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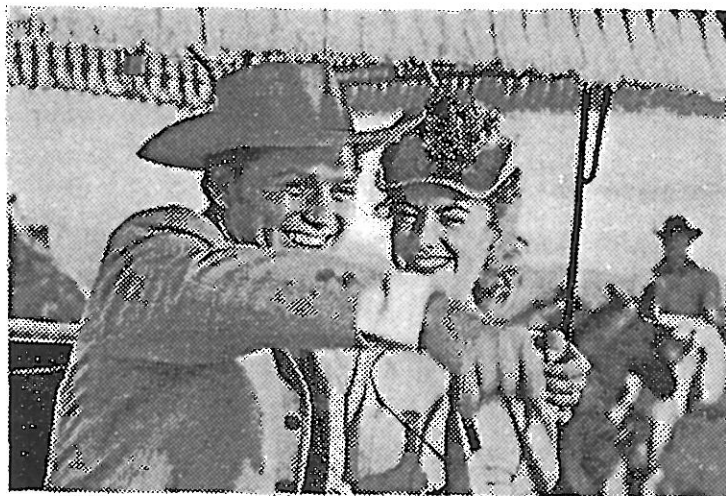
70mm

Newsletter

ASSOCIATION

NO 35 - SEPTEMBER 1994

...WILL LIVE AS LONG AS THERE'S A SCREEN TO SHOW IT ON!"
—HEDDA HOPPER



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The International 70mm Association

The 70mm Newsletter

October 1994, No 35

Continental version

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The International 70mm Association.

The idea of The International 70mm Association is to get people involved in bringing back 70mm films on the big screens. We would like to see more films produced in 65mm and presented in 70mm with 6-track digital stereo on big curved screens. We will address film makers and tell them that people really care about 70mm and notice the difference. We will try to encourage film makers to produce in 70mm.

A complete list of all known 70mm films, including Imax, Showscan etc and lists of 70mm equipped cinemas are developed by the The International 70mm Association. New cinema technology will also be presented in The 70mm Newsletter. The International 70mm Association welcomes information about new and old 70mm films in the form of stills, ad slicks, posters, newspaper clippings and all other 70mm related items. All members are encouraged to write articles for the Newsletter.

"Why 70mm?"

Yes, why 70mm? Indeed. What a question to ask. Everybody knows why 70mm is so good. Or do they?

Today's audience is not used to excellent screen quality. Because they have never experienced state-of-the-art projection. They have never experienced the highest level of standard cinema exhibition available. Today's audience does not think about quality when watching a film on a large screen. As long as the film is in focus they do not complain. The audience never realises the projected image can be so much better. As long as they do not understand the impact of the 70mm film, they do not care whether it is 35mm or any other format. So why bother about 70mm?

As nobody cares about 70mm why bother at all? True! Some of the arguments put forward by non-70mm enthusiasts: "70mm is so expensive. No cinemas can run 70mm films anymore. Nobody knows the difference. Cameras are too heavy. Film stock is not available. 70mm is not any better than 35mm".

The arguments are countless. The point is: Why not show the whole lot in 16mm black & white and mono? Or even better, close all cinemas and show the films on TV. This would save every distributor a considerable amount of money, not to speak of all the cinemas we can turn into profitable parking lots, bingo's and MacDonalds. Is this a nightmare? Certainly not. In a few years this may be reality.

Today's cinema audience can easily get motion pictures from a variety of sources: satellite, CD-ROM, TV, Laserdisc, Video, CD-I, HDTV, etc., etc. In fact there is no need to go to the cinema anymore. The audience can watch films at home. The video quality is becoming better and better. Laserdisc sound and image are excellent, and in most cases better than in any cinema. The image quality has declined considerably in the cinema. The future of the cinema does not look too bright.

The members of The International 70mm Association think otherwise. People still go to the cinema. "Why?". The answer is quite simple. They want to be entertained which cannot be done at home. As simple as that. Films presented in seventy millimeter with six track stereophonic sound, magnetic or digital, are the only route to the cinema of the 21st Century.

Big, bright, well-focussed, razor sharp images in 70mm on huge curved wall-to-wall screens will do the trick to get people out of their homes and back into the cinema. Because people really notice the difference. Perhaps only on a subconscious level, but they do notice the difference. People are never going to

The International 70mm Association

experience films on TV as they will in the cinema. For the simple reason that TV screens are too small.

In recent years we have seen a growing interest in 70mm. "Lawrence of Arabia", "Spartacus" and "My Fair Lady" have been restored. "Far and Away" and "Baraka" have been filmed in 65mm and a few new projects are in the pipeline. And Imax and Showscan have not even been mentioned yet. Two companies that make a living out of 65mm film.

The future of 70mm lies in the hands of film producers, cinematographers, directors etc who are willing to invest their money in 65mm. The future of the cinema depends on cinema owners who are willing to build 70mm state-of-the-art cinemas. The Bert family in Belgium has shown the way with Kinopolis in Brussels. The World's largest cinema complex. 25 THX and Dolby Stereo equipped screens under one roof. Nine of them are fully equipped for 70mm and all 25 high-impact cinemas features giant wall to wall curved screens.

From October 1st to October 15th 1994 **The International 70mm Association** has organized a **70mm Promotion Tour** to San Francisco and Los Angeles. For a period of two weeks *Johan Wolthuis* and *Thomas Hauerslev* will gather information about the future of 65mm/70mm film. We will visit industrial people in Los Angeles, and ask them what they feel can be done to promote the use of 65mm equipment. We will visit laboratories and studios to see how they handle 70mm productions. Many companies such as Todd-AO, Panavision, Showscan and MGM have shown an interest in the **70mm Promotion Tour**. Upon our return to Europe all our reports will be published in **The 70mm Newsletter**.

There are only 3 major issues left for the cinema of the 21st Century:

70mm with 6-track stereo, a big curved screen and the event of going to the movies.

...and boy, how do we all miss this combination.

The International 70mm Association.

70mm Promotion Tour Los Angeles 1 - 15 October 1994

Secretary of **The International 70mm Association**
Johan C M Wolthuis, Arnhem, The Netherlands.
Projectionist and editor of **The 70mm Newsletter**
Thomas Hauerslev, Copenhagen, Denmark.

In collaboration with Mr Albert Bert, chairman of directors of the Kinopolis Group, Belgium, Mr Vittore Nicelli. President of Cinemeccanica Milano, Italy and Robert G Dickson, documentary filmmaker in Los Angeles, USA.

"What has happened to the use of 70mm prints, or How to dramatically improve picture quality in the cinema before the year 2001?"

The International 70mm Association will launch a **70mm promotion tour** to Los Angeles. Our goal is to tell American film producers and directors how enthusiastic their European counterparts are over original 70mm films such as "**Oklahoma!**", "**Cleopatra**" and "**2001: A Space Odyssey**". New 70mm films as "**Baraka**", "**Far and Away**" and "**Little Buddha**" from the present age attract audiences because of the narrative content, but also because of the stunning cinematography. People like Ron Fricke, Ron Howard, Michael Salomon and Vittorio Storaro are to be applauded for their decision to use 65mm. Our hope is to persuade film makers to use 65mm negatives in cinematography more frequently. We hope to arrange appointments with a film producer, a director, a cinematographer and a marketing executive in Los Angeles. Furthermore, we naturally intend to keep the local press informed about the subject. There are three major points we want to bring to the attention of film makers:

- * An increasing number of European cinemas are able to show 70mm prints. A decreasing number of 70mm prints are available, however. Is it because the industry thinks the audience is not aware of picture quality and only cares about sound quality?
- * Why improve the sound quality of the films alone, and not the image. Increasingly, the quality of prints shown in Amsterdam and Copenhagen is awful. In some cases the local laserdisc shops presents image quality more impressive than a new 35mm print. Why is that?
- * An effort must be made to restore old 70mm films. Have any American exhibitors been asked about their interest in showing restored 70mm films?

Upon our return to Europe a full report will be written by The International 70mm Association and published

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later in the **The 70mm Newsletter**. The report will include our discussions with American filmmakers and their opinions about the future of 70mm. We will try to provide information about the four different standard 65mm cameras available. Todd-AO's **Cinespace 70**, ARRI's **System 765**, Panavision's **System 65** and Cinema Product's **CP65**. It has quite often been said by industry people in the past two years that "*70mm is dead*". That statement is often repeated when digital sound on 35mm is discussed. It is not true, however. The International 70mm Association is of a different opinion altogether. It is our impression that many people do see 70mm on the marquee as a special added attraction. And those people who do not know about 70mm will experience any 70mm presentation as a sense of reality they will never get from any other medium, even those with 35mm multi track Dolby SRD, SDDS or DTS digital THX sound. It seems to us that the reason why Todd-AO appeared in the first place 40 years ago has been forgotten.

"...a motion picture system with a quality so perfect that the audience would be a part of the action, not just passive spectators".

Dr Brian O'Brien about the Todd-AO process in 1953.

The difference between a home theatre and the cinema is becoming increasingly negligible as home theatre systems are getting better. In fact today there is no need to attend the cinema. The digital sound in a home theatre is very often far more impressive than in any theatre. The point is, there are only three major issues left for the cinema: "70mm with 6-track stereophonic sound", a big curved 70mm screen and the event of going to the cinema. Their combined effect can never be achieved at home. Digital sound AND 70mm is perhaps the only hope for the future of the cinema as we know it. 70mm is an artistic potential for film makers and may well provide the cinemas with an economic edge and constitute the difference between staying open or closing.

Digital sound on film alone does not ensure success. Film is a combination of sound and picture. The cinema needs 70mm film once in a while to survive and in order to "fight back" against television and other forms of entertainment. The situation has not changed in 45 years. In those days Cinerama arrived on the scene and people went to the cinema again. A 70mm print has always given the audience an experience that can never be matched by 35mm film. It is therefore necessary to keep showing new films in 70mm, otherwise the audience will slowly forget what the cinema experience is all about. The increased cost involved in using 65mm in photography is very small compared with the overall budget in the average 35mm Hollywood film.

"...with Todd-AO (70mm), audience participation now has its fullest and truest expression".

Dr Brian O'Brien about the Todd-AO process in 1953.

Many famous American films from the fifties and the sixties are representative of the cultural heritage of the United States. These films should be restored as has been done successfully with "**Lawrence of Arabia**" and "**Spartacus**". The International 70mm Association would like to draw special attention to "**Around the World in 80 Days**", "**Porgy and Bess**" (not shown in public for more than 30 years!), "**South Pacific**", "**Ben Hur**", "**Cleopatra**" and many more. There is a growing interest among some cinemas in Europe to show old 70mm films again.

The following material will be distributed to the people and press we hope to speak with.

- * A list of the most important 70mm cinemas in Europe listed by country.
- * Information concerning 70mm films by **The International 70mm Association**.
- * A complete list of original 70mm films with production year and 65mm process.
- * Letters from managers of European cinemas requesting more 70mm prints.
- * A special October 1994 edition of **The 70mm Newsletter**.

The International 70mm Association is a non profit organization with dedicated members all over the Globe. **The 70mm Newsletter** is published 4 - 6 times a year and mailed free to all members. For more information please contact: The 70mm Newsletter, C/O Thomas Hauerlev, Kong Georgs Vej 12, St, DK-2000 Frederiksberg, Denmark.

Johan C. M. Wolhuis: Born 1940 in Arnhem, The Netherlands. Saw "**Around the World in 80 Days**" and parts of "**Oklahoma!**" at a Philips Todd-AO demonstration in 1957 and has been convinced of the superiority of 70mm ever since. In 1988 he formed The International 70mm Association in an effort to raise the interest in the nearly forgotten 65/70mm photography.

Thomas Hauerlev: Born 1963 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Addicted to films from an early age. Became a professional projectionist in 1982. Has since published articles about film and especially 70mm films. Has his own DP70 Todd-AO projector installed in his study and is currently working on a book about the history of the DP70. Will edit the **The 70mm Newsletter** from winter 1994.

The International 70mm Association



K I N E P O L I S

Brussels, September 1994

The International 70mm Association
c/o J.C.M. Wolthuis
Katwoudehof 36
6843 BX Arnhem
The Netherlands.

Dear Johan,

The managements of "DECASCOOP" Gent (12 screens)
"KINEPOLIS" Brussels (25 screens)
"METROPOLIS" Antwerp (22 screens)

are very much disappointed about the few numbers of 70mm prints (original 65mm photography and 35mm blow-ups) which were released last year in Belgium.

In an effort to raise the quality of projection and screening in their complexes they have equipped several auditoriums with 70mm projectors and of course Digital Sound.
(Gent: 6x70mm Brussels: 9x70mm Antwerp: 5x70mm !)

But the absence of 70mm prints last year was very disappointing !

We hope that producers, directors and production companies will consider the use of the new 65mm cameras to keep the phenomenon of the 70mm film alive !!

Albert Bert
Chief Executive

Geert Bert
General Manager

Christian Nolens
Publicity Director

KINEPOLIS NV/SA Eeuwfeestlaan 1 Av. du Centenaire B-1020 Brussel/Bruxelles
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The International 70mm Association
Katwouderhof 36
6843 BX Arnhem
The Netherlands

Milano, 12th September, 1994

Dear Mr. Wolthuis,

We regret very much the lack of interest that is now prevalent in 70mm film. The 70mm format has tremendous visual impact and can really pull back a lot of visitors to the theatres.

At the moment the prints are very expensive because of the need of magnetic striping. If one of the digital formats could be adapted to 70mm the cost of the prints could be cut in half. In this way 70mm would be come much more affordable and could be used much more heavily.

On the other hand there are quite a few exhibitors that are equipped to show 70mm and would be happy to take advantage of the far superior image quality of this format.

I hope the response to your tour are favourable and I am looking forward to seeing quite a few more 70mm releases in the near future.

Vittore Nicelli
President
Cinemeccanica

The International 70mm Association

Nederlands Filmmuseum

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The International 70 mm Association
Dhr J.C.M. Wolthuis
Katwoudehof 36
6843 BX ARNHEM



Datum 16 September 1994

Kenmerk 70rest

Doorkiesnummer 020 - 5891417

Dear Johan Wolthuis,

As you know the Nederlands Filmmuseum has a small but interesting collection of older 70 mm prints, which are being screened from time to time on our original Philips DP 70 projectors.

It goes without saying that we fully support the efforts of the International 70 mm Association to increase the number of restorations of famous and original 70 mm films such as AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS, BEN HUR, WEST SIDE STORY, CLEOPATRA etc, etc.

Yours sincerely,

NEDERLANDS FILMMEUSEUM
Jan Ewout Ruiter

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The International 70mm Association

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70MM Newsletter
Johan C. M. Wolthuis
Katwoudehof 36
6843 BX Arnhem
The Netherlands

March 12, 1994

In answer to "Why 70MM?" you have to ask yourself: "Why do people go out to be entertained?" The answer is simple. People leave the comfort of their home to attend something they cannot experience in their home. They go to a museum to see great artifacts or paintings that they cannot see otherwise. They go to a play or concert to see and hear live performances. They go to a zoo or park to experience nature, tame or wild.

If people gather in a place to see a movie, it should be presented in the best possible way, something that cannot be experienced at home. I have seen HDTV and it is good but it is still not a two - to - three story screen!! However, with HDTV imminent, unless something special can be gotten from going to a movie, like the clear, sharp image of 70 MM, movie theaters will be history. Why go to a theater that almost has a smaller screen than you have at home? Why leave the comfort of your own home to attend something that can be experienced in your home?

So in answer to "Why 70MM?" I'd say because you cannot get that big sharp screen any where else.

Sincerely yours,



Marshall Ellenstein

The International 70mm Association

Digital Highway offers cinema's no way out!

Digital techniques and possibilities may be indefinite and of high quality level, the cinema without conventional projection equipment is still not yet the cinema of to-morrow. This is the issue of a discussion by satellite between Belgian, other European and American specialists in Brussels about a.o. the future of movie and cinema.

The information-highway - digital transmission of picture, sound and other information by optical cable-networks - is in the limelight.

In the Brussels cinema megaplex Kinopolis - with 24 auditoria the top megaplex in Europe - the possibilities of digital techniques for distribution and performance were discussed.

Quality

The specialists concluded rapidly: Joost Bert and Bob Claeys - cinema megaplex entrepreneurs in Belgium and France of the same name - referred to a presentation in the U.S. From the studios in Hollywood a picture had been brought into the cinema by a telecommunication-network. The projection itself was the cream of the jest: the quality was inferior, in the opinion of everybody.

Joost Bert expects that it will take another ten years before projection apparatus ready for sale can compete on the screen with the conventional equipment.

America

Still the Americans expect to supply by 1997 about 10.000 cinemas with these new techniques. The owners of Kinopolis are not so sure about it. "The highway may be in order, but leaving the highway there are apparently problems". Flanders movieproducer and moviedistributor Jan Verneyen feels that filmland has to embrace this new technique.

Pictures entering the auditoria by phonecable are the future. For time being however the conventional means will be sufficient. They are even improving every day, according to Bob Claeys of the Kinopolis-group. He concluded that the technical possibilities of digital transmitted picture and sound still are incomplete in order to equal the quality of the 35 or 70 mm films of today in large complexes as Kinopolis with screens of 22 m width.

Brussels, August 26, 1994.

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The Moving Image.

In the early fifties the motion picture industry became aware they had to do something in the struggle against the coming television. In 1952 "THIS IS CINERAMA" opened in New-York and this 3-panel system became an enormous success ! In 1953 "CinemaScope" was introduced. A process with anamorphic lenses that uses the normal 35 mm film. A lot of other "Scopes" followed. However, one of the financial backers of the Cinerama process, Michael Todd, understood that this system was not suitable for general releases because of its complicated technique in the theatres concerned. And so he went searching for another process!

In October 1955 Todd proudly presented his "TODD-AO 70MM" process together with the premiere of Rodgers and Hammerstein's "OKLAHOMA!" a beautiful film with stereophonic sound via six magnetic sound tracks !

In the following years many great movies were photographed in one of the new 65/70mm processes. However, after 1970 the 65mm processes seemed to die out, one of the reasons was the new "blow-up" technique by which 70mm prints could be taken from 35mm negatives. No progress was made for many years. Except Douglas Trumbull, who announced in 1984 his "SHOWSCAN" 70mm theatre (with 60 frames per second).

And then suddenly, in 1987 Todd-AO/Glen Glenn introduced their new lightweight CINESPACE 70 cameras in an attempt to convince producers to use their unsurpassed 70mm process again ! And in 1990 Arriflex announced their new 65mm camera ARRIFLEX 765.

But it looks as if the majority of the Hollywood companies think all we need is special effects dramas, rough language and the more violence the better. What a bad example for our young people who have the future !! However, producers and directors should not only think of a young public when they produce films, but also people over forty and fifty years sure like a good movie with a good story seen in a comfortable cinema ! During the screenings of the restored "Lawrence of Arabia" in glorious 70mm here in Holland (in the famous PARADE CINEMA) I have never seen so many older people in the cinema: more than with any other film

In Europe we have a lot of musicals on the stage at the moment - with great success - but film producers seem to have completely forgotten this phenomenon. Maybe the restoration of "My Fair Lady" will change that.

More good stories, sometimes a musical - with digital sound- and better (65mm) photography will make the cinema of the future more attractive to a larger audience.

The International 70mm Association

Why not put back on the track the "70mm Roadshow" from the fifties, "epic" films with Entrance music, Intermission and Finale score,

In 1992 Ron Howard tried to upgrade his "Far and Away" with the new Panavision Super 70 cameras. And Mark Magidson has made a beautiful documentary "Baraka" with the new TODD-AO cameras. Just before the beginning of the filming in 1992 of "Little Buddha", Vittorio Storaro convinced Bernardo Bertolucci to use the new Arriflex 765.

But the rebirth of the 65/70mm technique yet seems still far and away. In Europe there are a lot of cinemas with 70mm installations. And in all new cinema complexes one or more auditoria are already equipped with new 70mm projectors. Producers and production companies should not ignore these developments!

Epilogue

I hope the trend, that started in Belgium, to build again large cinemas with screens from wall to wall and many auditoria for 70mm screenings, will not be disturbed by the lack of interest for 65mm photography by film producers. For the struggle against home video and other forms of amusement, the cinema of the future not only needs digital sound but also a better quality moving image, projected on large wide screens.

Johan C.M. Wolthuis.

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Music by Frederick Loewe Produced by Herman Levin
From the play by Bernard Shaw Production and Costumes by Cecil Beaton
Music supervised by Andre Previn Music by Frederick Loewe
Screenplay by Alan Jay Lerner Produced by Jack L. Warner
Directed by George Cukor Restored by Robert A. Harris and James G. ...

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