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## PAUL ANKA TEAMS WITH LATINO ‘AMIGOS’ FOR SONY SET

By John Lannert

Although Paul Anka has notched 12 top ten hits and recorded 121 albums during a career that has spanned nearly 40 years, the famed singer/songwriter describes without pretense his forthcoming English-and Spanish-language record “Amigos” as a “milestone album that I was never able to make until now.”

Set for release July 30 (coincidentally, the day Anka turns 55), the Globo/Sony Discos album largely contains bilingual duet versions of Anka written evergreens sung with a prominent lineup of Latino and non-Latino stars. Among the guest artists are Juan Gabriel, Ricky Martin, Julio Iglesias, Celine Dion, Tom Jones, Ana Gabriel, Jose Luis Rodriguez, Jose José, Myriam Hernandez, and Lucero.

Lending instrumental backing support are Arturo Sandoval and Kenny G, the latter of whom plays on “Do I Love You,” a previously unreleased Anka composition featuring Anka, his daughter Anthea, and Barry Gibb. Among the Anka nuggets included on “Amigos” are lead single “My Home Town,” recorded with Juan Gabriel; “Diana” with Martin; “My Way” with Iglesias; and “She’s A Lady” with Jones and Rodriguez.

Anka is one of the most self-contained artists in the business. He owns masters of his early hits; has his own publishing company, Paulanne Music, Inc.; and is managed by another Anka-owned company, Paul Anka Productions, which is headed by executive of business affairs Gloria Jewett.

Anka owns several portraits of himself that were done by Andy Warhol; one of those paintings serves as the cover artwork for “Amigos.”

One of the first pop acts to regularly tour Latin America, Anka has long been a revered fixture in the region as a recording artist and performer. The Ottawa native says his strong ties to fans south of the U.S. border spawned the idea for “Amigos.”

“If I can go and work these venues [in Latin America] and these people know me and I see the love I get back from them,” says Anka, “then the quickest way for me to reach out to them is with a record of songs they grew up with, sung by the Latino stars they love today. It’s a natural.”

Anka credits the smooth production of “Amigos” to producer Humberto Gatica, as well as to singer/songwriter Alejandro Lerner, who “helped Gatica fine-tune the [Spanish] lyrics,” he says.