

Christian Cappelluti

The Dream Of Constance Project

The Dream Of Constance Project (1)

Mission:

To produce a single (Lemon Girl) and an album (The Dream Of Constance) that will be on the American charts by the year 1998 (1999 at the latest).

Condicio Sine Qua Non:

I am the artistic producer/arranger for the album, i.e. the songs have to be arranged and performed the way I want them to be arranged and performed.

Key Success Factors For The Mission :

First Class Production (Studio + Musicians + Sound Engineer)

Massive Airplay

Effective Promotional Campaign (Positioning)

Massive Distribution

MTV Video

Current Status:

I have produced an attractively packaged, good quality demo-CD which includes:

- 1) A semi-produced version of Lemon Girl (according to me the strongest piece in the album)
- 2) the other 14 songs that I intend to include in the album, in a rough-cut version. Even though all the songs are virtually completed in their melody/harmony/lyrics contents, some re-writing (est. 5%) may still occur

Note: while the semi-produced version of Lemon Girl, as recorded on the demo, effectively shows the commercial potential of the future full-blown production, the other 14 songs, because of their under-produced nature (and, specifically, due to the lack of a drums track) can probably be more appreciated by a musically trained ear, and the listening of those 14 tracks should preferably be accompanied by my own explanation of what I think the arrangements should sound like.

Mid-term Objectives:

Decide how to go about the production of the record. The two main alternatives are:

1) To completely self-produce the record

Pros: Total artistic freedom + extremely higher margins when the record gets sold, if I own the master.

Cons: Extremely high initial investment + it may be hard to secure a good promotion-distribution-record contract, being a virtually unknown producer (even though I may decide to use world-class musicians on the record) + much greater time and energy is required on my part.

2) To get another person involved, preferably a well-established personality in the music business, as an executive producer

Pros: The Person may be a passport to a contract with the big players in the music scene + a first-class producer would further enhance the attractiveness of my project in the eyes of record companies and end-consumers + much lower production costs on my part.

Cons: May reduce artistic freedom + smaller long-term returns on record sales if I am not the owner of the master.

Current Major Players:

Kashif

Major California producer (Whitney Houston, George Benson, Kenny G, etc.). Met personally over Thanksgiving 1996. Says he is interested in my music. He and his secretary contacted me 3 times to ask for material. I am planning to fly out to LA and see him as soon as possible. He may be willing to co-produce the record if he likes what he will listen to.

Max Pani

Top-class Italian producer, son of Italy's most famous female singer, with whom I worked professionally in the summer of 1995, he is willing to let me use his recording studio in Switzerland if I decide to self-produce the record, for a friendly price (budget totals 68 million lire). However, he needs to know what I intend to do long in advance.

Other Players:

There are actually other pros in the music business that expressed interest in becoming involved with the project, but none of them is a big-enough name to induce me to share my project with them.

Also, a few pros have heard about my project from others and are waiting for me to send them a copy of my music.

Something That Must Be Done Before Production Starts:

Write out all the arrangements of my songs, so that hired musicians can perform them on the record. This will probably take 2 months of work, maybe 3.

Short-Term Objectives (2 weeks from now):

The Bobber

I need to have at least 20 copies of the Lemon Girl Demo printed in Italy and shipped over to the US . In the meantime I will work night and day to publish the best-possible, attractive packaging material. I will then ship these CD singles to as many people in the business as I can, and see what kind of response I get. This demo will be my bobber.

College Radio Airplay:

I will also try to get my song played on the Wake Forest Radio, and test the reaction.

Brain-Storm List Of Decisions:

Where to produce the record (Switzerland , US, both, etc.)

Who will be the Executive Producer?

Who will have the publishing rights to my songs?

Could I sign a co-publishing agreement?

Should I sign a record contract with a major label?

Or could I set up my own label?

Will I hire top-quality local musicians or world-class personalities?

Do I need a manager right now?

Who is going to pay for the promotion?

For the printing of the CDs?

Do I want to join ASCAP or BMI right now?

Should I hire a pro-arranger for brass and strings orchestrations?

Should I produce a demo of all the songs in an arranged version?

Should I let people listen to the rough-cut demo of all 14 songs?

Should I fully produce a great single first, and then wait to get offers for the album project?

Should I consider the UK and Germany as good primary markets?

How much should I trust the pros' opinion about the commercial potential of my music?

The Dream Of Constance Project (2)

Current Status:

1) The production of the "bobber" has been completed (see previous report). 20 CDs were printed in Italy containing the semi-produced version of Lemon Girl. I have been working in the past two weeks to achieve a very good-quality package for these compact discs, using the hardware in the multimedia center (scanner), plus my own software (Microsoft Publisher, Adobe Photoshop) and newly purchased printer (Epson Stylus 500). I also used the Ricoh top-quality color copier at the University Student Services to obtain the needed copies (30 to achieve some buffer against rejects), as well as some paper-cutting equipment that I personally purchased. The per-unit production cost of these CD-singles is very high (my estimate is between \$25 and \$30, and this does not even take into account a compensation for my time, several hours to get everything ready, and then about 15-20 minutes per CD). CD singles sell on the market for under \$5. Three copies of this CD have already been shipped to: 1) Mina, for a professional opinion from her and her son Max (see previous report); 2) One of my father's best friends, who, next week, will give the compact disc to his friend the president of Warner-Chapel, in Italy; 3) David L. Burge, a millionaire American musician famous for his educational publications. I met him personally in Switzerland over Christmas Break. He has many contacts in the business. Other copies are ready to be shipped, see following sections.

2) The Wake Forest Radio idea cannot be realized, because I found that the Wake Forest Radio Station plays almost exclusively classical music. There is a student-run radio on campus called Wake Radio. However, it can only be received on campus, through cable. The exposure would be very limited.

3) Last week, after transcribing the music onto staffed paper using the equipment in the music computer lab, I registered Lemon Girl with the Italian Performing Rights Society (SIAE). If I should license a radio station here in the US to play Lemon Girl, I will be able to obtain performance royalties, provided that I file a copy of the license agreement with SIAE. It also seems more convenient for me to wait before joining ASCAP or BMI, since I would have to resign from SIAE before, and the procedure could be rather time consuming.

4) Three other important contacts I could make, about which I found out only recently, are 1) Barry Manilow, through Professor P. Kairoff's sister, and 2) Tony Bennet's son, through Prof. Kairoff himself, and 3) a rock journalist that writes on the Winston-Salem Journal, again, through Peter Kairoff. Apparently, this journalist is in touch with the most important personalities in the business

5) I am planning to see Kashif (see previous report) on the 15th and 16th of February, to find out how big and how serious his interest in my music is. In the meantime, I have been investigating into Kashif's reputation by asking Prof. Brian Goerlick, in the music department (prof. Goerlick's brother, Kenny G, is a multimillion-sales musician whose first album was produced by Kashif). The feedback was very positive.

6) I was asked to play the Lemon Girl CD at a party at former WFU professor Bill Hottinger's. There were about 60 people (average age 45) and their reactions were very positive. I kept being stopped the following days by people who were there and wanted to congratulate with me again. However, I would need more test-marketing with younger people.

7) I have published 3 copies of all the lyrics of the songs on the album.

Mid-term Objectives:

Compared to the previous report, my inclination is more towards the second option. I think I can see more clearly that what I probably need most, ultimately, is a record contract. I would tend to

make this my current mid-term objective, i.e. find a good record deal with a major label. Kashif, again, may be the best person to help me achieve this goal. Our meeting in two weeks will be extremely important.

Short-Term Objectives (2 weeks from now):

1) A Music Resume

I think it would be very useful to accompany the Lemon Girl demo with a nicely published resume of my music background, education, accomplishments, and abilities. I am planning to work on this task as soon as possible (I am waiting for the development of a Kodak Photo CD containing current pictures of myself that I would like to add to the resume).

2) Airplay for Lemon Girl

I am ready to license Lemon Girl to any radio station, to get some airplay and test the public reaction. I also think that this would be an appropriate time to let Prof. Isbister's friend listen to the song, and ask for suggestions.

3) Meeting with Winston-Salem Rock Journalist

Prof. Kairoff can help me arrange this.

4) More Test-Marketing with teenagers and people in their 20s.

I think it may be helpful, in this sense, to get Lemon Girl played over the Wake Radio cable system.

5) Ship Lemon Girl CDs to Barry Manilow and Tony Bennet's son.

When the music resume is ready.

6) Follow-up with Mina, Max Pani, David L. Burge, and the president of Warner-Chapel , Italy .

7) Meet with Teresa Radomsky, professional singer and teacher at WFU, to have an opinion about my singing

This is more an artistic issue, and is not directly related to the process of finding a record deal.

8) Read Kashif's Book, and prepare for the meeting.

As of today, it seems like he is the most important person involved with my music, and the one who could help me the most. Our meeting on the 15th and 16th of February will be extremely important in determining my future path for "The Dream Of Constance" project.

The Dream Of Constance Project (3)

Current Status:

- 1) The music resume (see previous report) has been published, and can be used from now on to accompany the Lemon Girl demo-CD.
- 2) Recent events include a meeting with Alan, a friend of Prof. Isbister's, who has been in the record business for over thirty years. I received very encouraging feedback from him, and, most of all, it seems like he has contacts with superstar producer Narada Michael Walden. I will let Alan have a copy of my Lemon Girl CD (and a copy of my newly published music resume) as soon as possible, so that, hopefully, Walden can listen to it. In addition to this extremely important contact, Alan will also try to arrange a meeting with his son, who is in the music business, while I am in LA. Even though his son works for a small independent Canadian label (not the kind of deal that I am looking for), his experience in the music industry can be extremely valuable. A third contact that Prof. Isbister's friend has provided is with an entertainment lawyer in New York . I will definitely need one sooner or later.
- 3) On Monday, February 10th, a friend of my father's is going to meet with his close friend, the presidente of Warner-Chappell , Italy , to let him listen to my Lemon Girl demo.
- 4) I will be flying out to LA on Thursday, and meet with Kashif over the wee-end.
- 5) I checked into Wake Radio. They would love to play Lemon Girl so much. However, it would be totally useless because the current audience is zero.
- 6) I met with Teresa Radomsky (see previous report) and received positive feedback about my singing.

Mid-term Objectives:

My mid-term objective is sufficiently clear by now. I need to get a record deal with a major label. Actually, not just a deal. A good one. I have a general idea of what the deal should look like. However, I think I will wait until there is a potential deal in sight to address the all the details. The potential contact with Narada Michael Walden is terrific. He is actually more important than Kashif!

Short-Term Objectives:

- 1) Get the most out of the meeting with Kashif.

This is my greatest immediate concern (see next section)

- 2) Try to get Narada Michael Walden to listen to the Lemon Girl demo.
- 3) Meeting with Winston-Salem Rock Journalist.
- 4) Ship Lemon Girl CDs to Barry Manilow and Tony Bennet's son.
- 5) Follow-up with the president of Warner-Chapel , Italy .

Preparing for the meeting:

There are two basic options as regards my attitude in the meeting with Kashif:

1) Attitude "... here is my situation, this is my music, how can you help me?"

This is definitely the least aggressive approach.

2) Attitude "... believe me, I'm good. If you get involved with my career it will certainly be beneficial to you as well!"

This is definitely the most aggressive approach. I think that the right attitude falls somewhere between these two extremes, but maybe closer to the second. In other words I have to be able to sell myself. My weapons, i.e. what I will say makes signing me "a good deal", are: a) I have a style that appeals to a broad market, b) I am a composer, arranger, producer, and performer, all in one person, c) I am very serious about my business and my career in music, and everybody can count on me to always give my best (this means that I am ready to go on tour and do whatever it takes to establish my career, and it also means that I don't have any major extravaganza in my personality like some other artists do. Ultimately, all I care about is producing and selling the best possible music), and d) I am 21, and I am planning to make music for the rest of my life, which means that I could represent a very important potential long-term investment for any label that I end up signed to.

What Kashif can do for me:

There are two basic roles that I can ask Kashif to play for me:

Agent: I can ask Kashif (possibly hiring him) to represent me and help me get a record deal;

Executive producer/producer: If so, Kashif would have a direct stake in my album. But 1) would he let me arrange it the way I want? And 2) Is he interested in producing a pop/rock record as opposed to an R'n'B record?

If I can walk out of the meeting with Kashif playing any of the two above mentioned roles, it would definitely be quite an accomplishment.

What I must do for Kashif:

No matter what his reactions, I must let Kashif listen to Lemon Girl and ALL the other songs on "The Dream Of Constance", accompanying the listening with my best explanation of what the full-blown production should sound like. This is the only way I can impress Kashif with my "music vision" and the highly artistic contents of the whole project.

The Dream Of Constance Project (4)

Current Status:

1) As a result of my meeting with music producer Kashif, my mid-term plans for the project have changed. Kashif suggested that I should produce the master recordings of 4 songs and use those masters to shop for a record contract. He said that if I want a record contract that includes production, I have to let the label have a chance to listen to my abilities as a producer. Also, he said that even the best A&R people usually do not have an ear capable of figuring out the hit-potential of a song out of a simple piano/vocal demo. Kashif suggested that if I can provide him with a full production of the best four songs, he would then be happy to act as my agent to shop a record deal with all the major labels. Kashif suggested that among the songs that he listened to there were at least 5 or 6 good candidates that could be selected for the final production. However, given the fact that I want "all four songs" to sound like hit singles, I think I would be better off selecting only 2 songs out of the former "The Dream Of Constance" demo (i.e. "Lemon Girl" and "Jealous"), and take the other 2 out of the selections that I had started to accumulate for a possible second album. This is because I am determined to end up with the strongest possible material, something that, using Kashif's words, leaves the listener with no choice but buy the record. Because of that, I have already changed the lyrics and some of the music of "Lemon Girl," and I am very satisfied with the results. I believe it is a much better song now.

2) My meeting with David Shaw was very productive. He supports my plans for my career, and most of all, he has provided me with the telephone number of a friend of his, who is a very good entertainment lawyer in New York . This friend of his, whose name is Patrick Balestrieri, is also in contact with Donald Passman, who is one of the most famous entertainment lawyers in the world.

Mid-term Objectives:

My mid-term plans are as follows: I will try to complete the music, the lyrics, and the arrangements of the 4 selected songs as soon as possible (one song is only about 20% done, the others are relatively close to completion). Immediately following graduation, I will fly back to Italy and record a demo of the final production of the four pieces. Around the second week of June I will meet again with Kashif in LA, so that I can have his approval before starting the actual final production. Before meeting with Kashif, I am also planning to consult with Sheila Davis, one of the most respected music critics and lyrics-writers in the world. She lives in New York , and I have already contacted her. Also, when I am in New York , I believe it will be a good time to meet with Patrick Balestrieri. As far as where to record those four masters, I am seriously beginning to consider the option of doing it in California . This is for two primary reasons: 1) Kashif has volunteered to help me find the studio and the best musicians if I decide to record those two songs in LA, and 2) Given the style of the 4 songs, I think that an American studio is more appropriate (3 of the songs are American rock-oriented, and the line-up would be 2 guitars, bass, drums, keyboards, and a brass).

Short-Term Objectives:

1) Work on the 4 songs (best possible music, lyrics, arrangements).

This is my greatest immediate concern

2) Read more books about the music business.

- 3) Arrange a meeting with Winston-Salem Rock Journalist.
 - 4) Ship Lemon Girl CDs to Barry Manilow and Tony Bennet's son.
 - 5) Follow-up with the president of Warner-Chapel , Italy .
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The Dream Of Constance Project (5)

Networking Objectives (by next week):

- 1) Follow up with Narada Michael Walden.
- 2) Follow up with Manilow and Bennett.
- 3) Arrange meeting with Winston-Salem music journalist.
- 4) Contact Patrick Balestrieri and possibly arrange meeting for consultation with him in N.Y.
- 5) Get phone number for Andrea Baggio (Italian Keyboards Player and Arranger). I believe his assistance would be beneficial in preparing the demo of the arrangements in May/June.

Songwriting Objectives (by next week):

Complete and revise lyrics for "Lemon Girl," "Do You Really Wanna Love Me?" and "Jealous."

Books read during semester (finished):

- 1) Kashif, "All You Need To Know About The Music Industry."
- 2) George Martin, "Making Music."
- 3) Donald Passman, "All You Need To Know About The Music Business."
- 4) Alan Siegel, "Breaking Into The Music Business."
- 5) Dan Kimpel, "Networking In The Music Business."
- 6) "Billboard Magazine," weekly.

Current readings:

- 1) Wayne Wadhams, "Sound Advice. The Musician's Guide to the Record Industry."
 - 2) Jim Clevo, "Networking in the Music Industry."
 - 3) Jay Josefs, "Writing Music for Hit Songs."
 - 4) M. William Krasilovsky, Sidney Shemel, "This Business of Music."
 - 5) "Billboard Magazine," weekly.
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The Dream Of Constance Project (6)

Conclusion:

The Dream of Constance Project, with Professor David Isbister, has been the most interesting, challenging, and helpful study effort in my business curriculum at Wake Forest University. More than any of the other courses that I have taken in College, this independent project has had a dramatic impact on my professional career, and the knowledge and expertise about the music industry that I have gained from this course will prove to be extremely beneficial to my musical activities, not only in the short term, but in the long run as well.

What I have gained from the project:

1. A clear vision of the music business industry structure. This includes who are the major players, who has the power, what is changing, and where the whole industry is going.
2. A clear vision of my role within the music business. This means a clear understanding of what my skills are, and how the market values them.
3. A hands-on familiarity of how business is done in the music industry. I am now very knowledgeable about all the common "tools of the trade" such as record contracts, demos, music publishing, production contracts, etc.
4. A "road map" to success for me as a songwriter and artist. What are the steps that need to be taken, what can help me, and what are the dangers to avoid.
5. The seeds of an effective network of contacts with professionals in the industry, who can help me achieve my career goals. During the duration of the project, and as part of it, I made contacts with several people that could have a potentially great impact on my professional career. These include Kashif (producer), Patrick Balestrieri and Donald Passman (entertainment attorneys), David Shaw (marketing expert), Andrea Baggio (Italian keyboard player, producer, music teacher, and author of educational books), and many others.

A few more things to do before Graduation:

1. Photo shooting for David L. Burge. I will endorse his product (an ear-training course) and, in return, he will advertise my upcoming album. My picture will appear for several months on all the major American music publications. This was an unexpected opportunity that I came across, and I believe I should take advantage of it.
2. An interview and, possibly, an article about myself on the Winston-Salem Journal. This will also be good publicity for my career, and the article could also be something to include with the bio kit that I will be sending to record labels in a few months from now.

Plan for the next six-month period:

This is my plan (see previous project reports). I will go back to Italy immediately after graduation and produce a demo of the final production of four songs. My Italian friend musicians and Andrea Baggio will assist me in this effort. When the demo is completed I will fly to New York to shop the tape to the majors with the help of Patrick Balestrieri. Sheila Davis will also help me with some constructive criticism. I will then fly to LA and meet with Kashif to start the final production of

those four masters. When such production will be completed I will focus my efforts on negotiating what is technically referred to as an "independent master purchase deal" with a major label. Possibly Warner Music or BMG (Arista). In a year from now I am planning to start my own publishing company to retain the publishing rights to my songs. After reading so many books about the music business (see previous report), I am confident that I know enough about music publishing operations to start my own company. However, I would be willing to enter a co-publishing agreement with a major publisher (most likely Warner-Chappell, where I already have very high-level contacts). As far as getting a record deal, I think that if my songs are strong enough, that should not be a problem. Right now my immediate goal is to write and produce material that is so good that great interest from the major labels will follow almost automatically.

([visit the website](#))