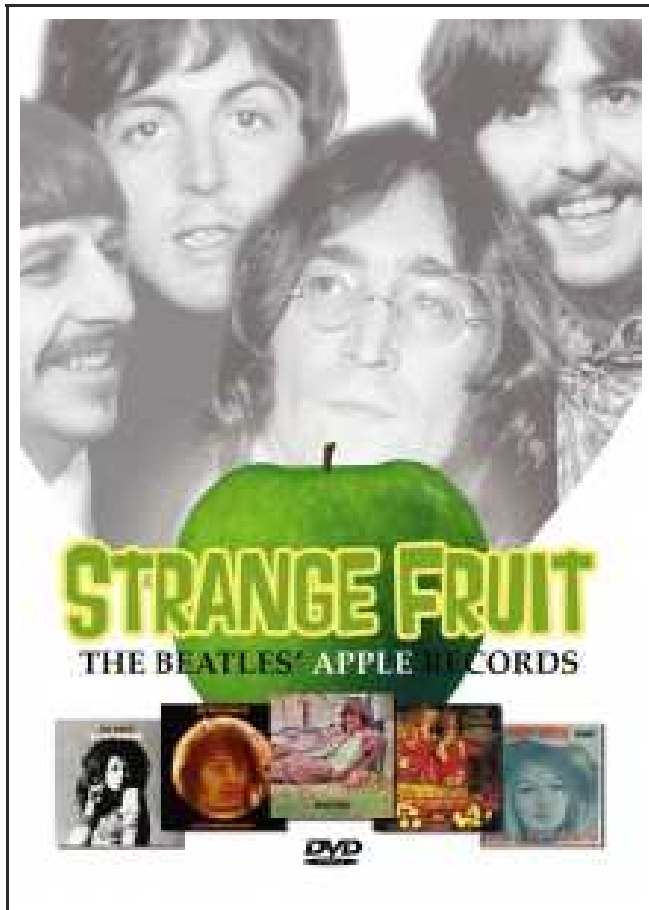


PIGSHIT: "A" IS FOR APPLE, "B" IS BIZARRE

Posted on **April 27, 2012** by **Gary Pig Gold**



As hard as it may seem today to fathom, there was a time, in the not too distant analog past, when starting up a record company required more – *much* more – than just a domain name and the nearest GarageBand™ software.

Yes, there was a time when starting up a record company required actual brick and mortar (or at least some office space), telephones, pens, pencils, typewriters and reams of 20 lb stationery (plus desks to put them all on and, ideally, a staff of people to use them) not to mention, in the case of at least one of the two record companies mentioned below, a full Cordon Bleu kitchen staff equipped with a £600-a-month-at-least liquor allowance.

Oh. And many, many talented musicians, songwriters and singers with access to recording studios full of the brightest and most creative engineers, arrangers and/or producers available, I should most definitely add.

A pair of wonderful new DVDs from Sexy Intellectual spotlight two such maverick,

pioneering operations from the Golden Age of Boutique Labels. We learn both of these companies were bravely and boldly artist-launched, artist-operated, and above all artist-friendly, both had quite specific audiences to target with their product, and that one of these two labels amazingly continues to run successfully to this very day ...though lately their time is much more often spent in the courtroom as opposed to the recording studio.

In a virtual nutshell then, Here's the stories:

DATE OF INCORPORATION:

APPLE: January 1968, London, England.

BIZARRE: February 1968, Los Angeles, California.

CHIEF OPERATING DIRECTORS:

APPLE: John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Richard Starkey (MBE)

BIZARRE: Frank Zappa, Herb Cohen (mgr)

INSPIRATION:

APPLE: The Beatles needed to quickly spend a lot of untaxed income after the death of Brian Epstein.

BIZARRE: Frank Zappa needed to quickly gain control of his career after MGM/Verve forgot [sic?] to renew his initial recording contract.

START-UP CAPITAL:

APPLE: £2,000,000.00

BIZARRE: 200 shares of no par value common stock.

CORPORATE LOGO:

APPLE: A green Granny Smith apple.

BIZARRE: A black vacuum pump.

EARLY STATEMENT OF INTENT:

APPLE: "It's business concerning records, films, electronics, and as a sideline, whatever it's called, manufacturing, whatever. But we want to set up a system whereby people who just want to make a film about anything don't have to go on their knees in somebody's office. Probably yours." (John Lennon)

BIZARRE: "We make records that are a little different. We present musical and sociological material which the important record companies would probably not allow you to hear." (Frank Zappa)



LAUNCHED IN AMERICA WITH:

APPLE: John Lennon and Paul McCartney appearing on *The Tonight Show*.

BIZARRE: Wild Man Fischer appearing on *Laugh-In*.

AFFILIATE LABELS:

APPLE: Zapple Records.

BIZARRE: Straight Records.

OTHER DIVISIONS:

APPLE: Apple Electronics, Apple Films, Apple Management, Apple Publicity, Apple Publishing, Apple Overseas, Apple Retail, Apple Tailoring (Civil and Theatrical).

BIZARRE: United Mutations (fan club), NT&B (Nifty Tough & Bitchen PR), Intercontinental Absurdities (holding company).

TALENT ROSTER:

APPLE: The Beatles, Mary Hopkin, Jackie Lomax, The Iveys *aka* Badfinger, (White)

Trash, (the incredible) Brute Force, James Taylor, John Tavener, Billy Preston, The Modern Jazz Quartet, The Black Dyke Mills Band, The Plastic Ono Band, The Elastic Oz Band, The Hot Chocolate Band, The Radha Krishna Temple (London), Doris Troy, Ronnie Spector, Ravi Shankar, Yoko Ono, Wings, Mortimer, Chris Hodge, The Sundown Playboys (at 78 rpm!), Elephant's Memory, Lon and Derrek Van Eaton, David Peel and the Lower East Side.

BIZARRE: Frank Zappa and The Mothers of Invention, Sandy Hurvitz, Wild Man Fischer, Alice Cooper, Judy Henske, Jerry Yester, Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band, Mayf Nutter, Jeff Simmons, The GTO's, The Whistlers, The Persuasions, Rosebud, Junier Mintz, Tim Dawe, Tim Buckley, Lord Buckley, Lenny Bruce.

MISSED OUT ON SIGNING:

APPLE: Lord Buckley, Lenny Bruce, Grace Slick, Delaney and Bonnie, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Fleetwood Mac, Solomon Burke, David Bowie, The Turtles, The Easybeats, The Band, Yes, MC5, Timon, Harry Nilsson, Jon Isherwood, Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs, Kenneth Patchen, Ken Kesey, Ken Weaver, Ed Sanders, Charles Bukowski, Charles Olson, Richard Brautigan, Michael McClure, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Henry Miller, Anaïs Nin, Aram Saroyan, Anne Waldman, Gregory Corso, Diane di Prima, Simon Vinkenoog.

BIZARRE: The Shaggs.

EARLY CATCH PHRASES:

APPLE: "It'll be like a sort of Western communism."

BIZARRE: "Just what the world needs – another record company."

EARLY ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN:

APPLE: Boxed and hand-delivered their first four records to Prime Minister Harold Wilson, Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and even the Queen Mother.

BIZARRE: Took out full-page ads in comic books.

FIRST RELEASE:

APPLE: "Hey Jude" by The Beatles (on August 26, 1968)

BIZARRE: "The Circle" by Wild Man Fischer (on September 10, 1968)

RAREST RELEASE:



APPLE: The 1969 *Wall's Ice Cream* E.P. by The Iveys, James Taylor, Jackie Lomax and Mary Hopkin (available by mail-order only ...after you bought enough ice cream, that is).

BIZARRE: The 1969 Japanese "World New Rock" Series 2-LP (with die-cut slipcase obi cover and "a nifty 12-page book") pressing of the Mothers' *Uncle Meat* soundtrack – sort of – album (most recently for auction online with a starting bid of \$1,865.76 U.S.)

MOST UNIQUE RELEASE:

APPLE: "The King of Fuh" by Brute Force (1969)

BIZARRE: "I don't think *unique* is a strong enough word for *Trout Mask Replica*" (Mark Paytress, *Mojo Magazine*)

UNRELEASED:

APPLE: "The Lady Is A Champ" by Frank Sinatra, with new lyrics (e.g.: *She married Ringo, and she could have had Paul*) by Sammy Cahn (labeled Apple 1 and given to Maureen Starkey as a birthday present in 1968).

BIZARRE: *The History And Collected Improvisations Of The Mothers Of Invention* 12-LP (!!) box set (1970).

TOTAL RECORDS SOLD DURING FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION:

APPLE: at least 16,000,000

BIZARRE: well under 160,000

CROSSOVER:

APPLE: *Some Time In New York City* by John & Yoko and the Plastic Ono Band featured a full album side recorded live at the Fillmore East with Frank Zappa and the Mothers.

BIZARRE: *We're Only In It For The Money* by The Mothers Of Invention featured a full album cover parody of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* sanctioned by Paul McCartney.

MOST INTERESTING PEOPLE TO EVER GRACE THEIR OFFICES:

APPLE: Lauren Bacall (with her children), a bunch of Hell's Angels en route to "straighten out" Czechoslovakia, the "Original Shoot 'em Up Head 'em Off At The Pass Pardner Psychedelic Traveling Family Medicine Show" en route to the Fiji Islands to establish their own alternative universe (and hoping to pick up John & Yoko on the way), and this guy who kept visiting the Press Office claiming he was Adolf Hitler ("...oh Christ, not that arsehole again," complained Apple Press Officer Derek Taylor. "All right, send him up").

BIZARRE: Frank Zappa and The Mothers of Invention, Sandy Hurvitz, Wild Man Fischer, Alice Cooper, Judy Henske, Jerry Yester, Captain Beefheart and His Magic Band, Mayf Nutter, Jeff Simmons, The GTO's, The Whistlers, The Persuasions, Rosebud, Junier Mintz, Tim Dawe, Tim Buckley.

REASON FOR ORIGINAL DISSOLUTION OF COMPANY:

APPLE: The Beatles broke up and Paul McCartney sued them because he didn't like their new manager, who later sued them.

BIZARRE: Frank Zappa broke up The Mothers of Invention and then sued his manager, and then the Mothers of Invention sued Frank.

CHIEF OPERATING DIRECTORS WENT ON TO OWN AND OPERATE:

APPLE: Lenono Music, MPL Communications, Dark Horse Records, Ring O'Records.

BIZARRE: DiscReet, Zappa Records, Barking Pumpkin Records.

NUMBER OF ORIGINAL RELEASES STILL IN PRINT:

APPLE: 42

BIZARRE: 14

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED ADDITIONAL READING:

APPLE: *The Longest Cocktail Party* by Richard DiLello.

BIZARRE: *The Real Frank Zappa Book* by you-know-who.

CLOSING STATEMENTS:

APPLE: "Apple is losing money every week. If it carries on like this, all of us will be broke in six months. I'm down to my last £50,000." (John Lennon, 1969)

BIZARRE: "The richest people in the world aren't particularly smart or happy. And the happiest people in the world aren't particularly smart or rich. That leaves me making music." (Frank Zappa, 1979)

<http://www.seeofsound.com/p.php?s=SIDVD570>

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