Cover Story

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RICHARD BRANSON

Staff

V2 marks Richard Branson's re-entry into the record business. The company intends to combine the artist-friendly atmosphere of an independent label with the financial muscle and international marketing strength of a major label. To-date, V2 has opened offices in London, New York, Paris, Stockholm, Berlin, Sydney, Brussels and Holland with licensing partnerships in place in the Far East. V2 will sign artists directly as well as enter into partnerships with other independent labels. Such partnerships already include the Gee Street, Big Cat, and Flydaddy labels. In coming months, V2 will release recordings by Alice Temple, Stereophonics, Mercury Rev, High Llamas; Big Cat's Mary Coughlan and Addict; Flydaddy's Richard Davies and Syrup USA; and Gee Street's Gravediggaz, Headrillaz, RZA and PM Dawn.

DAN BECK - President, V2 Records



Dan was made President of V2 Records' North American Operations following twenty years with Epic Records. Most recently Epic's Senior Vice President of Marketing, he supervised campaigns for new and established artists, including Pearl Jam, Michael Jackson, Gloria Estefan, Luther Vandross, Sade, Indigo Girls, and Living Colour. Dan previously worked in a number of capacities for the label, including V.P. of Marketing, Director of Product Development and National Director of Publicity.

Dan was one of the original developers of promotional music video. He also launched the first major label publicity department in Nashville (CBS Nashville), working with such artists as George Jones, Tammy Wynette, and Charlie Rich. In the mid-70's, Dan received personal management experience at Leber-Krebs, guiding the careers of such artists as Aerosmith and Ted Nugent. Beck began his career as a freelance journalist for the national trade magazine, Record World. According to Richard Branson, "(Dan)

was our number one choice and it's good to be number one."

RICHARD SANDERS - General Manager, V2 Records



Prior to joining V2, for the past five years, Richard served as Arista Records' Vice President of Artist Development. This included coordination of Arista's developing artists roster as well as such established names as Whitney Houston, Sarah McLachan and Annie Lennox. He also supervised marketing for LaFace Records (Tony Braxton, TLC), Bad Boy Entertainment (Notorious B.I.G.), and Rowdy Records (Monica).

Another twenty-year veteran of the industry, Sanders founded Loud & Proud Management which he ran for eight years, guiding the careers of double platinum selling White Lion, gold status Planet P Project and Eric Gales. Concurrent with his management experience, Richard served as booking agent for the rock club, L'Amour. Earlier in his career, Sanders gained valuable experience as both as tour accountant and tour manager for artists such as Aerosmith, Ted Nugent, and Scorpions.

KATE HYMAN - Head of A&R, V2 Records



Since 1994, Kate has served as President of the independent music publishing companies Realization Music (co-founded with the late Denny Cordell) and In Bed Music. Artists signed to Realization/In Bed include Skeleton Key (Capitol), Chris Harford, Aster Aweke, Grandaddy (Will Records), and Marc Anthony Thompson (aka Chocolate Genius).

Previously, Hyman served as V.P. of A&R for the Imago Recording Company, where she signed Rollins Band, Paula Cole, Aimee Mann, Basshead, Maggie Estep, and Giant Sand. As V.P. of A&R Chrysalis Records (1987-90), Kate added Was Not Was, The Pursuit of Happiness, and Wartime (Henry Rollins) to the label. Hyman also held a senior A&R position at MCA Records (1984-87), where she inked The Breakfast Club, and Brenda K. Starr. Her career began at Ze Records, with the signing of Einsturzende Neubauten and Was Not Was. Kate has thus far brought 12Rods, Alice Temple, and Marc Anthony

Thompson to the V2 roster, as well as V2 International signings Grandaddy, and OP8 (Giant Sand/Lisa Germano).

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AL SMITH - Director of A&R, V2 Records



Al comes to V2 from Atlantic Records where, as an A&R Rep since 1991, he was responsible for signing Walt Mink, The Melvins, and Surgery, among others. Smith also hired producers and facilitated a number of recordings for the label. Prior to Atlantic, Al was an A&R assistant at Atco Records. Smith has also worked as house sound engineer for the rock venue, CBGB's in New York and studio assistant for The Record Plant recording studio. He also spent several years in personal management with Bill Graham Management, handling such artists as The Neville Brothers, Blues Traveler, Jill Sobule, and Joe Satriani. Al also acted as personal assistant to Bill Graham during the 1990 March on Washington Homeless Benefit.

DAVID STEEL - Vice President, V2 Music Publishing



Steel was most recently Sony Music's Vice President of A&R. In that capacity, he was active in the exploitation of Nile Rodgers and Solar Catalogues and worked closely with Mariah Carey, Spin Doctors, and Cyndi Lauper. David was also involved in signing the Fugees, Liz Phair, Maxwell, and Jeff Buckley to the Sony Music roster.

From 1983-93, Steel worked for Virgin Music (under the aegis of Richard Branson) as Senior Vice President/General Manager. He opened the North American office as a sub-publisher, handling all administration, and began signing American writers in 1987. His responsibilities included catalogue promotion to music supervisors, sample clearance, coordination of sheet music and personality folios as well as liaison with Virgin's foreign affiliates. He worked closely with C&C Music Factory, Deee-Lite, Soul

Il Soul, Nicky Holland, and many others. David began his publishing career at Chappell Music where he served as International Manager.

JON BAKER - President & Founder, Gee Street Records



John founded the innovative and successful Gee Street Records in 1986. Born in the UK, and influenced by the punk movement, Baker submerged himself in the rising fashion, art and club scenes in Europe and New York. After working with artists such as Sade, Spandau Ballet, Queen Latifah, and the Jungle Brothers in the early 80's, he opened a recording studio on London's Gee Street. The studio developed into a dance label with the help of local DJ, Richie Rich. In its previous joint venture with Island Records, the label achieved 4.5 million in album sales worldwide including hits with such artists as The Stereo MC's and PM Dawn. Gee Street is now an important part of the V2 family.

NEIL ROBERTSON - Senior Director of A&R, Gee Street Records



Neil joined the label last year and has since overseen A&R and marketing on the new Jungle Brothers release and the upcoming album by Gravediggaz. He also signed dancehall DJ, Yankee B., and Stone Love. Prior to Gee Street, Robertson was label manager for Island Jamaica, handling artist development, marketing and A&R for artists including Luciano, Beenieman and Chakademus & Pliers. Neil began his industry career in 1993 with Stepson Music Entertainment where he was involved in marketing and A&R of such artists as Miss Jones, Pure Soul, and comedian Paul Mooney.

MIKE GRIFFITHS - CFO, V2 Records MELINDA CODY - Head of Business Affairs BOB CAHILL - Head of Sales, V2 Records SANDY SAWOTKA - Head of Media Relations, V2 Records

