

November 23, 1955

November 18, 1955

### 'Oh What a Beautiful' Reception Press Gets At L.A. 'Okla.' Opening

Last night's L.A. preem of "Oklahoma" at the Egyptian came off as planned—without a hitch.

There had been worries about the Coast opening since, no doubt, some negative NY reaction to some technical aspects of the Todd-AO production were partly due to the thoughtless treatment of the NY press at pic's world preem in Gotham last month.

However, special attention was given to making last night's bow here letter perfect, and that's the way it turned out, with scribes getting full cooperation, room to work, good seats.

It was a true glamour-packed event with Mike Todd himself stealing the limelight as he entered the theatre with Marlene Dietrich. Seymour Peysner was in charge of "Okla." opening here.

Metro's police force, headed by Whitey Hendry, got a hurry call yesterday p.m. to help out at last night's "Oklahoma" preem. . . . Sixty of "80 Days" are in the Todd-AO can. Spencer Tracy, Peter Lorre, H. Bogart and Gary Cooper are a few of the guest stars who may yet make appearances . . . Jay Blackton, who conducted the music for "Oklahoma," "Guys and Dolls" and now special music for "80 Days," has decided to hang his baton in Hollywood.

November 21, 1955

### 'Okla.' Capacity 226 On Its First Seven Performances Here

"Oklahoma" opened to as walloping a biz as was possible on its local run—absolute capacity, \$22,000 for first seven performances, ending last night at the Egyptian Theatre. The Todd-AO production is on a reserved seat policy, with \$2.20 top at matinees, \$2.75 at night. House seats 1,400.

Approximately \$65,000 was spent on exploiting "Okla." here, according to Seymour Peysner, Magna exec who is handling local run of pic, which had invitational preem last Thursday and opened to the public with one Friday night screening.

**A**WARE OF THE EXCITEMENT caused by the extraordinary qualities of the sound accompanying "Oklahoma" in Todd-AO, 20th-Fox plans to show its "Carousel" musical with six separate magnetic tracks in some selected houses. "Carousel," lensed in 55m, will be released in the 35m version reduced from the larger negative. Film was recorded for six-channel sound. When shown this way, the six sound tracks will play via a separate and synchronized pick-up, i.e., the tracks won't be on the same film as the picture.

## Mike Todd Sews Up 10-Pix Prod'n Deal In Todd-AO; Stepping Out of Magna

New York, Nov. 23. — The Michael Todd Co. last night finalized its franchise deal to make 10 pix, beginning with "Around the World In 80 Days," in five years in the Todd-AO process. Pact was signed by Phil Reisman for Todd and Henry Woodbridge, on behalf of Todd-AO.

In lining up the 10-picture franchise, Todd retains his original 31% stock ownership in Magna, which in turn owns 67½% of Todd-AO. However, because of his production activity in the process under the Michael Todd Co. banner, Todd is reported stepping out

of all management activity in Magna next Tuesday. He will remain, however, in a consultant capacity.

Reisman and Todd promptly flew to the Coast to begin prepping plans for "80 Days," which will be the second picture released in the audience participation process. Project has a shooting schedule of around five months and a budget near \$3,750,000. It will get underway in London in mid-December, probably with Carol Reed directing.

As with "Oklahoma," first of the Todd-AO films, "80 Days" will be roadshown on a two-a-day policy in some 60 key situations around the world. Up to 40 of these will probably be in the U.S. Reisman will personally set up the roadshow distribution for "80 Days" and all other Todd company films.

However, future distribution in widescreen, CinemaScope and finally "postage stamp" theatres will be handled by other companies. No deals have been set, but it is thought here that individual deals will be made in different countries for the printdown versions to be released after completion of roadshow distribution. In line with this, Todd has his own printdown process which he has already demonstrated to several top industry execs to enthusiastic response.

Todd franchise does not restrict the opening of his films, although "Oklahoma," under the original Magna deal with Rodgers & Hammerstein, must be the first Todd-AO film to be exhibited. There's no problem here, however, since "Oklahoma" is virtually completed while "80 Days" hasn't even started. Todd will go to London late next week to begin plans for the production there, particularly with reference to engaging studio facilities and lining up the necessary second units for the film.

Todd last week bought out all of Sir Alexander Korda's interests in the Jules Verne classic for around \$240,000. Korda had originally developed "80 Days" as a film property and, for a time, it appeared that he would have some association with the Todd production, but he is now completely out of it as a result of Todd's purchase of his rights, including scripts.

"Oklahoma," also sro at the "Egyptian," delayed its 8:30 p.m. screening for 20 minutes. "Okla" grossed \$8,000 Saturday.

### Selznick Eyes Todd-AO And 65m Techni Footage As He Preps 'Farewell'

David O. Selznick will utilize one of the new big-screen processes when he returns to production early next year with "A Farewell to Arms." Jennifer Jones starrer, which will be made under the banner of the Selznick studio, will be released by RKO.

Selznick has been spending considerable time at Technicolor eyeing 65m footage processed there and has also been gandering Todd-AO footage. He expects to make a decision within the next few weeks.