

June 13, 1955

I've often wondered why movie technicians, now that the wide screen and the use of color film have become practically universal, have not taken greater advantage of Appia's methods. And I was interested to note that in at least one scene of "Oklahoma!" in the Todd-AO process (the widest screen that has been used for purely dramatic purposes to date) they were used with great success. This was in the "Poor Jud is Dead" number which opens as a dramatic conflict between hero and villain (Gordon MacRae and Rod Steiger) and ends as a satiric duet whose humor depends on its being played straight. It occurs in a smoke-house (a sod shanty, actually) where light and shadow is subtly motivated at the discretion of the cameraman. Most of these two-shots are roomy enough to let the spirited hero move around in contrast to the phlegmatic heavy. When the singing starts and the two must stand close together, the shadows imperceptibly close in on the sides of the camera field, blotting out distractions.

What love scenes I saw were not tricked.  
—Jack Moffitt.

June 29, 1955

... Mike Todd loaded the press with champagne and caviar on his "Around the World in 80 Days" junket to Tijuana ... Where Cantinflas fought two bulls, first strictly for comedy, second strictly for the kill ... Both baby bulls ... Todd was nervous while his star "played" with the animals ... During a chat with the producer we learned that "80 Days" will open with a jet doing it in 80 hours ... Impressive sight over Tijuana: view of the bullring, practically filled to capacity (papered house!) ... After the bullfight, off to Caesar's Restaurant ... Where the tables were decked with models of Cantinflas ... And where more than a few proceeded to get blind ...

We flew to the Tijuana bull fights to cover NBC's "Wide World" delineation of Cantinflas and the bull, and to get in on the luxurious junket hosted by Mike Todd for "Around the World in 80 Days." The sign in the chartered United Air Line plane flashed: "Tighten Your Belt." In Caesar's Restaurant, where the press was plied with fantastic viands, the sign read: "Loosen Your Belts." The Pilot describing a DC7 to us said: "The plane is a DC6 with muscles." We found the TVersion of Cantinflas pantomime in a bullring not suited to American audiences. The little matador, idol of his country, satirizes a bullfight with broad comedy — pants falling, exaggerated dance steps, etc., showing great courage but little fresh humor. However, with NBC cameras sweeping the world, the viewer here will be treated to a rounded education in entertainment.