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DICK CLARK: THE ENIGMA BEHIND THE 'BANDSTAND'

By LEE GRANT

The image: Dick Clark, perpetually young, perpetually personable, perpetually visible on a multitude of TV shows. He remains fixed in the national psyche behind that "American Bandstand" podium.

But, following a score of interviews with people around him, another Dick Clark emerges, a man of great personal and monetary ambition, a man of temperament, a loner whom few people know well, few understand. This Dick Clark remains a puzzle.

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Up front, there is Clark the conglomerate producer: "We do daytime TV, prime-time TV, cable TV, syndication," he said, "motion pictures, theater, radio, lounge shows in Nevada."

There is Clark the inerudite author, offering simple-minded advice in his latest book, "Looking Great, Staying Young": "Some say use a circular motion with a hair dryer, but I am one who prefers a back-and-forth motion."

There is Clark the enduring host of "Bandstand," playing records for 25 years while kids danced, protecting the TV show like a doting parent: "I feel about 'American Bandstand' like I would a member of my family. I'm sentimental about it. It was the beginning of everything for me."

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GEORGE ROSE / Los Angeles Times

For 25 years Dick Clark has been introducing acts on "American Bandstand," often surrounded by his loyal fans—as above on a recent show.

PISSARRO EXPLORED

By WILLIAM WILSON

BOSTON—To radical generations of late 19th-Century French artists, Camille Pissarro was always there, always old, respected, reassuring and perhaps somewhat taken for granted.

They styled him a Jewish patriarch, a saint, even "the good God." His role was clearly parental, so some of his friends were affectionately annoyed when he tried new things. He was Paul Gauguin's mentor and absorbed some Post-Impressionist ideas. In his mid-50s he became, for a time, a disciple of the pointillism of young Georges Seurat. His peer "children" didn't like that much. Parents aren't supposed to change.

Today they are calling him "The Unexplored Impressionist" in a revelatory survey exhibition visiting the Museum of Fine Arts here through Aug. 9.

It celebrates the 150th anniversary of his birth with more than 90 paintings, 100 prints and drawings, plus fans, painted ceramics, and memorabilia. It was orga-

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TWO FACES OF SPOLETO USA

By MARTIN BERNHEIMER

CHARLESTON, S.C.—Spoleto USA, Gian Carlo Menotti's brave and not-so-little festival of the arts in this hypnotically beautiful 18th-Century city, has many faces. Perhaps too many.

It is, after all, a 17-day haven for major as well as minor concerts, a showcase for visiting dance companies, an elaborate operatic production apparatus, an institution that puts on interesting plays and houses fascinating art exhibits, a sponsor for jazz and country-music extravaganzas, and a generous general source, as it were, of innocent merriment.

The so-called serious Spoleto offerings are the official Menotti-sanctioned efforts that attract glamorous audiences and fetch relatively high ticket prices. On any given day, there may be as many as five or six such events—in the handsome and tiny Dock Street Theater, in the neo-hideous and barn-like municipal auditorium, in a renovated movie palace, on a nearby campus lawn, in several of the city's 180

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THE ENIGMA OF DICK CLARK

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There is Clark, 51, "America's oldest living teen-ager," as he has forever been tagged ("My age is a matter of great speculation"), feverishly searching for the fountain of youth: "I want to look good, I want to look young," Clark has written in his books. "I want to think young. I want to be as young as I can be until the day I die . . ."

And somewhere in all that is Clark the man, workaholic, yearning for respect via the accumulation of money, a demanding employer in charge of all that emanates from showcase offices in Burbank, a tough professional adversary who can hold a grudge.

He has few intimate friends and those who have known him for years seldom get close. Three marriages (the latest has lasted four years) and three children (one by his first wife, two by his second) seem to have mellowed him. But there is still the fire of the man who arose un-

Dick Clark at 1960 payola hearing.

scathed from the payola scandals of 20 years ago (when many in broadcasting were charged with accepting money or gifts to play certain records) to create a multifaceted, multimillion-dollar company bearing his name.

Catch up with Clark for a moment on the road in Reno, introducing rock 'n' roll acts from the past. This is the lucrative little sidelight called the "Good Ol' Rock 'n' Roll" show that plays about 12 engagements a year including dates at hotels, amusement parks and state fairs. Freddie Cannon ("Tallahassee Lassie") was there and Little Anthony ("Tears on My Pillow") and the Shirelles ("Soldier Boy") re-creating their oldies but goodies.

In it, Clark served as a tour guide back to the '50s and '60s, complete with home movies of old "Bandstand" shows and other scenes from an era past: "All you guys will go home and have dreams of Annette Funicello," he told the audience. The half-filled Friday dinner show house at the Nugget in Sparks was into it—laughing at Clark's jokes about "whatever happened to the fine art of unfastening a bra," applauding in recognition of each ancient rock 'n' roll hit, engaging in repartee with the host.

Why does Clark still get on a Friday afternoon flight to Reno and host rock 'n' roll shows? "The money," he said, "is very good and it's fun."

Money is a factor that drives Clark in a way that even his friends don't understand. He is independently wealthy enough to spend the rest of his days at an enormous new seaside home in Malibu ("bigger and better" than the old one in Malibu, said an associate) shared with wife Kari.

A former employee of Clark (when he had offices on the Sunset Strip) recalled the boss saying one time, "I'm the whore of Sunset Boulevard. I'll do anything for a buck."

Clark couldn't recall using that phrase but acknowledged another one, "I'm a commercial whore." That means, he said, that he was not above producing any kind of show that stood to make money.

"From the time I was a kid," said Clark, "money has been important to me. I only began to get a modicum of respect when people knew I was well-to-do. Before that, I was just a guy playing a bunch of records with kids dancing . . . money is a factor that drives me; why I'm into so many things.

"I don't ever want anyone to say, 'Let's have a benefit for that poor guy' or 'I wonder what he's doing now' "

. . . in 1968.

There is a yearning for esteem from his professional peers: "I would like recognition for having done something other than Clearasil commercials all my life," he wrote in a candid autobiography called "Rock, Roll & Remember."

It's a reason that the tentacles of Dick Clark Productions encompass such a variety of projects. The image of the "American Bandstand" host is one thing, but putting together a No. 1-rated TV show like "Murder in Texas" is something else.

The drive, however, has cost him. Clark says his incessant work habits contributed to the failure of his previous marriages. It has also left little time for meaningful friendships. Many people know Clark professionally, few know him personally and well.

"I go back 25 years with Dick Clark," said singer Dion DiMucci ("Abraham, Martin and John"). "We are friends but I really don't know all that much about him."

Said Larry Klein, producer of "Bandstand" and other Clark shows, who has been part of the company for nine years, "Dick is the best, most beautiful man in the world to work for. We go out to dinner, we talk about world problems. Being personally close to him? Well, not really.

"I don't know anybody who is. It's not that he's aloof, it's that he's forever on the job. I work with him, travel with him, but there's a lot of his life I know nothing about."

Clark carries a reputation for honesty, fair play, professionalism. There are also documented bursts of temper, particularly when he was misinformed on a matter or when there was a foul-up during a show.

Those from his past like performers Bobby Lewis ("Tossin' and Turnin' ") or Dobie Gray ("The In Crowd") or Gary U.S. Bonds ("Quarter to Three") and those who've worked with him more recently like Klein or disc jockey Robert W. Morgan (host for a year on the Clark-produced "In Concert" series) speak of him only in glowing terms.

"I have never heard anybody badmouth Dick Clark," said Morgan, "and if somebody's getting bad-mouthed in this business you hear it real quickly. He has the respect."

Said Lewis, "If you never had a brother and always wanted one, Dick is the guy. He was the first man in show business to give me an honest wage."

Clark's ventures into the literary world seem like hollow and indulgent exercises in ego. The two most recent books

. . . in 1973.

—"Dick Clark's Program for Success in Your Business and Personal Life" and "Looking Great, Staying Young"—are gorged with repetitious aphorisms, simplistic, cliche-type pointers.

There is a badgering to look young, a fixation on the physical and the external and little credit given for traits like intelligence and character.

Advice to older women from "Looking Great, Staying Young": "If you're a lady, you can take a tip from those actresses who wear high-necked and long-sleeved dresses and wear scarves and things that cover up wrinkled skin and loose flesh . . . ."

Clark takes criticism of his books in stride. One writer said of "Looking Great, Staying Young": "(It) reads more like an inspirational tract for people of limited intellectual ability . . . a combination of self-congratulatory hype and avuncular advice delivered in a patronizing tone, Clark's tips run to hoary cliches: 'Try new things, find a hobby, make sure you get all the rest you need. . . .'

"As for Clark himself, he has the bad taste to discuss the failings of his two ex-wives and the sexual stimulation he gets from the present Mrs. Clark."

Clark does discuss in them his own sexual attitudes, sexual appetites and activities including a bout with impotency. A chapter in his new book starts out, "I like young women. I like sex." Earlier, he wrote, "I believe sincerely in 'more is better' in this department."

In an interview, Clark listened to observations on his literary skill. "The books are written for people who are concerned about these things," he said. "They are powers-of-positive-thinking books. I say if your hair's gray, dye it. If things bother you, get them taken care of, get them fixed. Physical appearance is a fact of life.

"It doesn't take a genius to figure out the books are good common horse sense, easy to read. They were not written to be literary masterpieces of all time."

Clark said that he does care about factors other than the physical. "That's the first thing my mother taught me as a kid," he said. "I was skinny and had acne and wasn't particularly attractive. She drew me aside one night in my room and said, 'Your father was taken with me not because of how I looked'—she was no raving beauty—'but the kind of person I was.' "

Two earlier books called "Your Happiest Years" and "To Goof or Not to Goof" were aimed at teen-agers and Clark admitted he put them together

. . . in 1981.

merely to exploit his name and image at the time. "They were explanations on how to survive your teen years," he said.

Incidentally, Clark does look his age. Much of what TV makeup hides is exposed during one-on-one conversation. There are deep facial lines, sagging jowels and a paunch.

In Reno, Clark stayed at a private home provided for the stars by the Nugget Hotel. The residence was furnished like a moderately priced motel room, all plastic and Formica.

One afternoon, Clark wore jeans, black boots, a gray sweater covering his belly, a thick gold chain around his neck, with brown hair covering the ears. He seemed distracted, the "hello" short, the smiles few.

Clark tolerates reporters but doesn't particularly like them: "You guys are not high on my list," he told one from Chicago recently. There have been feuds with People magazine over the timing of stories on Clark productions—he wanted them run before the shows aired; the magazine didn't see it that way.

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THE ENIGMA OF DICK CLARK

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Through the years, he believes, the press has taken shots at him. "I'm a good target, an obvious target," said Clark. "In the early days, I represented something not liked by older people; I wasn't into drugs, so I was a square; no matter what you do, the critics are going to get you."

Clark focused on the plethora of activities undertaken by his company, each of which is personally overseen by him. His company grossed $25 million last year, Clark said.

"I don't know anybody who does so many various things as we do," he said. And they come spewing off the top of his head: a summer tour for the "Good Ol' Rock 'n' Roll" show in places like Chicago and Sacramento; a new anthology book called "The First Years of Rock 'n' Roll;" a Broadway show titled "Music, Music, Music;" a weekly radio program called "National Music Survey" on the Mutual Broadcasting Network similar to friend Casey Kasem's "American Top 40;" a line of Dick Clark toiletries and vitamins called Youth Formula.

Clark's production company took over the "Academy of Country Music Awards" three years ago; "New Year's Rockin' Eve" has completed its eighth year, the "Amercian Music Awards" also its eighth. Shows like "Murder in Texas," "Elvis!" and "TV's Censored Bloopers" garner big ratings. He has flown to New York for more than seven years to host variations of "The $50,000 Pyramid," a popular daytime quiz show. He appeared the other week as emcee of the Daytime Emmy Awards. The Clark face is on ads for the Columbia Record Club.

For the future, he's producing a play for Home Box Office on the life of John F. Kennedy; a theatrical movie for Warner Bros. called "Rivers," being written by Stirling Silliphant ("The Towering Inferno"); an animated feature based on "Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy," the Elton John album; "The Destroyer," taken from the books about a superhuman man and his Korean sidekick and being written by Lorenzo Semple Jr. ("King Kong"); "Bandstand, the Movie," a fictionalized account of a group of people and their relationship to the show; a syndicated talk show, and a movie based on Margaret Truman Daniel's book, "Murder in the White House."

There have been some failures along the way—the folding last year of the Dick Clark Westchester Theater in Tarrytown, N.Y., the cancellation in 1978 of a TV variety show that had been a professional dream, a short-lived country music club in the San Fernando Valley.

"I like producing," said Clark, "sorting out the fights, mediating the problems. Everything you do may not succeed but if there are a lot of irons in the fire, then there are more chances."

So why does Clark do it all—commuting from coast-to-coast, piling project on top of project, living a non-stop life of deals and Nielsen ratings?

Said associate Klein, "He has the creativity and the talent and has to express it. Money also has something to do with it."

Said Joe Smith, the chairman of Asylum Records who goes back to the 1950s with Clark when both were disc jockeys, "It's the roar of the crowd. He loves being out there."

"I've been that way my entire life," Clark said, "since I was 3 or 4 years old, my parents tell me. It's hereditary. I'm an overachiever. I like activity."

Clark gets antsy with questions that probe. "I'm not an extraordinarily deep person," he said. "I do things because they feel good.

"When people come up to me with deep psychological observations, I say, 'Wait a minute, I never thought of that.' "

The work habits meanwhile have affected his personal life, he said. "I've been married three times. The first one fell in love with another man, the second was warm and loving but we were incompatible."

His current wife, with whom he lived for seven years before marriage, was a secretary in his office. "I've had complete personal happiness with her," he said.

The two have few close friends, he said: "And they are people like us. We make appointments far in advance to see each other for dinner."

Clark can flash a temper, verbally flail away at an employee and then come back a few minutes later to apologize. "Can I be a mean mother?" he said. "That's absolutely true. My temper has gotten a little better but it's still notorious. I have no patience. If I have something on my mind, I blow up. It's my way of keeping sanity."

Jason Levine remembered a few years back when he worked closely with Clark in a public relations capacity. "He had a real bad temper," said Levine, now a marriage and family counselor, "and could be very explosive."

Levine said a lot was demanded by Clark from his employees: "It's bad if you get fooled by his easygoing manner, and a lot of people did . . . . You had to realize that Dick Clark was the name of the game, the product was Dick Clark and it was not anybody else. If you were looking to make your own mark, you had to leave the organization behind because it focused on only one individual."

He can, according to another ex-employee, be very loyal: "He never forgets one who has done something good for him."

Said Rex Polier, TV critic for the Philadelphia Bulletin who has known Clark for 25 years, "Dick has never forgotten those in Philadelphia who helped him. There are retired broadcasters here who are 80 years old. Dick calls them up, gets on a plane to be at their parties. He still remembers Philadelphia. I recall him writing checks to take care of sick studio guards."

Clark plays tough out in the real world. He moved ahead with "Murder in Texas" despite an attempt by producer David Merrick to stop the production by using a preliminary injunction. Merrick had planned another version of the same famous Houston murder story, his based on Thomas Thompson's book, "Blood and Money." Clark acquired another book, Ann Kurth's "Prescription Murder." A U.S. District Court judge denied the injunction.

One person Clark tangled with a few years back was Don Cornelius, the bass-voiced host-producer of "Soul Train," a dance show oriented toward black teenagers that occasionally comes on opposite "American Bandstand" at 11:30 a.m. Saturday.

In the early '70s, Clark decided to confront "Soul Train" head on. He produced another dance program with his own group of black kids and a black master of ceremonies and called it "Soul Unlimited." It came on once a month in place of "Bandstand."

Cornelius was incensed and brought some pressure to bear on ABC including a strong message from the Rev. Jesse Jackson delivered to the network. The Clark show was canceled after a few weeks.

Cornelius remembered the fray: "If you want to fight someone, pick on someone meek," he said. "Dick Clark is definitely not meek."

These days, Cornelius gives Clark a certain respect. "I never had any personal animosity against him or ABC," said Cornelius. "Father Clark is the father of the kind of thing I do and he is the best at it."

Another man who found that Clark was not meek was TV personality Gene Shalit, the hirsute film reviewer of the "Today" show. In the early 1960s, Shalit was a press agent and Dick Clark was a client. When Clark began to take heavy heat during the payola hearings, Shalit dropped him, according to Clark.

Referring to Shalit with a commonly used profanity, Clark added, "I've harbored terrible feelings against him. He did some very cowardly things. He was my publicist. When the payola scandals hit, he deserted me, resigned the account, like a surgeon leaving you in the middle of an operation."

Shalit, reached at his office in New York, was reluctant to discuss the incident: "I don't want to talk about it. I blot out my past. I probably met Dick Clark twice in my life. It is true that when I started in this business, I was a press agent."

Shalit wouldn't respond to Clark's charges: "I don't know what he's talking about. I haven't seen that man in all these years. Oh my, I don't remember it. And please make it clear I didn't represent him, the firm did."

And what was the name of the firm? "I really don't want to talk about it, OK, coach."

Clark has softened a little on Shalit. "I think back now and I've done similar things," he said. "I didn't stick by Jerry

GEORGE ROSE / Los Angeles Times

Dick Clark in a reflective moment.

GEORGE ROSE / Los Angeles Times

Dick Clark and Gary U.S. Bonds.

Lee Lewis (when the singer married his 13-year-old cousin and was all but blackballed by the industry). But I think I made it good to Jerry Lee a million times over."

Clark also is bothered by the fact that he's never been on "The Tonight Show" when Johnny Carson was there. To that, said "Tonight" producer Fred DeCordova, "There sure isn't any bad feelings between them. Johnny has great admiration for Dick. It's just been a matter of scheduling and availability."

Clark often is asked to lend his name to political and other causes. He refuses them all. "Jerry Weintraub (concert and film producer) invited me to a party for (Lt. Gov.) Mike Curb," said Clark. "I will just not be seen doing that, using the entertainment medium to put forth my own personal political feelings. It's an unfair use of your public image. Others can do it but I don't want to participate. It's irresponsible.

"I don't want to hear a singer tell me how to vote. I want to hear him sing. I've known performers all my life and have known so few who could advise me how to cast my ballot."

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"Two of the country's most popular disc jockeys—Dick Clark and Alan Freed—face investigation shortly by Congressional probers, it was reported unoffically today."
—From an AP story, Nov. 25, 1959

In February, 1960, Clark was officially subpoenaed to Washington to appear before the Special Subcommittee on Legislative Oversight of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. He was a star witness into the investigation of payola.

It was a time that has slipped from memory, he said. "It only comes up when I talk to guys from the press who read the morgue file," Clark said. "It's a long-gone thing in my life."

What has remained, however, is a permanent bitterness toward politicans. "I have a deep hate for most politicians," Clark said in an interview a few years back. "In status, I rate politicians as a whole in the same class as a pimp."

At the hearings, Clark told the committee, "I want to make it clear . . . that I have never taken payola . . . I have never agreed to play a record or have an artist perform on a radio or television program in return for a payment in cash or any other consideration."

Clark was cleared, although he did divest himself of a variety of record publishing companies, labels, distributorships and a management firm.

Another central figure in the investigation was Alan Freed, the legendary New York disc jockey on whose life the movie "American Hot Wax" was based. Freed, unlike Clark, never emerged from the clouds of scandal, worked only sporadically afterward and died broke and an alcoholic in 1964 at age 43.

Said Clark, "I never knew Alan Freed during his radio heyday, only after the bubble had burst. Me and Bobby Darin were his last friends. During the payola thing, we weren't close and I think it was partly because I was going on to other things. I won't say anything bad about him. It's not nice. He was an extraordinary man, irascible. He was generous, bright, abrasive, a rebel.

"Without his insight that white people would listen to black music, this whole industry might have never gotten off the ground."

Joe Smith, the record company executive, has a theory as to why Clark made it pretty much cleanly through the hearings and Freed didn't. "Clark was middle America, nice, a white-bread face," said Smith. "Freed was gruff, a street man, New York rock 'n' roll, tough."

Lance Freed was 16 when his father died. Now 33 and president of a music publishing company that is a subsidiary of A&M Records, Freed had a remembrance of Dick Clark: "I'm sure in Dick's mind he was a friend of my dad's but he was never there; he never called. My dad never talked about him.

"My father was not an Establishment person. Dick was more conservative. During the hearings, Dad was asked by ABC (owner of the radio station he worked at in New York) to sign a statement that he had never accepted a bribe or a gift to play something on the radio. He refused to sign it. My father was hard-headed."

Clark, said Freed, "was the fair-haired boy. My father wasn't. He shouldn't have gone up against the Establishment. If he had been a little less of a crusader, and compromised a bit more. . . .

"My father felt bitter about Dick Clark the last couple of years perhaps because of how his life turned out and how Dick Clark's did. My dad was in the hospital three weeks and word got out that he was broke, that he needed help.

"I recall my stepmother saying, 'Would you believe Dick Clark never returned my call?' "

Clark was brought up in Mt. Vernon, N.Y., later moving with his parents to Utica. There he got his first job in radio cleaning up at the station where his father worked. While attending Syracuse University, Clark became a local country-music disc jockey.

He returned to Utica for a job as a TV news anchorman before traveling on to WFIL in Philadelphia where in 1956 he took over the local "Bandstand" show that had begun in 1952. In 1957, "Bandstand" became "American Bandstand" and went national, emanating an hour and a half daily—3 to 3:30 p.m. and then 4 to 5 p.m.—from studios at 46th and Market streets.

The regular kids like Justine Carrelli and Bob Clayton, and Arlene Sullivan and Kenny Rossi received as much fan mail as major motion picture stars. The latest Philly dance crazes—the Watusi, Loco-Motion, Swim, Bristol Stomp, Twist—influenced a nation of teenagers.

What Clark did, he often said, was "play the records and the kids danced." He also brought in recording stars of an age—Paul Anka, Connie Francis, Bobby Rydell, Frankie Avalon, Chubby Checker, Fabian.

Clark recognized early the lode of money to be mined from the teen-age market. "When I started there was no differentiation of generations," he said, "no music differentiation, no clothes differentiation. We recognized young people had quite a lot of spendable income."

And Clark capitalized on it. "Dick Clark," said Charlie O'Donnell, his announcer then and now a KCOP newsman who still occasionally works for his old boss, "is the best salesman in television. I never met a better one. He believes in Dick Clark and sells Dick Clark."

The show moved to Los Angeles in 1964 and is now on once a week for an hour. Clark has been offered enormous sums to take it into syndication but keeps it on the network for prestige. There is a clause in Clark's multimillion-dollar production deal with NBC that if ever ABC should drop the show, NBC would pick it up.

These days, a new generation of kids gather at KABC Center at Prospect and Talmadge in East Hollywood. They wear designer jeans instead of bobby sox, dance the Slide instead of the Monkey. The Top 10 board has "Bette Davis Eyes" No. 1 instead of "Johnny B. Goode."

Some things, however, never change. Those picked to "rate-a-record" still give the new songs 95 on a scale of 35 to 98 and say, "I like the beat. It's easy to dance to."

Clark tapes six "Bandstand" shows over one weekend every six weeks. The dancers, the best of whom are encouraged to come back, have their own dressing rooms and sport fancy and creative outfits. A show coordinator barked at them one Saturday morning, "Spit out the gum. You're not allowed to chew gum on the show."

Andy O'Neal, 20, a flight attendant for Continental Airlines, and his sister, Michelle, 16, a student at Gardena High, were waiting patiently for the studio doors to open. The two have been watching "Bandstand" since "we were kids," Andy said. Added Michelle, "Our parents were fans."

In a downstairs dressing room, Clark was going over the show's schedule. Soon, he put on another conservative suit and topped it all with a mist of hair spray.

According to Joe Smith, the power of "Bandstand" in the record industry has dissipated pretty much. "It doesn't have the same impact it once did," he said. "Having an act on the show is not considered a prime plug anymore."

A few minutes before air time, Clark strolled on stage and told the assembled dancers: "Please remember to rotate around the floor so the camera doesn't get you all in the same place, and give our guests lots of applause."

The seconds counted down, the red camera light went on and the "Bandstand Boogie" theme (sung by Barry Manilow) played in the background. Clark, standing at his usual angle, gazed straight ahead and said, "Hi, welcome to 'American Bandstand.' Have I got news for you, and special guests—Kim Carnes and Gary U.S. Bonds. So come and join us on 'American Bandstand.' "

Klein perched in the wings and clapped along to the beat of the first song, "Too Much Time on My Hands" by Styx. As the cameras rolled by, the kids mugged and looked at themselves in the monitors.

Carnes was the first guest and she lip-synced her No. 1 song, "Bette Davis Eyes." Afterward, in her dressing quarters, the 34-year-old singer who grew up in Pasadena and attended San Marino High, reflected on Dick Clark and "American Bandstand."

"As a kid," she said, "I always watched 'American Bandstand,' sat there and fantasized about being on the show, being a singer and being introduced by Dick Clark. It all came true."

Later, Gary U.S. Bonds, whose career had a long drought until the recent hit, "This Little Girl," said, "Dick always looked out for me. When I've had rough spots, when the tears started falling, he was there with jobs and encouragement. Without him without his faith, I would have given up a long time ago."

The hour passed quickly and another "American Bandstand" show ended the way all the others have ended, the host peering out at the television audience and saying for what is approaching the 4,000th time:

"For now, Dick Clark, so long." □

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