As part of RCA's press service in America, the Japanese album was sent to American reviewers as an example of some of the rock recording being done outside the United States, and to add to their collections of unusual recordings.

At that time, RCA Records had no plans to release the album in the United States.

Almost immediately, favorable reviews of the album started appearing in many of

the nation's underground and regular press. Among these was a piece in the Dec. 26 Saturday Review, in which Ellen Sander described the album as: "... one of THE rock albums of the year."

Significant Response

Following closely on the heels of the reviews came significant consumer response. Requests for the album built to a point where RCA felt that the album warranted release. Japanese "Hair" is being released as a February Special, getting to the stores as soon as possible. The album is the score from "Hair" done in English and Japanese.