

3-Strip Films in Japan!

Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre", Osaka's "OS Theatre" (both in January 1955), and later (in November 1962) Tokyo's "Theatre Tokyo" were Japan's first 3-strip Cinerama venues.



Images left: the Tokyo "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) rebuilt in 1924 after a fire caused by the `Great Kantō Earthquake´ on 1st September 1923. It became a Cinerama venue from January 1955 until December 1962 and was demolished in 1964. The current "Imperial" (see image bottom right) opened in 1966 – mainly as a venue for major commercial plays and musicals. The theatre is located in the commercial district "Marunouchi" (丸の内) in Tokyo´s ward "Chiyoda-ku" (千代田区). Note in the black and white image bottom left the gathering of people at a box office for the screening of a Cinerama movie. The ticket top right is dated 36-5-21 for a screening at 7 pm on 21 May 1961 ("36" is a Japanese time period relating to the length in years of Emperor Hirohito´s reign: Shōwa 36 = 1961). 3-strip films were shown at this theatre until 16 December 1962 – then they switched to 70mm film projection with the Japan premiere of "Mutiny on the Bounty" [(戦艦バウンティ), USA, 1962] on 22.12.1962. The very last movie shown at this "Imperial Theatre" was a revival season of "Lawrence of Arabia" [(アラビアのロレンス), UK, 1962], which ran until 31.01.1964. The building was then demolished.

Opening program of the totally rebuilt "Imperial Theatre" was a very successful live spectacle that ran for years. Due to its length (8 hours, plus intermissions) it was initially divided into two parts. It was based on Margaret Mitchell's novel "Gone with the Wind". Toho Company, Ltd. (東宝), a well-known Japanese film, theater production, and distribution company, had purchased the theatrical rights from the estate.





Top left: advert dated 17.08.1966. The stage production "Gone with the Wind" (風と共に去りぬ) – Part 1 – opens on 03.11.1966 (advance ticket sales from 20.08.1966). Opening of the new "Imperial Theatre"(帝国劇場) building on 21.09.1966. Below: a ticket dated 23.02.1967 (Shōwa 42), and the advert on the right (dated 26.02.1967) announces the second part of the "Gone with the Wind" stage production. Later, the 2 parts were combined into a single, shorter production that had another successful run.

CINERAMA (シネラマ) at Tokyo's old "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) – Japan's first 3-strip venue.

From "Motion Picture Herald" (an American film industry trade paper)
dated 15 January 1955: — Cinerama opened in Japan (Fourth Overseas Showing) —

""This is Cinerama" opened at the Tokyo "Imperial Theatre" on 5th January 1955, following a preview attended by government officials and cabinet members. Japan is the fourth overseas nation to show the multi-dimensional medium. Toho Company is presenting the film in Japan by arrangement with Robin International, Inc., which has international distribution rights from Stanley Warner Corporation. Special commentary was recorded in Japanese."

Author's note: the previous 3 overseas showings were:

a.) from 02.09.1954 in Damascus (Syria) on the occasion of the First Damascus International Exposition – here two interesting links about Cinerama at this exposition:

http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/the-united-states-presents-cinerama-in-damascus-1954/ https://csme.indiana.edu/documents/profiles/Behind%20Cineramas%20Aluminum%20Curtain.pdf

b.) from 30.09.1954 at London's "Casino" Theatre (UK) – the film's European premiere, and... c.) from 05.12.1954 (another source gives 07.12.1954) in Bangkok (Thailand) on the occasion of a Constitution Fair.

From "New York VARIETY" dated 29.12.1954: — "Cinerama" clicks at Bangkok's Fair —

"Washington, Dec. 28. – Topped by "This is Cinerama" the U.S. exhibit at the Bangkok Fair in Thailand took first prize for originality, the U.S. Information Agency has announced here. Impact of "Cinerama" was just as great as it had been previously at the Damascus Fair in Syria. Crowds were so big and ticket demand so great that the show is being held over for two additional weeks after the end of the fair. It is being shown in a 2,000-seat auditorium, hence the added time will enable an estimated 56,000 more Siamese to witness "Cinerama". U.S. exhibit also included American fireworks, a see-your-self television show, sale of TV and HI-FI equipment."

At the time of the introduction of Cinerama to Japan (in 1955) there existed a close cooperation between Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" and Osaka's "OS Theatre". Conversion of the Imperial took place in late 1954. The OS was under construction as a new conventional cinema in 1954 when the decision was made to alter the design and open as a 3-strip house. After the closure of the "Imperial Theatre" the cooperation was continued with the "Theatre Tokyo" – an existing 70mm house, which had been newly revamped for "Super Cinerama".

CINERAMA (シネラマ) at the "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) located in district "Umeda" (梅田) in the "Kita-ku"(北区) ward of Osaka – for a more detailed description on this cinema, also on the "Theatre Tokyo", you can read in the report: "William Wyler's `Ben-Hur' and `Cinerama' in Japan" that is available on the introductory web page "Bigger than `Ben-Hur' – My Japan Cinerama Project".



Above: Osaka "Cinerama" announcement adverts dated 29.12.1954 and 14.01.1955. Advert left: (1955 年の話題を獨占する!) We will dominate the topic of the year 1955! (シネラマ) CINERAMA. Small Text in the image: "Opening soon, the new OS-Theatre ... the Greatest Cinerama Show Palace in the World". (日本初公開慈々迫る!) First public exhibition in Japan! — at "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) and at "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場). Advert on the right: (明 15 日世紀の驚異実現!) Tomorrow on the 15th the Astonishment of the Century!



CINERAMA, (前売中) advance sales.



Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) at the time when Cinerama films were shown there.



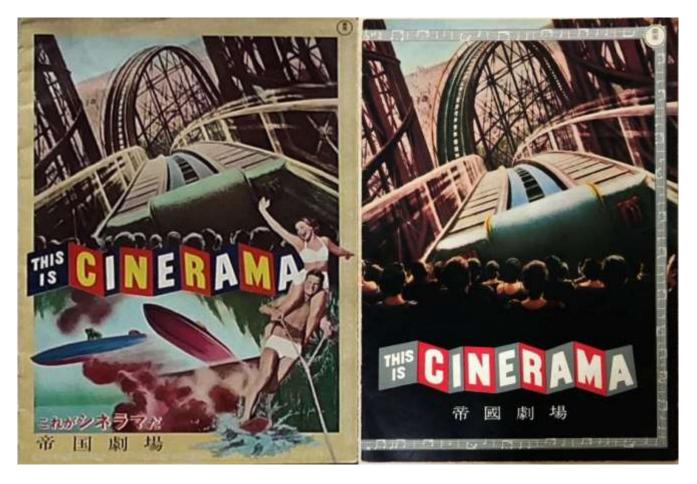
The "OS Theatre" ticket on the right is dated 12.05.1957 (Shōwa 32)

The nine 3-strip films shown in Japan and information material (excerpts from souvenir brochures, flyers, tickets, etc.) at a variety of venues:



The big show began with "This is Cinerama" – a flyer of the movie dated January 1955.

A.) "This is Cinerama" (これがシネラマだ) / USA. World Premiere on 30.09.1952.
Japan: Public Premiere at "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on 05.01.1955,
and at Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) on 15.01.1955.



Two different "This is Cinerama" souvenir brochures from Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre".

Below: adverts taken from vintage Tokyo newspapers:



(あヅと驚〈20世紀の驚異!) Wonders and surprises of the 20th century!

An announcement advert dated 24.12.1954. "This is Cinerama" (これがシネラマだ) opens at Tokyo´s "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) and at Osaka´s "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) on 05.01.1955. (Advance ticket sales from 25.12.1954)



Left: a further announcement advert dated 29.12.1954. Middle: a large premiere advert dated 04.01.1955 with a same premiere date at both cinemas: (明 5 日歴史的大公開)

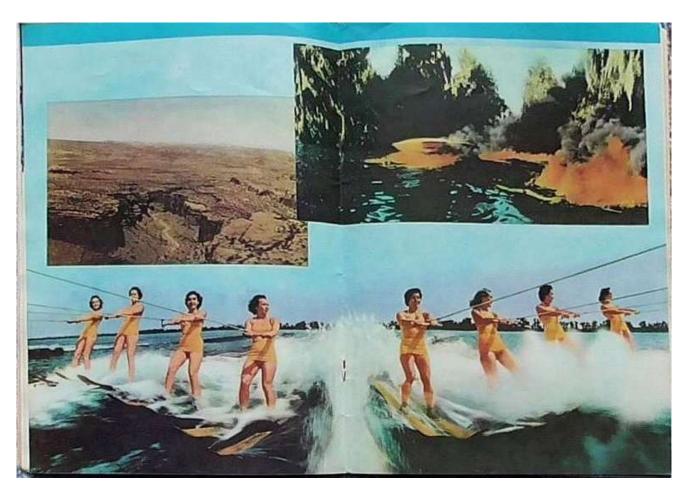
"Tomorrow on 5th Great Historical Opening" – although the event took place in Osaka with a delay of 10 days. On the right: an advert dated 21.12.1961 – "This is Cinerama" opens tomorrow on 22.12.1961 at "Imperial Theatre". This had been a second run of the film at this venue. A third Tokyo season of the film took place at the "Theatre Tokyo" from 01.11.1964. (See advert next to the photo below)



Above: an announcement advert dated 03.12.1961 – a rerun of "This is Cinerama" at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" from 22.12.1961, advance ticket sales from 08.12.1961.



The "Theatre Tokyo" at the time of its opening in November 1955 with the movie "The Seven Year Itch" [(七年目の浮気), USA, 1955]. Right an advert dated 16.10.1964 – a rerun of "This is Cinerama" at this venue opening on 01.11.1964 (advance ticket sales from 17.10.1964). It was the first of a total of six 3-strip films showing at this venue on the occasion of a "Cinerama Festival" (シネラマ祭り) that lasted until 30.04.1965.



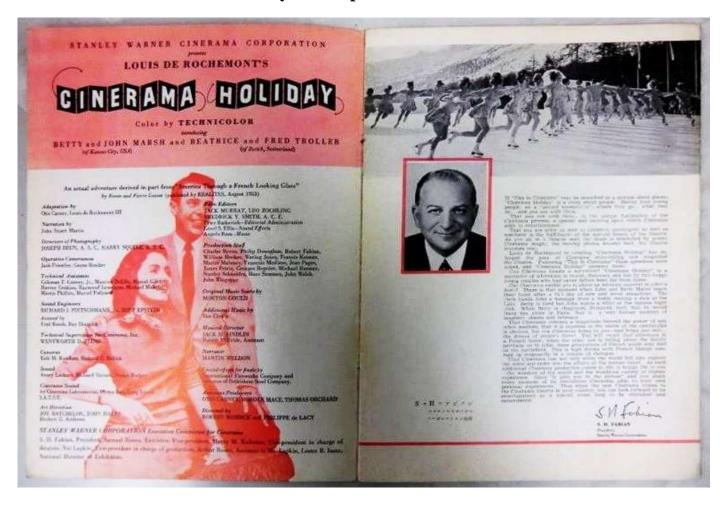


Above: pages from the left of the two souvenir brochures shown at the top.

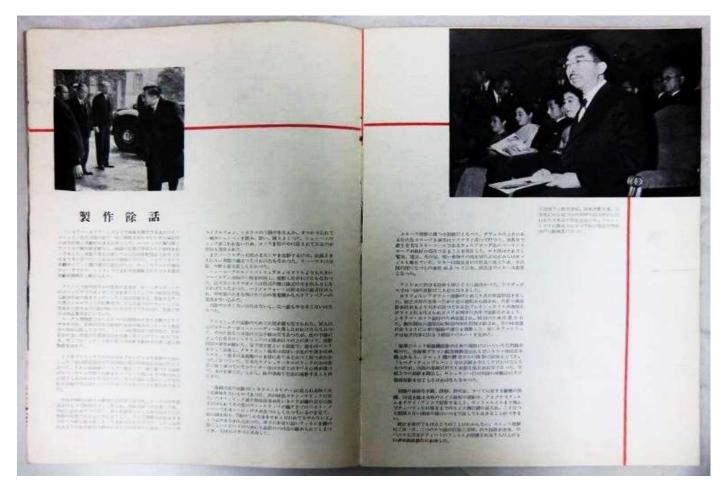
B.) "Cinerama Holiday" (シネラマ・ホリデー) / USA. World Premiere on 08.02.1955. Japan: Public Premiere at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on 21.12.1955, and at Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) on 24.12.1955.



Two different "Cinerama Holiday" souvenir brochures from Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre".



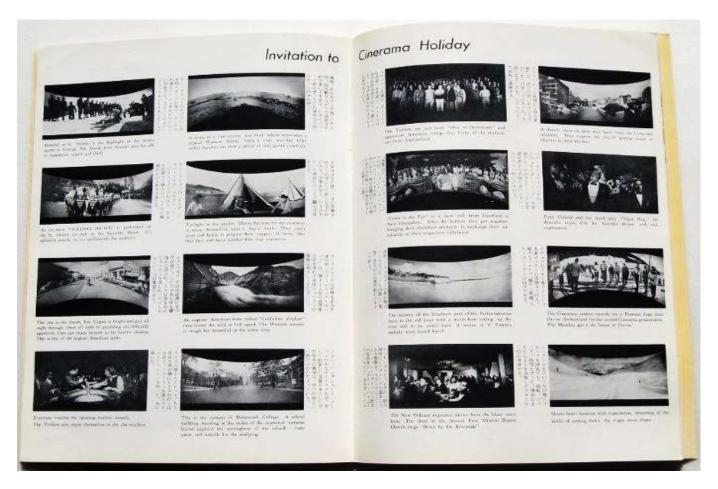
Pages from the left souvenir brochure.



Pages from the left souvenir brochure – Japan's Emperor Hirohito at "Imperial Theatre".



... also taken from the left souvenir brochure.



Pages from the right souvenir brochure.



A (1955) fold-out leaflet, and on the right an announcement advert dated 30.11.1955: premiere of "Cinerama Holiday" at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" on 21.12.1955, and premiere at Osaka's "OS Theatre" on 24.12.1955. Advance ticket sales from 01.12.1955.

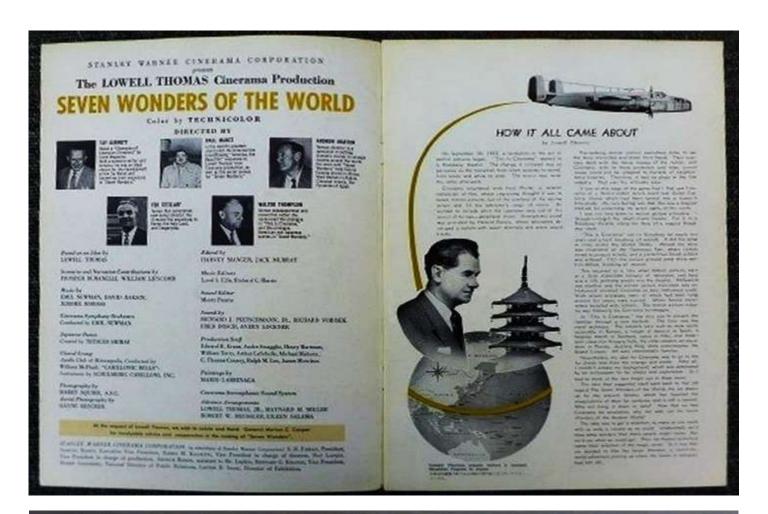


The movie's premiere advert dated 20.12.1955. Middle: an announcement advert dated 12.06.1960 (advance ticket sales from 15.06.1960) – a rerun of "Cinerama Holiday" from 01.07.1960 at "Imperial Theatre", and rightmost a small announcement advert dated 19.11.1964 – a rerun at "Theatre Tokyo, opening on 01.12.1964 (Cinerama Festival).

C.) "Seven Wonders of the World" (世界の七不思議) / USA. World Premiere on 10.04.1956. Japan: Public Premiere at "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on 15.03.1957.



Two different "Seven Wonders of the World" souvenir brochures from Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre"





Above: pages from the left souvenir brochure.



"Seven Wonders of the World" (世界の七不思議) – a (1957) fold-out advertising leaflet. Middle: an announcement advert dated 21.02.1957 – advance ticket sales from tomorrow, the 22nd, premiere on 15.03.1957. Rightmost a premiere advert dated 14.03.1957, "Seven Wonders ..." opening at "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on following day.



An advert dated 13.12.1960 announcing a second run of "Seven Wonders of the World" at "Imperial Theatre" opening on 29.12.1960 (advance ticket sales from 15.12). Middle: an announcement ad dated 29.12.1964 – a rerun at "Theatre Tokyo" opening on 01.01.1965 (Cinerama Festival), and on the right another advertising leaflet dated 1957.

D.) "Search for Paradise" (世界の楽園 – Paradise of the World) / USA. World Premiere on 24.09.1957. Japan: Public Premiere at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on 01.06.1958.



"Search for Paradise" souvenir brochure from Osaka's "OS Theatre"(OS 劇場), and on the right a Tokyo premiere advert dated 31.05.1958 – premiere at "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on following day (01.06.1958).

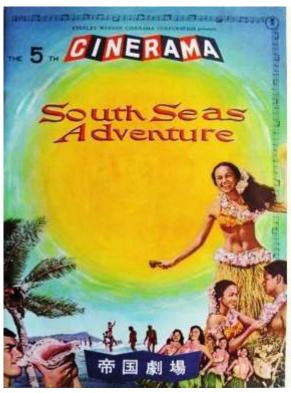


"Imperial Theatre" adverts for "Search for Paradise" (世界の楽園) left dated 14.11.1958, and on the right dated 05.03.1959.





- A (1958) fold-out leaflet "Search for Paradise", and right an advert dated 28.02.1965. The movie at "Theatre Tokyo" a rerun from 01.03.1965 (Cinerama Festival).
- E.) "South Seas Adventure" (南海の冒険) / USA. World Premiere on 15.07.1958. Japan: Public Premiere at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on 25.04.1959.





"South Seas Adventure" souvenir brochure, and on the right the premiere advert dated 24.04.1959 – opening of the film at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" tomorrow on 25.04.1959.



From the souvenir brochure – on the left is the enchanting Ramine.



An "Imperial Theatre" advert dated 17.03.1960, and on the right an advert dated 31.03.1965 – a rerun (Cinerama Festival) of "South Seas Adventure" (南海の冒険) at "Theatre Tokyo" (テアトル東京) from tomorrow (01.04.1965).

F.) "Windjammer: The Voyage of the Christian Radich" (大西洋 2 万哩 - 20,000 Miles on the Atlantic) / USA. World Premiere on 08.04.1958.

Japan: Public Premiere at "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) on 29.04.1962 – the last 3-strip film at this venue. The "Theatre Tokyo" (テアトル東京) would then take over Tokyo 3-strip duties with the Cinerama premiere of "How the West Was Won" (西部開拓史) on 29.11.1962.



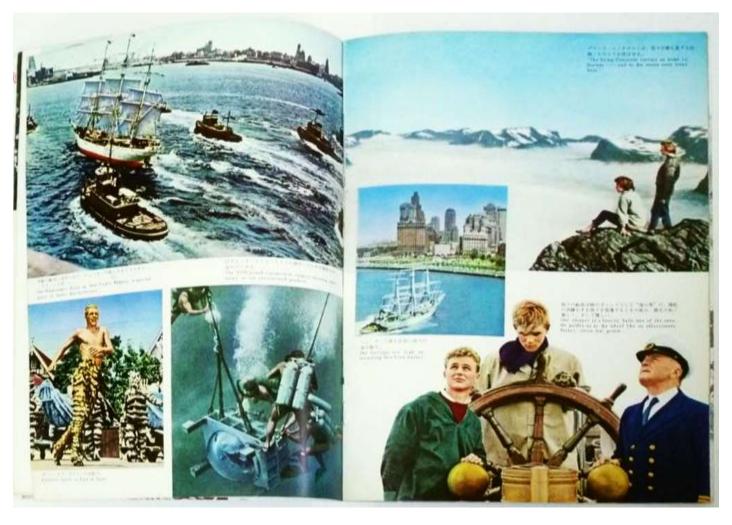
Souvenir brochure of "Windjammer" (大西洋 2 万哩) at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場), and on the right an announcement advert dated 25.04.1962 – premiere of "Windjammer" at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" on 29.04.1962. It was projected here in CINERAMA (シネラマ), and not in CINEMIRACLE (シネミラクル).



A "Windjammer" ticket from "Imperial Theatre" dated 23.06.1962 (Shōwa 37)







Above: pages from the movie's souvenir brochure.



An advertising leaflet. The film at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" (帝国劇場) and at Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) – (総天然色) Color Film (日木語版) Japanese Version / (シネラマ提供) provided by Cinerama.



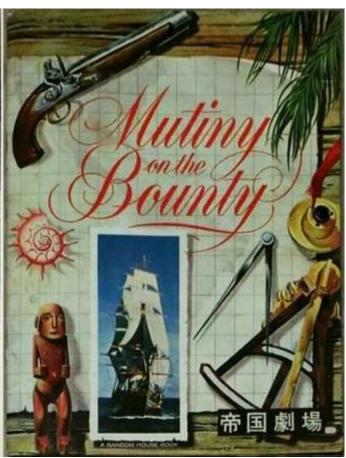


Premiere advert dated 28.04.1962 – "Windjammer" at Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" on 29.04.1962. Middle: advert dated 18.09.1962 – the last weeks of "Windjammer". Rightmost an announcement advert dated 22.11.1962 – Japan premiere of the following film "Mutiny on the Bounty" [(戦艦パウンティ), USA, 1962] in 70mm at "Imperial Theatre" on 22.12.1962 (advance ticket sales from 24.11.1962).



An invitation flyer: "Windjammer" at Osaka's "OS Theatre", and on the right an advert dated 31.01.1965 – a rerun of "Windjammer" (大西洋 2 万哩) at "Theatre Tokyo" – [Cinerama Festival (シネラマ祭り)] – opening on 01.02.1965.





Premiere advert dated 21.12.1962 – Lewis Milestone's "Mutiny on the Bounty" (戦艦バウンティ) in 70mm at Tokyo´s ''Imperial Theatre'' (帝国劇場) on 22.12.1962.

On the right the movie's souvenir brochure. A festive pre-premiere took place under attendance of Emperor Hirohito and Empress Kōjun (born "Nagako").

Watch: https://youtu.be/0E2V5TKHyn8

Previously, Emperor Hirohito had already visited festive performances of "Cinerama Holiday" (on the occasion of the movie's Japan premiere at "Imperial Theatre" in December 1955), and "Ben-Hur" (Grand Charity Premiere at "Theatre Tokyo" in March 1960).

An excerpt taken from an article written in "New York VARIETY" dated 30.05.1962:

Tokyo, May 22 - Cinerama president Nicolas Reisini said: "Our business here since 1955 has brought 16,000,000 people to the two theatres in Japan (author's note: Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" and Osaka's "OS Theatre"). To our amazement, repeat showings sometimes brought bigger box office than the original runs".

Although Tokyo's "Shochiku-za" Theatre soon will be showing films here in Russia's `Kinopanorama' process, Reisini does not fear the competition. He said: "They copied us. When I first saw `Kinopanorama', I asked a Soviet official why they did it, and he replied: if you are accusing us of copying, and suppose we agree that we did, should we copy the second best? I was flattered", Reisini beamed, "they copied our mistakes too."

G.) "Two Hours in USSR" (大いなる楽園) / USSR (1958/59).

Produced in "Kinopanorama" (キノパノラマ) – in Japanese "Kinerama" (キネラマ).
Premiere in France at the "Kinopanorama" Theatre on 25.09.1959. Japan: Public
Premiere at Tokyo´s Asakusa (浅草) "Shochiku-za" (松竹座) Theatre on 01.07.1962.

(The season ran about 4 months)



(キネラマ誕生!) For the first time Kinerama!

The movie's Japanese title: "大いなる楽園" – Great Paradise



Advert dated 16.06.1962 – advance ticket sales from 17.06.1962.

(キネラマ誕生!) For the first time Kinerama! Russian's "Kinopanorama" 3-strip projection process (film: "Two Hours in USSR" / Japanese title: "大いなる楽園") was shown at Tokyo's "Shochiku-za" (松竹座) Theatre – located in Tokyo's district Asakusa (浅草) – from 01.07.1962. It is the first "Kinopanorama" film in Japan.



By the way, "Two Hours in USSR" was even shown in Germany in 3-strip "Kinopanorama" at West-Berlin's Cinerama "Capitol Theater" opening on 01.06.1961. The film was presented with the system's "9-channel magnetic sound" – is written in the movie's poster (see above) and in the newspaper premiere advert (see below).

The movie's German title is "Zwischen Nordpol und Krim".





"Soviet KINOPANORAMA debuts in Japan" – a full-page advert about "Two Hours in the USSR" taken from the trade magazine "Movie Marketing" dated June 1962.

The film was worldwide distributed by SOVEXPORTFILM, Moscow.

`Kinopanorama' also see: http://www.in70mm.com/news/2015/kinopanorama/index.htm

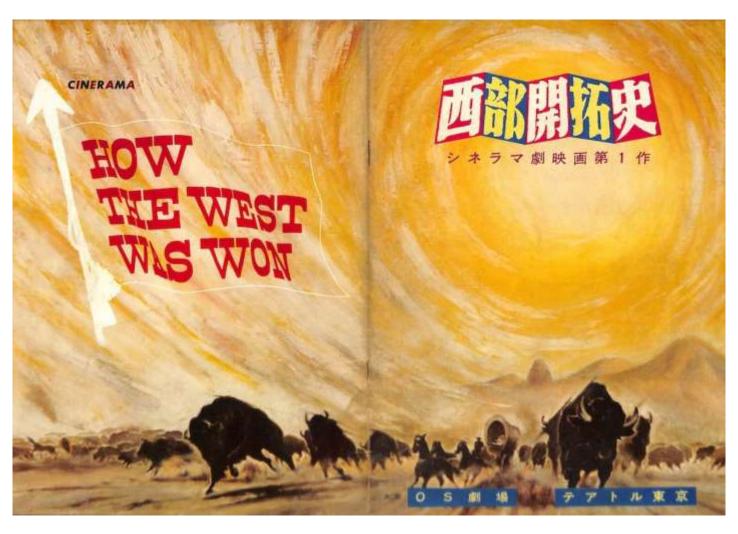
H.) "How the West Was Won"(西部開拓史 – Western Pioneering History) / USA. World Premiere on 01.11.1962. Japan: Public Premiere at "Theatre Tokyo" (テアトル東京) on 29.11.1962 – most likely also at Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) on this date. Last screening at "Theatre Tokyo" on 05.03.1964 – so, here season length: 1 year, 3 months and 5 days (or 66 weeks).



A "How the West Was Won"(西部開拓史) ticket from "Theatre Tokyo" dated 17.12.1962 (Shōwa 37).



A large newspaper announcement advert dated 20.09.1962 – appearing more than 2 months before the premiere. (シネラマ 劇 映画第 1 作) The first dramatic feature film in Cinerama (author's note: presented in Japan). (世紀の大公開迫る!) The era made accessible to the public! It was the very first 3-strip film shown at "Theatre Tokyo".



The souvenir brochure – on the right the front page.





Carroll Baker



*+05-<fh-



Henry Fondo



DICTO YEARY

Report France



Debbie Reynolds









Gregory Yeck



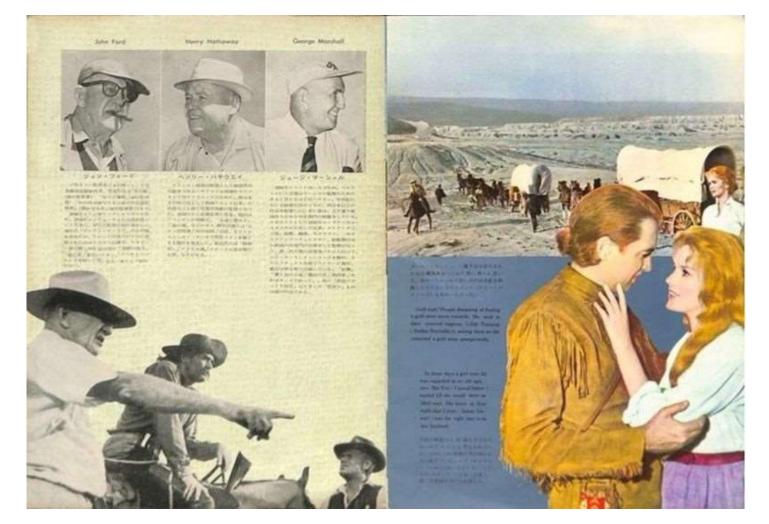
George Peppard

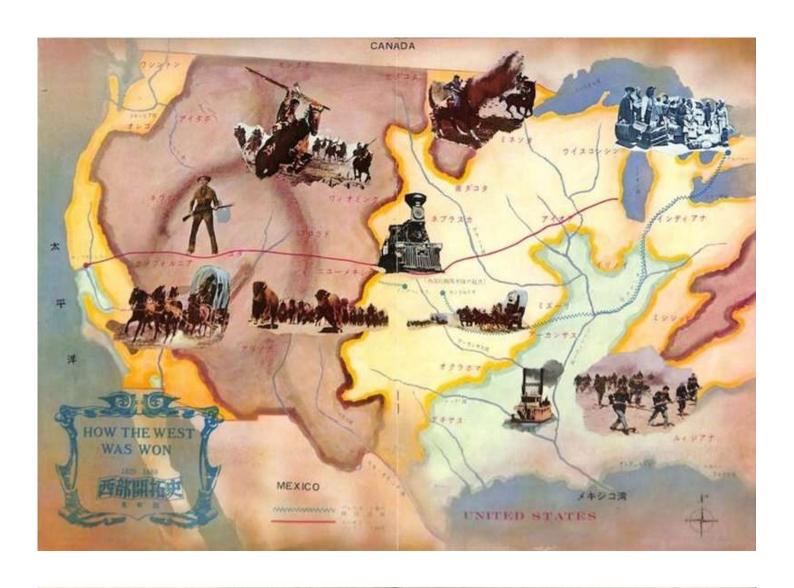










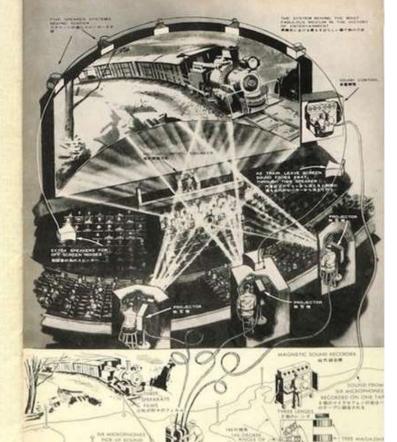


シネラマとはどんなものか?

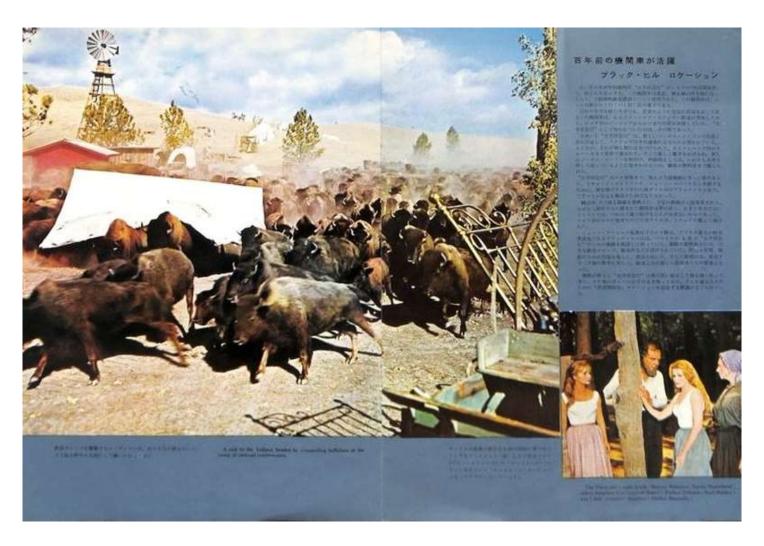




は、一部の日本の本語ではません。このイスト、 ショウマは不能度のオートメーション ※成の地で出げまってットーの目的でのため地(は可能と り、1年間・の)を形する。 も成立の世代成本の全様が必要から発症してよるショー ・のようのでは成本のではないましょうと、機関的のはマート ルイトではない、機関ののの地でフェストはからよ



MIES.



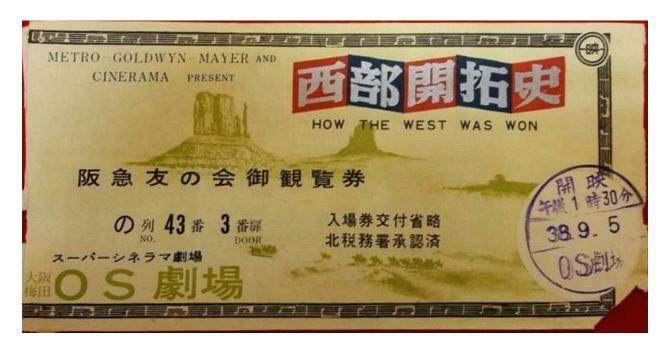
Above: pages from the movie's souvenir brochure.



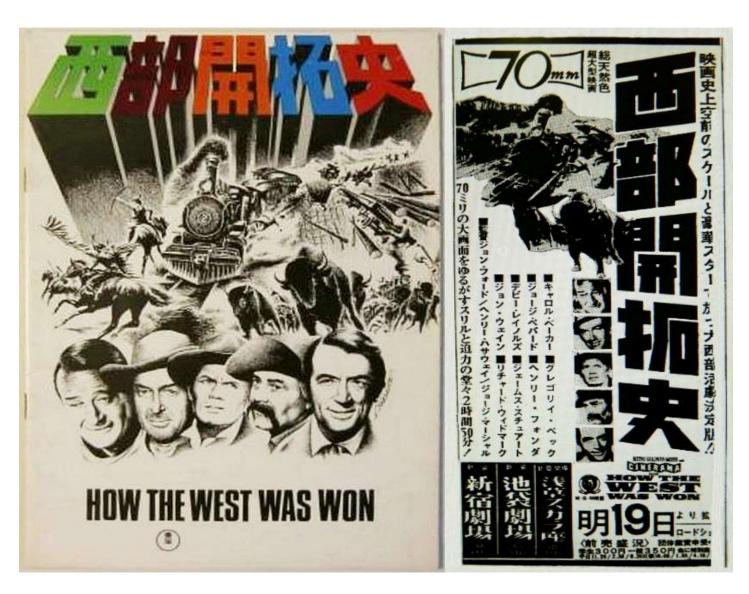
Above left: an announcement advert dated 08.11.1962 – advance ticket sales from tomorrow 09.11.1962. Japan premiere of "How the West Was Won" (西部開拓史) on 29.11.1962, and on the right an advert dated 28.11.1962: tomorrow premiere at "Theatre Tokyo" (テアトル東京) – (明 29 日大公開) Public opening tomorrow on 29th.



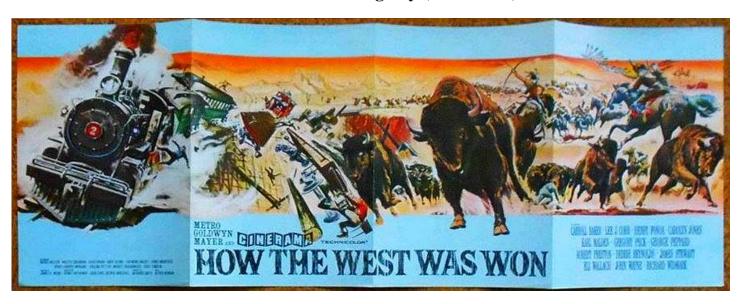
An advertising leaflet: "How the West Was Won" at Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場).



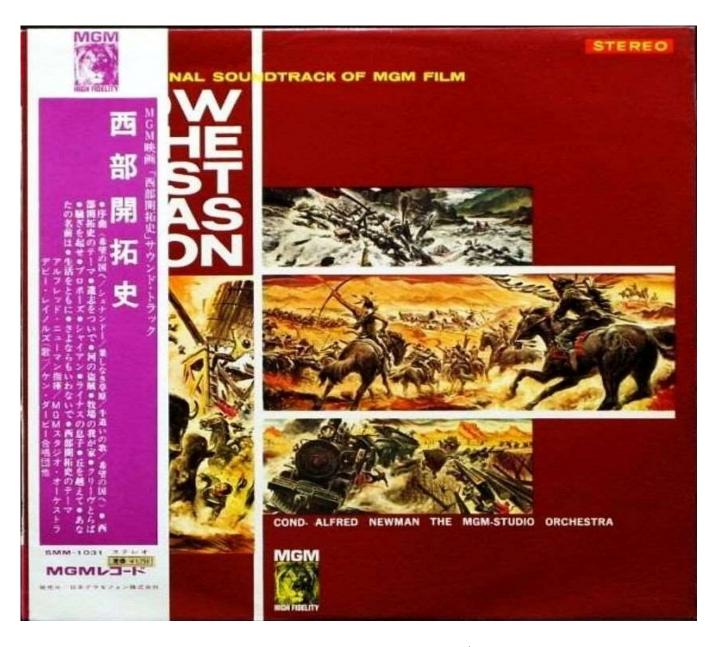
A "How the West Was Won" (西部開拓史) ticket from Osaka's "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) dated 05.09.1963 (Shōwa 38).



Another souvenir brochure of "HTWWW", and on the right an advert dated 18.11.1964 — screening of the 70mm version of the Western epic at 3 venues in Tokyo: the "Shinjuku Theatre" (新宿劇場), the "Ikebukuro Theatre" (池袋劇場), and most likely (in the advert very difficult to read) at the "Asakusa Scala-za" (浅草スカラ座) Theatre on following day (19.11.1964).



A Japanese advertising leaflet.



Japanese records (LP and single) of Alfred Newman's amazing musical score.



Years later, "HTWWW" (70mm version) had a further rerun (advertised and projected in "D150") at Tokyo's "Shinjuku Plaza Theatre" (新宿プラザ劇場). The venue opened on 31.10.1969 and closed forever on 07.11.2008 – it was equipped with a D150 system.





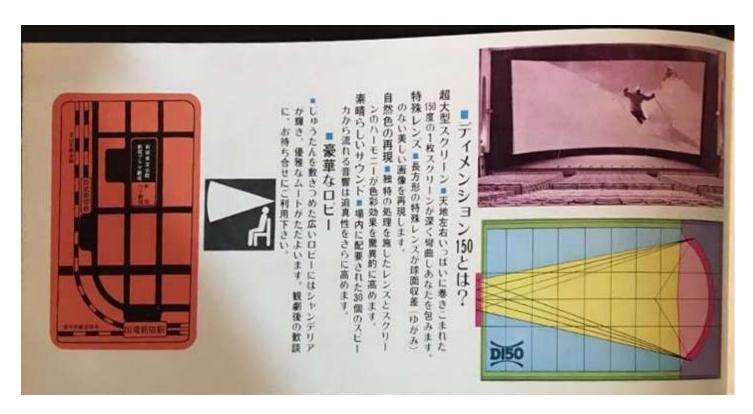
An announcement advert dated 23.02.1970, and on the right an opening advert dated 27.02.1970 – screening of "HTWWW" from tomorrow (28.02.1970) in D150 projection.



An advertising flyer from the "Shinjuku Plaza Theatre" about the movie – although "How the West Was Won" wasn't, of course, photographed in D150 like the films "The Bible" [(天地創造), USA / Italy, 1966] or "Patton" [(パットン大戦車軍団), USA, 1970].



The "Shinjuku Plaza Theatre" (新宿プラザ劇場) showing at the time "Tora!Tora!Tora!" (トラ・トラ・トラ!).



Tokyo's D150 "Shinjuku Plaza Theatre" (新宿プラザ劇場) with its curved screen. Watch on YouTube a clip about the day of the theatre's closure:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-brxPYoWZg

There also existed a D150 venue in Osaka – namely the "Hankyu Plaza Theater" (阪急プラザ劇場)

See: https://blogs.yahoo.co.jp/room304zombie/22291745.html



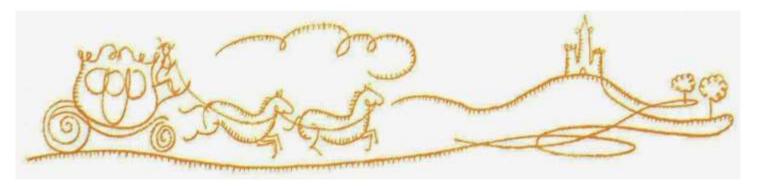
The "Hankyu Plaza Theatre" even ran the 70mm version of "Gone with the Wind"[(風と共に去りぬ), USA,1939] in D150 projection.

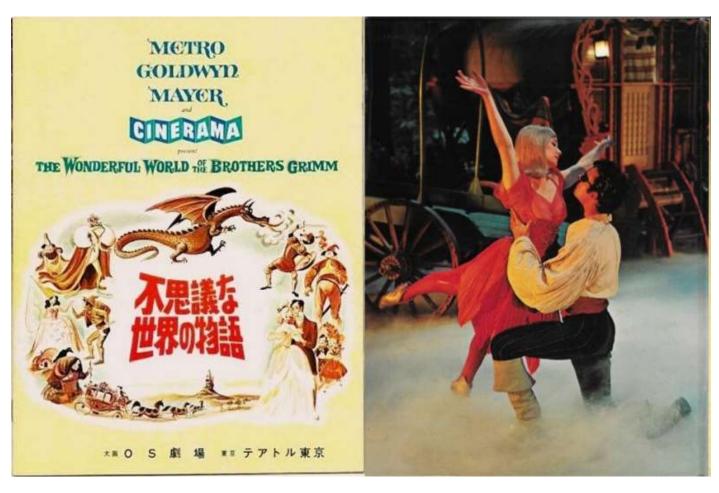


A "Gone with the Wind" discount coupon ticket from Osaka's "Hankyu Plaza Theatre".

I.) "The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm"

(不思議な世界の物語 – A Story of a Mysterious World) / USA. World Premiere on 07.08.1962. Japan: Public Premiere at "Theatre Tokyo" (テアトル東京), and also at Osaka´s "OS Theatre" (OS 劇場) on 06.03.1964.





The souvenir brochure (front and back side) of the 3-strip Cinerama film "The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm" (USA, 1962).



The movie's poster, and on the right the fairly tale castle high in the Bavarian Alps.



A "Brothers Grimm" announcement advert dated 28.02.1964 – premiere at "Theatre Tokyo" on 06.03.1964. (絶賛上映中シネラマ西部開拓史 3 月 5 日迄)
"The acclaimed screening of `HTWWW' in Cinerama is still running until 05.03.1964".
On the right a leaflet – premiere at "Theatre Tokyo" and at Osaka's "OS Theatre" on 06.03.1964.



A ''The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm''(不思議な世界の物語) ticket from ''Theatre Tokyo'' dated 08.04.1964 (Shōwa 39).



Premiere advert dated 05.03.1964. Public opening (大公開) of "The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm"(不思議な世界の物語) at "Theatre Tokyo" (テアトル東京) on 06.03.1964. On the right an advert dated 23.07.1964.

<u>Tokyo's "Imperial Theatre" – Cinerama 3-strip dates (1955 – 1962)</u>

05.01.1955 – 20.12.1955 / "This is Cinerama" / 50 weeks
21.12.1955 – 14.03.1957 / "Cinerama Holiday" / 64 weeks, 1 day
15.03.1957 – 31.05.1958 / "Seven Wonders of the World" / 63 weeks, 1 day
01.06.1958 – 24.04.1959 / "Search for Paradise" / 46 weeks, 5 days
25.04.1959 – 30.06.1960 / "South Seas Adventure" / 61 weeks, 5 days
01.07.1960 – 28.12.1960 / "Cinerama Holiday" / 25 weeks, 5 days
29.12.1960 – 31.07.1961 / "Seven Wonders of the World" / 30 weeks, 4 days
01.08.1961 – 21.12.1961 / "Search for Paradise" / 20 weeks, 2 days
22.12.1961 – 28.04.1962 / "This is Cinerama" / 18 weeks, 1 day
29.04.1962 – 16.12.1962 / "Windjammer" / 33 weeks
22.12.1963 – 26.09.1963 / "Mutiny on the Bounty" in 70mm / 29 weeks
13.07.1963 – 26.09.1963 / "Tiko and the Shark" in 35mm / 10 weeks, 5 days
27.09.1963 – 31.01.1964 / "Lawrence of Arabia" in 70mm / 18 weeks







A drawing of Tokyo's Cinerama "Imperial Theatre"; middle: an advert dated 21.09.1963 announcing a rerun (the last movie at this venue) of "Lawrence of Arabia" [(アラビアのロレンス), UK, 1962] opening on 27.09.1963, and rightmost a last small advert dated 16.01.1964 – screening of the movie until 31.01.1964.

The theatre was then demolished.

Previously, "Lawrence ..." had its Japan premiere at "Yuraku-za"(有楽座) Theatre on 14.02.1963, located in Tokyo's ward "Chiyoda-ku" (千代田区), where it ran until 27.09.1963.

"Theatre Tokyo" – Cinerama 3-strip dates (1962 – 1965)

29.11.1962-05.03.1964 / "How the West Was Won" / 66 weeks 06.03.1964-31.10.1964 / "The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm" / 34 weeks



01.11.1964 – 30.11.1964 / "This is Cinerama" / 4 weeks, 1 day 01.12.1964 – 31.12.1964 / "Cinerama Holiday" / 4 weeks, 2 days 01.01.1965 – 31.01.1965 / "Seven Wonders of the World" / 4 weeks, 2 days 01.02.1965 – 28.02.1965 / "Windjammer" / 4 weeks 01.03.1965 – 31.03.1965 / "Search for Paradise" / 4 weeks, 2 days 01.04.1965 – 30.04.1965 / "South Seas Adventure" / 4 weeks, 1 day

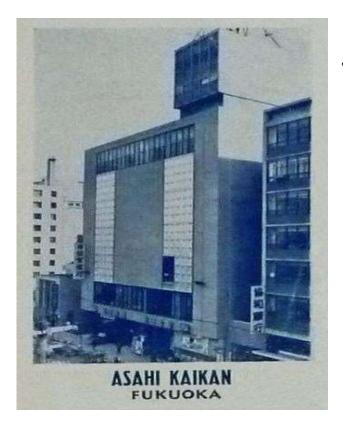
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70mm Cinerama film dates at "Theatre Tokyo" (1965 – 1970)

01.05.1965 – 03.09.1965 / "Mediterranean Holiday" / 18 weeks 04.09.1965 – 31.03.1966 / "The Greatest Story Ever Told" / 29 weeks, 5 days 01.04.1966 – 27.10.1966 / "Battle of the Bulge" / 30 weeks 28.10.1966 – 31.01.1967 / "Khartoum" / 13 weeks, 4 days 01.02.1967 – 05.10.1967 / "Grand Prix" / 35 weeks, 1 day 11.04.1968 – 19.09.1968 / "2001: A Space Odyssey" / 23 weeks 21.12.1968 – 28.02.1969 / "Ice Station Zebra" / 10 weeks 01.03.1969 – 04.04.1969 / a rerun of "2001: A Space Odyssey" / 5 weeks (there were further short seasons of "Grand Prix", "The Greatest Story Ever Told", and also of "2001: A Space Odyssey" at "Theatre Tokyo" after 1970)

Osaka's "OS Theatre" – Cinerama 3-strip dates (1955 – 1965)

The "OS Theatre" had the longest continuous run in Japan of 3-strip Cinerama titles commencing when it opened with "This is Cinerama" on 15.01.1955 until conversion to single-strip with the screening of "Mediterranean Holiday" in 70mm Cinerama in May of 1965. Unfortunately, I have no access to cinema advertisements from Osaka, but I noticed that seasons predominantly ran in tandem with the Tokyo screenings at the "Imperial Theatre" and later "Theatre Tokyo".



There existed more 3-strip theatres in Japan, like the "Asahi Kaikan" (朝日会館) Theatre in Fukuoka and the "Palace" Theatre in Kyoto.

Have a look at this website:

http://incinerama.com/ctcineramatheatres.htm

Image from "Far East Film News" dated November 1959

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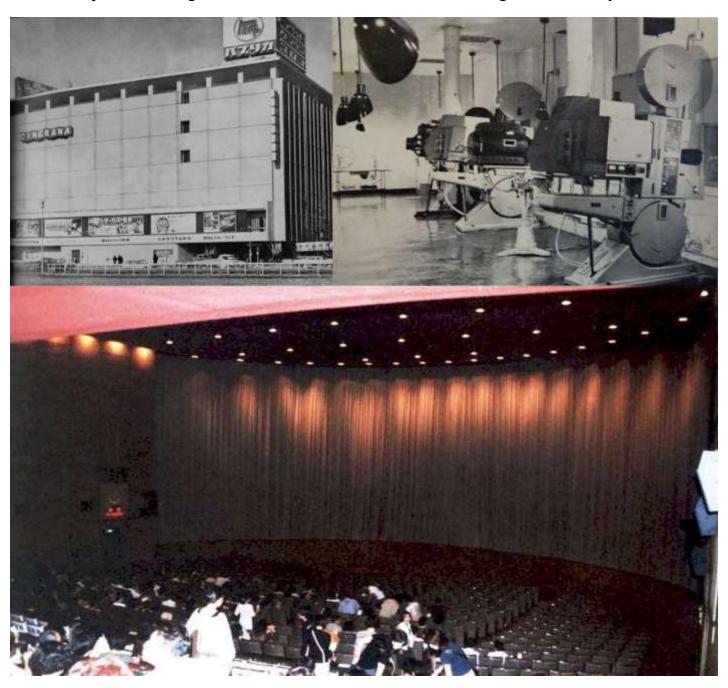


The 3-strip movie "The Best of Cinerama" (ベスト・オブ・シネラマ) / USA, first shown at the "Palace" Theatre in Cleveland (Ohio) on 13.11.1962, was not screened in Japan.

BONUS: Information about a revered Japanese Cinerama Theatre

The "Chunichi Cinerama Theatre" (中日シネラマ劇場) in Nagoya – later renamed "Herald Cine Plaza 1" (ヘラルドシネプラザ 1).

It had Japan's last original louvered Cinerama screen with a huge size of 30 by 11 metres.



The Nagoya Chunichi Cinerama theatre (with around 1,000 seats) was integrated in a 7-story, 2-basement building, which was a veritable amusement city with: a 200-seat Cinetarium (360-degree projection), a 36-lane bowling alley (on three floors), a billiard and pool parlor, a coinoperated miniature car racing course, an archery range, shooting galleries,10 restaurants, snack bars and food stands.

At its opening in December 1964 (Shōwa 39), the building was owned by Chunichi (for Central Japan) Cinerama KK (for Company Limited). President of which was Katsumi Furukawa, who also headed the Nippon Herald Motion Picture Co. — a leading film importer. The cinema's booth (see image above) was equipped with Nichion Imperial 70/35 all-purpose projectors. Did they also perform 3-strip Cinerama movies at this venue? On the internet I spotted the advert (see image below): "This is Cinerama" (これがシネラマだ) at the Nagoya "Chunichi Cinerama Theatre" (中日シネラマ劇場) — or did they only screen the film's 70mm version back then? The image on the right side shows the theatre's lobby.



It is reported that the "Chunichi" was a Cinerama venue that had been completed under the design guidance of American headquarters, and that it had been Japan's very last cinema with an original deeply curved, louvered Cinerama screen. The word is that the theatre's opening film was "Circus World" [(サーカスの世界), USA, 1964], which had previously been debuted in Tokyo at 4 cinemas on 19.12.1964 – but not in Cinerama (advertised in "Super Technirama 70"). A number of hits and major works were screened at this impressive Cinerama theatre – sometimes also in cooperation with Tokyo's "Theatre Tokyo" and Osaka's "OS Theatre".

In 1988, most likely due to an ownership change, the venue was renamed "Herald Cine Plaza 1" (ヘラルドシネプラザ 1) – but, happily, the deeply curved Cinerama screen remained until the theatre's closure in September 1999 (Heisei 11).

The very last film that had been shown there was "Elizabeth" [(エリザベス), UK, 1998].

See: http://maboroshi.movie.coocan.jp/cinerama.html

Nagoya Chunichi Cinerama Theatre Reported Screen Sizes:

VistaVision: width 12,45 m, height 7,5 m / *CinemaScope*: width 17,7 m, height 7,5 m *70mm Panavision*: width 25,4 m, height 9,4 m / *Cinerama*: width 30 m, height 11 m





The large amusement building with integrated Cinerama theatre – note the large Japanese Cinerama logo (シネラマ) on the building's roof. Image on the right: a leaflet about the movie "Lawrence of Arabia" [(アラビアのロレンス), UK, 1962] shown at the "Chunichi Cinerama Theatre" (中日シネラマ劇場). Note the additional Cinerama logo in the poster – although it isn't an official Cinerama movie.



Image and information sources about the "Chunichi Cinerama Theatre": the trade magazine "Movie Marketing" dated April 1965 and the internet.

An extract taken from a Japanese newspaper article dated 08.09.1999

名古屋シネプラザ閉館

国内最大のスクリーンを持つ名古屋市中区の「ヘラルドシネプラザ1」が二十四日で閉館する。「ヘラルドシネプラザ1」の開館は一九六四年。当時は中日シネラマ劇場と呼ばれた。テレビに対抗するため、大画面化が進んだ時代だ。幅三十メートル、高さ十一メートルのスクリーンは、縦に細長いプラスチックのリボンを約三千六百枚並べたもの。日本では、ここにしか残っていない。三台の映写機を使うシネラマ方式の「西部開拓史」、七〇ミリの「天地創造」「ゴッドファーザー」など、大作の多くが封切られた。ヘラルドコーポレーションの加藤潤一専務は「観光バスの遊覧コースに組み込まれるほど、話題のスポットだった」と振り返る。名古屋の映画ファンには、格別記憶に残る劇場だった。ヘラルドによると、スクリーンと映写機は保存するという。ラストショーは「エリザベス」。お別れイベントは特に催さず、静かに姿を消していく。

Translated: Nagoya's Cine Plaza closed

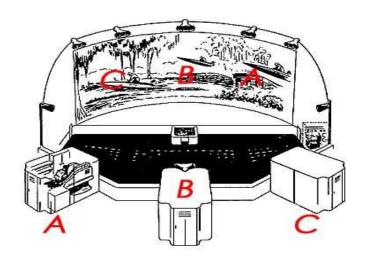
The "Herald Cine Plaza 1" in Nagoya's city ward "Naka-ku" (中区), with the largest screen in Japan, will be closed on 24 September 1999. The opening of the "Herald Cine Plaza 1" was in 1964. At the time, it was called "Chunichi Cinerama Theatre" (中日シネラマ劇場). It was an era in which the screens were made bigger and bigger in order to compete with TV. The screen with a width of 30 meters and a height of 11 meters consists of about 3,600 plastic ribbons – they are vertically arranged. In Japan, there is still something like this only here. Many of major films were shown at this venue, including the Cinerama movie "How the West Was Won" (西部開拓史) using three projectors (author's note: I am not sure whether 3-strip films were shown at this venue), the 70mm films "The Bible"(天地創造) and "Godfather" (ゴッドファーザー). Junichi Kato, managing director of Herald Corporation, recalls: "It was a place to go – so much that it was incorporated into the tours of sightseeing buses." For the movie fans of Nagoya it was an exceptionally memorable theater. According to Herald, the screen and projectors will be preserved. The last show is "Elizabeth"(エリザベス). A special `Farewell Event' isn't planned – all disappears quietly.



CINERAMA FESTIVAL – on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of CINERAMA a brochure* about the American 3-strip travelogue films. [Toho (東宝) · 1962]

(1) This is Cinerama (これがシネラマだ), (2) Seven Wonders of the World (世界の七不思議), (3) Cinerama Holiday (シネラマ・ホリデー), (4) Windjammer: The Voyage of the Christian Radich (大西洋 2 万哩), (5) Search for Paradise (世界の楽園), and (6) South Seas Adventure (南海の冒険). The Cinerama Festival (シネラマ祭り) at "Theatre Tokyo" took place from 01.11.1964 until 30.04.1965.

*A seller says 26 pages



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Source: "Movie / TV Marketing" dated September 1968

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Adverts from "Movie / TV Marketing" magazines dated 1968

END

Written by Gerhard Witte, Berlin (Germany), 2018, with kind support from David Coles, Sydney (Australia).

All the images and information for this article are taken from diverse vintage trade magazines, especially from the trade magazines "Far East Film News", "Movie Marketing", "Movie / TV Marketing", from Japanese newspapers of that time, and, of course, also from the internet — especially from Japan's `Yahoo Auctions' (ヤフオク).

Many thanks to all sellers, such as: "ceracchi4a" / "yukiko811" / "yan_yanai2004" / "lilimx722" or "zettonandco".