'Cop' On The Rock Beat Show Links Music, Drama

■ BY MELINDA NEWMAN

NEW YORK-Most directors and producers would pale at the thought of doing five music videos every eight days, but the people behind ABC's new musical drama "Cop Rock" are approximately doing just

The show, which premieres Wednesday (26) at 10 p.m., is the latest from Steven Bochco Productions, the company that brought television grams as "Hill Street Blues" and
"L.A. Law." viewers such groundbreaking pro-

The 60-minute weekly series combines five integral musical numbers with the dramatic action. "The important thing is that the stories are not written around the music, but the music written around the stories, says Gregory Hoblit, who serves as the show's co-executive producer with Steven Bochco. "Are there places where a song would be more reflective in revealing the nature and the characters than dialog? If you can make a greater impact or get to an emotional point through the song, that's what we're trying to do."

The songs for the pilot were done by Randy Newman; however, since "pumping out five original songs every eight days" is hardly Newman's style, subsequent songs for shows are being handled by a small staff of songwriters under the direction of Mike Post, who wrote the title tunes for "L.A. Law," "Hill Street Blues," and scads of other television shows.

Among the writers are Amanda McBroom, who penned "The Rose," and Don Markowitz, who wrote some of the tunes for "Dirty Dancing."

The daunting schedule calls for an average window of three weeks between an episode's first conceptual meeting and when taping starts. At the first meeting, Bochco, Billy Finkelstein and John Romano-the show's primary writers and producers-present a rough draft of the script and indicate where they want songs and what character will sing. The next meeting takes place with the songwriters, who discuss each song and its tempo with writers and hope to key into specific songs. A few days later, a rough demo of the song is done and, if it meets approval, a better demo will be done. At the same time, the script is being written. As soon as the songs are finished, the music scenes are choreographed and blocked.

Next comes the actual shooting of the show. Despite the addition of the music scenes, each show is shot in eight days, the current standard for 60-minute dramas.

For the pilot, it took a day to shoot each song. For subsequent shows, ballads are taking at least half a day. "For ambitious numbers, we're taking three-quarters of day," Hoblit says. A remote 24-track studio truck is used for the shoots. Two produc-

The Eye is closed, but it's only blinking; it will return wide-open next week

tion units-one that shoots the film, another that prepares the upcoming music scenes-are used. Not suprisingly, the budget for the show exceeds the norm for most one-hour dramas. According to a source, "Cop Rock" is pushing the \$1.8 million mark per episode.

Hoblit says the show purposefully stayed away from bringing in established music video directors to help out with the scenes.

"One thing I did not want to do was make these look like regular videos. I'm not a great fan of the MTVstyle videos. As I see see it, I find a lot it to be flash for flash's sake, and I just want to hear, feel, and absorb the music. I wasn't interested in a very flashy, dazzling way that would take away form the music," Hoblit says. "This is a lot more conservative than MTV and it honors the music, even though I know that sounds pretentious. Basically, we went about this the same way I shoot a dramatic scene. The content determines form."

Another difference between "Cop Rock's" musical segments and traditional music videos is that the singing is done live with the actors performing to tracks. "Candidly, we have had two exceptions because the actors weren't up to the songs, but in all other instances, they're being done live,' Hoblit says. "I never want to lip sync again. The qualitative difference between live and lip-synced performances is profound. We're asking the audience to really buy into the reality of the dialog and asking them to do it with a song is asking them to take a leap of faith anyway. Lip-syncing would really be asking a lot.'

Because of the live demands, casting for the primary characters, as well as guest stars, has proven to be a little more difficult than planned.

'We had this show cast in our minds $2^{1}/_{2}$ weeks before we were going to start shooting," says Hoblit. Then we went onto a rehearsal stage with Randy Newman and Mike Post and all the actors we'd picked came in to sing-around 22 of themand none of them passed the singing test. This precipitated a trip to New York for quick auditions." Aside from Barbara Bosson and Ronny Cox, the cast is largely made up of unknowns.

Although there is no current plan, it is not out of the question that an album or video of musical numbers from the show could be released. "It's all we can do right now just to put the show out and hope it succeeds," says Hoblit. "So while it's premature to release something now, it would be silly to say it's not something that's come across our minds.'

Despite a huge push from the network, there is the feeling among some that the idea for "Cop Rock" might be a little too risky to succeed. "Hull High," a CBS show that also features music numbers interspersed with the action, has received less than glowing reviews.

As Hoblit notes, one success can spawn a thousand imitators, but a failure will scare off any duplicators. "I think if neither one of these shows makes it, there will be no trend at all and I fully expect it will never happen again," he says laughing.

Billboard, THE CLIP LIST,



Continuous programming 1515 Broadway, New York,NY 10036 BREAKTHROUGH

EXCLUSIVE

BU77 BIN

STRESS

HEAVY

HEAVY

Bell Biv Devoe, Do Mel
Jon Bon Jovi, Blaze Of Glory
Phil Collins, Something Happened
Depeche Mode, Policy Of Truth
Billy Idol, L.A. Woman
INXS, Suicide Blonde
Janet Jackson, Black Cat
Living Colour, Type (Everything.
Motley Crue, Same Ol' Situation
Nelson, Love And Affection
Slaughter, Fly To The Angels

ACTIVE

Black Crowes, Hard To Handle Concrete Blonde, Joey Human League, Heart Like A Wheel Love/Hate, Why Do You Think... Queensryche, Empire Ratt, Lovin' You's A Dirty Job Vanilla Ice, Ice Ice Baby R. Waters/Bleeding..., Another Brick.

MEDIUM

Alias, More Than Words Can Say Blue Tears, Rockin' With The Radio Jude Cole, Time For Letting Go Damn Yankees, High Enough

Jude Cole, Time For Letting Go Damn Yankees, High Enough Deee-Lite, Groove Is In The Heart Don Dokken, Mirror Mirror Bob Dylan, It's Unbelievable UB40, The Way You Do The Things. Information Society, Think Soup Dragons, I'm Free Styx, Love Is The Ritual Too Much Joy, That's A Lie

BREAKOUTS

Anthrax, Got The Time T.Conwell, I'm Seventeen Concrete Blonde, Everybody Knows

Dino, Romeo
Jellyfish, The King Is Half Undressed
Bob Mould, It's Too Late
Pebbles, Giving You The Benefit
The Rave Ups, She Says
Wire Train , Should She Cry

IMPACT CLIPS

Urban Dance Squad, Deeper Faith No More, Falling To Pieces Poison, Something To Believe In The Cure, Never Enough Lightning Seeds, All I Want

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CURRENT

Dio, Wild One
Extreme, Decadence Dance
Maxi Priest, Close To You
Vixen, Rev It Up
Electric Boys, All Lips 'N Hips
Bad Company, Holy Water
Black Crowes, Jealous, Again
Suicidal Tendencies, You Can't...
Steve Vai, The Audience Is Listening
Trixter, Give It To Me Good
Faith No More, Epic
Mojo Nixon, Kill All Lawyers
2 Live Jews, Outil It's So Humid

Mojo Nixon, Kili Ah Lawyers 2 Live Jews, Ouil It's So Humid Sherman Hemsley, Ain't That A. Jane Siberry, Everything Reminds Dread Zepplin, Heartbreaker John Doe, Let's Get Mad Michael McDonald, Tear It Up Colin James, Just Came Back Gun, Taking On The World Damn Yankees, Come Again John Lee Hooker, Baby Lee

Black Crowes, Hard To Handle

AC/DC, Thunderstruck Faith No More, Falling To Pieces Heart, Stranded Mc. Hammer, Pray Poison, Something To Believe In Snap, Ooops Up Warrant, Cherry Pie Winger, Miles Away

Iggy Pop, Candy Jane's Addiction, Stop

The Cure, Never Enough

Urban Dance Squad, Deeper

Lightning Seeds, All I Want

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ADDS

DEVELOPMENT

Oleta Adams , Rhythm Of Life After 7, Can't Stop Basia, Until You Come Back To Me Basia, Until You Come Back To Me Breathe, Say A Prayer Mariah Carey, Love Takes Time David Cassidy, Lyin' To Myself Robert Cray, Forecast Calls For Pain Brenda Russell, Stop Running Away Lisa Stansfield, This Is The Right Time S.Youngblood, I'd Rather...

HEAVY

Michael Bolton, Georgia On My Mind Phil Collins, Something Happened . . . Taylor Dayne, Heart Of Stone Janet Jackson, Come Back To Me Maxi Priest, Close To You Wilson Phillips, Release Me Paul Young, Oh Girl



Continuous programming 12000 Biscayne Blvd, Miami,FL 33181

ADDS

ADUS

Alia, More Than Words Can Say
Anthrax, Got The Time
Audio Two, I Get The Papers
Caron Wheeler, Livin' In The Light
Concrete Blonde, Everybody Knows
Danzig, Killer Wolf
David Cassidy, Lyin' To Myself
Jane's Addiction, Stop
LL Cool J, The Boomin' System
List End Lie LL Cool J, The Boomin' System
Lita Ford, Lisa
Mariah Carey, Love Takes Time
Monie Love, Monie In The Middle
Nayobe, I Love The Way You Love Me
Powerule, Brick In A Wall
Pretenders, Sense Of Purpose
Queensryche, Empire
Sara Hickman, Blue Eyes Are...
Soup Dragons, I'm Free
Stone Roses, One Love
TKA, I Won't Give Up On You
Udo, Heart Of Gold
Wire Train, Should She Cry

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Tevin Campbell, Round And Round
Lizz Torres, If You Keep It Up
C. Mayfield/Ice-T, Superfly 1990

CURRENT

The Boys, Crazy
Prince, Thieves In The Temple
En Vogue, Lies
Black Box, Everybody Everybody
Lalah Hathaway, Heaven Knows
Pebbles, Giving You The Benefit
The Winans, A Friend
Tony Toni Tone, Feels Good
Maxi Priest, Close To You
The Whispers, Innocent
M.C. Hammer, Have You Seen Her
Johnny Gill, Fairweather Friend
Oleta Adams, Rhythm Of Life
Father MC, Treat Them Like...
Force MD's, Are You Really Real
Kiara, You're Right About That
Samuelle, So You Like What You See
Nayobe, I Love The Way You Love Me
Howard Hewitt, If! Could Only...
Tracie Spencer, Save Your Love Howard Hewitt, If I Could Only...
Tracie Spencer, Save Your Love
Lorenzo, Angel
Good Girls, I Need Your Love
Wynton Marsalis, The Seductress
Cynda Williams, Harlem Blues
Bernadette Cooper, I Look Good
Hi Five, Just Can't Handle It
Quincy Jones, Listen Up
Caron Wheeler, Livin' In The Light
Nancy Wilson, Don't Ask My Neighbor
Milira, The Rain
Michelle, Keep Watchin'
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WORLD PREMIERE

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HEAVY

Mark Collie, Looks Aren't Everything Kevin Welch, 'Till See You Again Helen Cornelius, Ask Any Woman R.V.Shelton, I Meant Every Waylon Jennings, Wron Reba McEntire, You Lie orrie Morgan, He Talks To Me Alan Jackson, Wanted Holly Dunn, You Really Had Me Going Vince Gill, When I Call Your Name Holly Dunn, You Really Had Me Going Vince Gill, When I Call Your Name Cleve Francis, Love Light Mark Chesnutt, Too Cold At Home Ky, Headhunters, Oh Lonesome. Carlene Carter, I Fell in Love Jann Browne, Mexican Wind Pirates/Mississippi, Honky Tonk. Hurricane, Next To You Ray Stevens, Sittin' Up With The Dead Billy Joe Royal, A Ring Where A. Mark Collie. Hardin County Line K.Mattea/T.O'Brien, Battle Hymn. Randy Travis, He Waiked On Water Garth Brooks. The Dance Matraca Berg, Things You Left Undone William Lee Golden, Louisiana Red. T.Tucker/T.G. Brown, Don't Go Out Canyon, Dam These Tears Gary Fieligaard, Somewhere On... Conway Twitty, Crazy In Love Billy/T.Smith, Blues Stay Away... Alabama, Pass It On Down Travis Tritt, Put Some Drive In.. Ronnie McDowell, Paralyzed Charlie Daniels, A Few More Rednecks Texas Tornados, Who Were... Hoyt Axton, Mountain Right k.d. lang And Take 6, Ridin' The Rails k.d. lang And Take 6, Ridin' The Rails

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ADDS

Delbert McClinton, Who's Foolin' Who Cee Cee Chapman, Everything

C.Gregory, Couldn't Love Have. . . R.Swanson/J.Lee. A Couple Of Good. R.Swanson/J.Lee, A Coup Wild Rose, Everything He.

A SAMPLING OF PLAYLISTS AT NATIONAL VIDEO MUSIC OUTLETS.

Lists do not include videos in recurrent or oldies rotation.

HEAVY

MEAVY

Alan Jackson, Wanted
R.W.Shelton, I Meant Every
Carlene Carter, I Fell In Love
Bellamy Bros., I Could Be
K.Mattea/T.O'Brien, Battle Hymn
Mark Chesnutt, Too Coid At Home
Pirates/Mississispi, Honky Tonk
Reba McEntire, You Lie
Holly Dunn, You Really Had Me Going
Tim Ryan, Let's Dance In Circles
D.Parton/K.Rogers, Love Is Strange
Conway Twitty, Crazy In Love

LIGHT

T.Tucker/T.G.Brown, Don't Go Out Matraca Berg, Things You Left Undone William Lee Golden, Louisiana Red... Patty Loveless, The Night's Too Long Mark Collie, Hardin County Line Sawyer Brown, When Love... Forrester Sisters, Old Enough To Know Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, You Made...



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ADDS

Taylor Dayne, Heart Of Stone
INXS, Suicide Blonde
Soho, Hippychick
Dramarama, Anything, Anything
Don Dokken, Mirror Mirror
Soup Dragons, I'm Free
UB40, The Way You Do The Things.

HEAVY

Phil Collins, Something Happened Maxi Priest, Close To You Paul Young, Oh Girl Nelson, Love And Affection Johnny Gill, My, My, My Wilson Phillips, Release Me Prince, Thieves In The Temple

MEDIUM

Jeff Healey Band, While My Jeff Healey Band, While My. ...
En Vogue, Lies
Deee-Lite, Groove Is In The Heart
Stryper, Shining Star
Pebbles, Giving You The Benefit
Iggy Pop, Candy
Damn Yankees, High Enough
Depeche Mode, Policy Of Truth
The Boys, Crazy
Black Box, Everybody Everybody
Vanilla Ice, Ice Ice Baby



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ADDS

Damn Yankees, High Enough David Cassidy, Lyin' To Myself Candyman, Knockin' Boots Lightning Seeds, All I Want Jellyfish, The King Is Half Undressed Jasmine Guy , Try Me Soup Dragons, I'm Free

Prince, Thieves In The Temple Jon Bon Jovi, Blaze Of Glory Phil Collins, Something Happen Maxi Priest, Close To You Nelson, Love And Affection Wilson Phillips, Release Me Janet Jackson, Black Cat Paul Yauge, Of Siri Paul Young, Oh Girl Dino, Romeo Depeche Mode , Policy Of Truth Johnny Gill, My, My, My Lisa Stansfield, This Is The Right Time

Glenn Medeiros, All I'm Missing Is You S.Youngblood, I'd Rather.
Jude Cole, Time For Letting Go After 7, Can't Stop Indecent Obsession, Tell...
Michael Bolton, Georgia On My Mind Black Box, Everybody Everybody Pebbles, Giving You The Benefit Alia, More Than Words Can Say Viren How Murch Love