



Enrique Iglesias Casts His Magic Spell

by Thessa Mooij

AMSTERDAM - During his stint at a Miami college, Enrique Iglesias started writing songs and performing in secret. He wanted to develop his musical talent far away from the high profile media buzz surrounding his father, Julio. He sent his demo tapes around, signed 'Enrique'. Straight after the Fonovisa release of his self-titled album and its first single *Si Tu Te Vas*, the 21-year old found himself on a rollercoaster ride, selling over 1.5 million albums in Latin America. MCA signed him for the world outside of Latin America, Portugal and Spain. Iglesias' vocal and songwriting qualities are both romantic and intelligent at the same time, a combination which should win Europeans of all ages over in no time.

When he walked onstage at a festival in Croatia, to perform for thousands of people who had never heard of him, it only took him a couple of minutes to get the crowd all excited. According to MCA Italy marketing manager **Marco Zischka**, "in person, he is quite shy, but on stage he transfers something and gets the audience involved. It's some sort of magic, which only a few artists have. That was my final confirmation that he has the potential to become an international super star. His looks, his talent and determination will enable him to reach a lasting success in the years to come. Singing in four languages will help him achieve international success."

MCA director of international marketing **Kate Farmer** received early

commitment from all territories after the signing last April. A large part of the buzz around Iglesias stems from his 9 weeks stint at number 1 of Billboard's Hot Latin Tracks chart. "We want to build the European story on the Latin American success," says Farmer. "For me, as a marketing person, it's exciting to realise that everybody wants him and works hard on setting up excellent campaigns." Iglesias recorded a Portuguese version of his album. France and the Benelux will work with the original Spanish version of the album, while the rest of Europe decided to go with the new version, which has six Italian tracks. "We left it up to the territories. Once the fan base is built up, we can always switch albums."

The Paris-based RTL and NRJ networks put *Si Tu Te Vas* on their playlists straight away, which Farmer cites as being "quite an unusual response for France." According to label manager **Sophie Louvet**, "the French media are usually very slow. Sometimes it takes six months to get airplay or a review. But RTL and our campaign partner NRJ are playing it twice a day and it's growing. We're including every kind of format in our radio promotion. Enrique has an appeal to young and older people. He has a

very strong image: he will do more than provide a romantic summer hit. Ultimately, we intend to sell one million copies."



ACE network RTL head of music **Monique Le Marcis** is one of Enrique's early fans. "I have followed him since he was doing so well in the

Billboard chart. I asked someone who went to the Bahamas to get me a copy of the album and I was really surprised by it. We decided to put *Si Tu Te Vas* on the air immediately after its release. We have to settle him with the single and then he has to come back to win over the French public." At press time, EHR network NRJ was playing the single twice a day, but VP **Max Guazzini** is expecting to play it three to four times a day very soon. "For us it's a big summer hit. You can listen to it on the beach; everybody will like it. The French like hearing latin repertoire in the summer."

German product manager **Katharina Landahl** is definitely thinking beyond the summer of 1996. "His potential is much bigger than just a romantic summer hit. He is a great songwriter with a very good voice and fantastic looks. I guess fans of his father could buy the album too, but we are aiming at the teeny fans, including the ones who are not buying Eros Ramazzotti anymore because he got too rock oriented. As we want the single to chart and reach the single buying audience, we will concentrate more on EHR. But our radio promotion team will be supported by the Splendido company in dealing with ACE stations."

Belgian Blunk From New Blue Blot Line Up

by Marc Maes



BRUSSELS - "With this new, self-titled album, Blue Blot takes the funk out of the "blunk," says Klepto Management's **Wilfried Brits**, when asked to describe the sound of the *Blue Blot* album (Klepto Records/EMI). The band was founded

almost ten years ago and soon made its way by offering a quite unique musical blend of rock, blues and funk: "blunk" was born. With the new album, released in Belgium in June, the band embarks on a national summer festival tour with international plans for the fall.

The group, fronted by the late Luke Walter jr., first reached a broader audience with the 1991 album *Bridge To Your Heart* (BMG). The album sold over 30,000 copies, and its title-track, produced by Vaya Con Dios' Dani Klein was the perfect introduction of "blunk". In 1992, Blue Blot released *Where Do You Go*, followed by the much acclaimed double *Blue Blot Live*, capturing the band's finest moments on stage. A further career step included their collaboration with Tony Joe White at the famous Muscle Shoals Sound studios in Alabama.

While BMG Ariola set the marks for the band's adventure abroad with the *September* compilation, singer Luke Walter jr. became seriously ill, leading the cancellation of all international plans. The singer left the band last year. Former American Gypsy leadsinger Steve Clisby joined the band both as singer and co-producer.

The album *Blue Blot* was released under a new deal with EMI Music Publishing and EMI Records. EMI Music Publishing Belgium GM **Guy van Handenhove** was actively involved in the production. "Whereas EMI Records take on distribution and promotion, we teamed up with Klepto to co-finance the recording of the album. In order to create international pre-release awareness, we presented Blue Blot at the global EMI Music Publishing MD meeting in June and we plan to do an extensive mailing to both our international partners and radio stations."

Although Blue Blot already established themselves in Belgium, Luxembourg and parts of Germany, Van Handenhove admits that the new album is pretty much like starting from scratch.

The same idea is partially echoed by the band's manager **Wilfried Brits**. "I strongly believe that the band's live shows will convince the audience of Blue Blot's fresh approach, although a frontman like Luke Walter jr. is hard to replace. But when the band will play abroad, it all comes down to the music the band plays today. And Blue Blot has become more funkier than ever - we're aiming for a younger audience with a

more danceable sound." Brits says that the international fall release of the album will be backed by a concert tour. "The band's international career is a priority, and the current deal with EMI allows us to have maximum collaboration," he adds.

EMI A&R and product manager **Guus Fluit** says that, in order to minimise consumer confusion, the company was on a difficult mission. "We backed the album release with a radio campaign on BRTN's Radio 1, Radio Donna and Studio Brussel. The single *So Lonely* enjoys national radio support, with both RTBF's Fréquence Wallonie and AC/EHR formatted BRTN Radio 2 providing airplay." RTBF Radio 21 DJ **Marc Ysaye** says he's "happy that the band managed to survive after Luke Walter jr. left." According to Ysaye, who put both single and album on his daily morning show playlist, "Wilfried Brits surely played a strong role in this. The new black singer sounds somewhat like Luke, meaning that Luke has always sounded black... Despite Luke's legacy as former Blue Blot singer, I'm convinced that the band's live appearances will make the audience follow Blue Blot in future."