



1220 Broadway, Suite 605
 New York, NY 10001
 (212) 947-2791

INTERVIEW WITH SERGIO COSSA

Q: How did you get into the business, Sergio?

A: I was born in Milan, Italy....I started working as a D.J. in Sweden and stayed three years there, ten years in England, and then another six or seven years in Italy. Then I went into radio and television...From the TV show Baby Records was started. I stayed there for five years and then we, as Baby Records, decided to open an operation in the United States. So we formed Emergency, which originally was a partnership owned by Baby Records. After six months, my partners and I began to have differences on how to operate the business in the U.S. so I bought all of the Emergency stock.

Q: When was that?

A: The company was formed in 1979 and in 1980 I bought the stock.

Q: You said you had differences with your partners...what were they?

A: I felt that the marketing, distribution, and promotion in the U.S. is completely different then it is in Europe...Since I was living here I was more aware of what changes had to be made.

Q: So was your main thrust to produce records here in the States?

A: Yes, I think that everywhere in the world they still look at the U.S. If you have a big record here, they tend to follow the trend...whereas visa versa is a little more difficult.

Q: How did you know that you would be able to hear what would work in this market?

A: In this business you never know....if it was mathematical everyone would be in it.

Q: What was the first project you took on when you took over the company?

A: The first record...I cut in Italy but for the U.S. market. The group was Kano and it was a big hit.

Q: Why did you go back to cut it in Italy...for the expenses?

A: Not merely for the expenses but for the connections...I had been working in Italy for a long time so I knew all the musicians, all the producers, all the studios...It was easier for me, at least from the beginning, to produce with people I already knew.

Q: What came after Kano?

A: After Kano we did mainly 12 inches, sometimes producing overseas but gradually producing more in the United States. I would say about 80% here and 20% overseas.

Q: In looking for material to record, what do you look for?

A: I mainly look for a traditional song with a verse, a chorus, a bridge, and a hook. Then you can dress the song the way you want it...but the bottom line is a good song.

Q: What is your present release schedule?

A: At this point, about one record per month.

Q: And you are using primarily independent distribution?

A: Yes....but with Shannon, at a certain point we decided that it was wise for us to sell the rights to the 7 inch and the album to a major company because we knew we had something that could be very big and that we could not bring the record all the way home without the help and the power of a major. So we turned over the rights to the 7 inch and the LP to Atlantic-Mirage but kept the rights to the 12 inch. That was the first deal done like that. As a matter of fact, we have the latest 12 inch out on Shannon right now which is #1 on the Dance Charts, and they have out the 7 inch and the album.

Q: What about international distribution for your label?

A: The only label distribution deal we have is with Bellaphone for Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The rest of the world is mainly on a record by record basis.

Q: What about subpublishing?

A: It's the same situation. I don't want to make an overall deal yet...I think, business-wise, it's better to have greater exposure in order to cut a good subpublishing deal.

Q: What are your thoughts on the size of your company?

A: I intend to keep the size decently small. Right now we are four people all together, but four very good people. We can manage to do all the jobs...I don't think it is wise to expand right now.

Q: What is your next release?

A: The next project is a guy named Jimmy Tunnell. We are in the process of releasing the 12 inch ourself and doing the same thing we did with Shannon, possibly with MCA.

Q: What about video...Are you doing videos on your artists?

A: On Shannon, we're doing the video through Atlantic. One of the advantages we have in the deal there is that they take care of all those promotional aspects.

Q: What about your new act...are you going to do a video on him?

A: I'm going to wait and see how the record does. In my opinion, the way that the video situation is now, if you see that the record needs a video, you can have a video very well done in two weeks. From the dance point of view, you can anticipate the breaking of a record in a few weeks....actually for dance purposes you don't really need a video. You need the video to cross it over...So we can at least feel if we have a dance record first.

Q: Do you intend to stay primarily in the dance market?

A: Yes, no question about it....You can change the name, but the danceable record will always have a market.

EMERGENCY STAFF

Sergio Cossa - President
Curtis Urbina - Executive Vice President
Richard Weinman - National Promotion Director
Constance Sullivan - International Administration and Office Manager



EMERGENCY ROSTER

Shannon
Xena

Jimmy Tunnell
C.O.D.

Chemise
Marla Adler