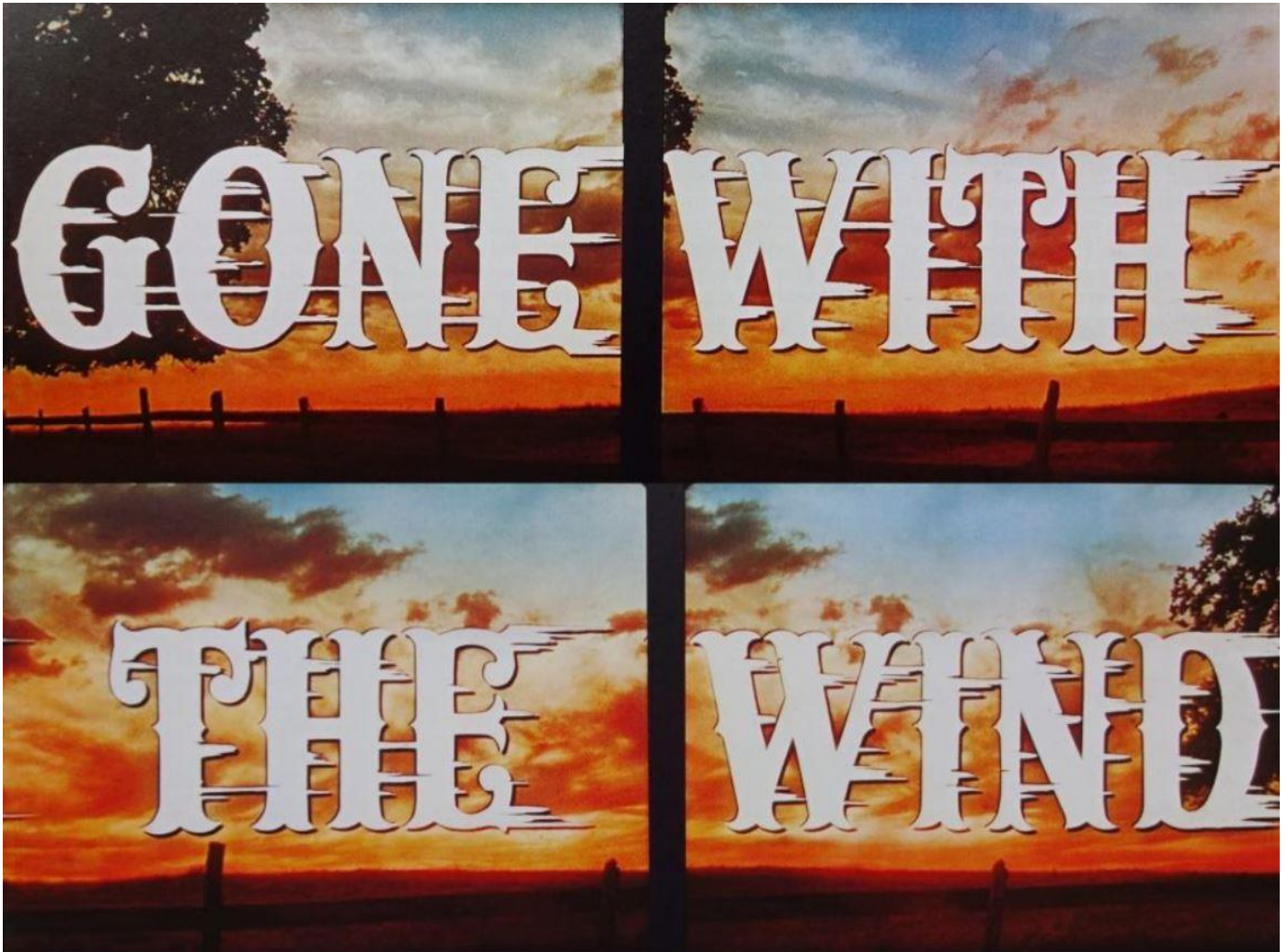


# **GONE WITH THE WIND** in 70mm Wide Screen and Stereophonic Sound

– Written by: Gerhard Witte, Berlin (Germany) in winter/spring 2021 –

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A short article from the book:

**"The complete *Gone with the Wind* Trivia Book – the Movie and More"**  
by Pauline Bartel (1989):

## ***Gone with the Wind* in 70mm Splendor**

Bigger isn't always better, and this axiom was proved true in 1967 when ***Gone with the Wind*** was reissued in a 70mm wide screen version. In the process, each of ***GWTW***'s 35mm frames was "stretched" to fit the wider 70mm format. To achieve this, however, the tops of heads and the bottoms of legs were sacrificed, running the composition. The film's title lost its sweeping grandeur, too. The main title was replaced with four small words, stationary on the screen.

Author's note: the film's impressive title ***Gone with the Wind***, which moves across the screen in the film's original version, had to be changed. The original letters, moving in the film from the right side to the left side (see the image above), are too big and didn't fit into the new, narrower 70mm film format.

Another new feature was the addition of a stereophonic soundtrack, very different from the enhancement made in 1954 (\*). The newly created soundtrack amplified sounds such as the rustle of hoop skirts or the clop of horses` hooves, but often these extraneous sounds muffled essential dialogue.

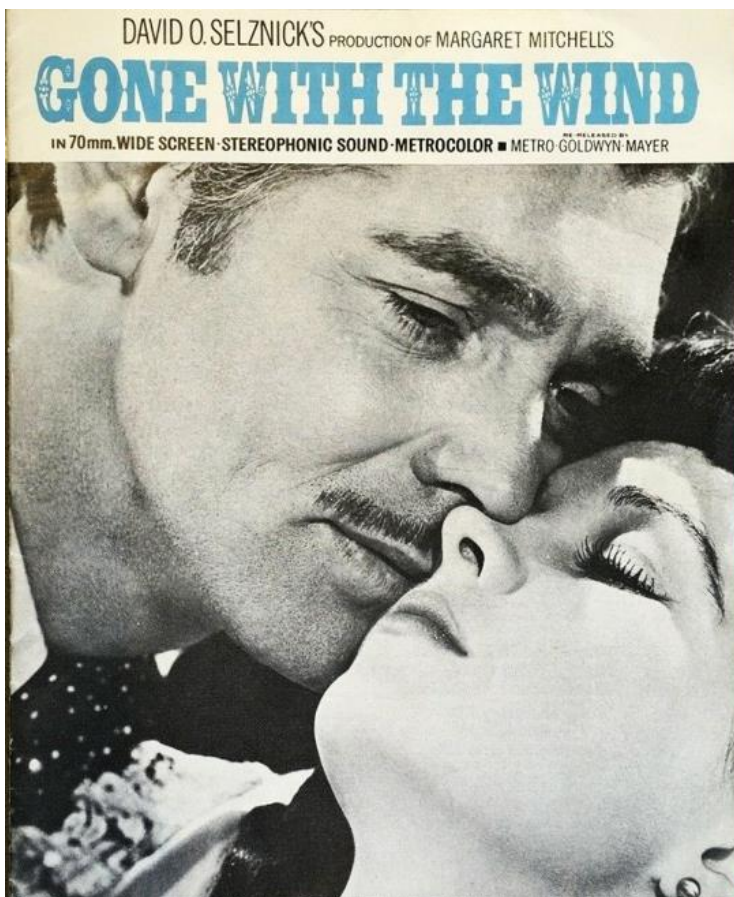
Despite its drawbacks, this latest version of **GWTW** kept theatre seats filled. At the close of 1967, **GWTW**'s total rentals reached \$47,400,000. One year later, at the end of the first-run engagements, the total had soared to \$70,400,000. Although **GWTW** had been on the top of Variety's list of box-office winners for weeks, it was supplanted at the end of 1968 by **The Sound of Music** (USA, 1965), whose higher-priced tickets brought rental totals to \$72,000,000.



(\*) Author's note: in 1954, **GWTW** had been re-released with a pseudo-stereo PERSPECTA sound track and dye transfer prints in flat `ersatz' wide screen format, compromising the film's original projected Academy ratio of 1.37:1, cropping the top and bottom to an aspect ratio of 1.75:1 – later locally shown (as far as I know) in an AR of 1.85:1 too.

It was presented outside the U.S. with the brand name "METROSCOPE" – for example at Vienna's "Imperial" cinema (see advert left) in 1956.

Advert left taken from the Austrian newspaper "Arbeiter-Zeitung" dated 12.10.1956.



Images above: left a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer promotional press booklet for the 1967 wide screen 70mm release of **Gone with the Wind**, and on the right the front page of MGM's "Exhibitor's Campaign Book" dated 1967.

Here is some information (partly commented by me) about the film's new 70mm version taken from MGM's "*Exhibitor's Campaign Book*":



### Lovers of **GONE WITH THE WIND** in Big New Presentation

Converting **Gone with the Wind** from 35mm negative to vastly enlarged scope of new presentation in 70mm and stereophonic sound – a **tremendous technical achievement!**

What has already been hailed over the past 28 years as one of the greatest artistic achievements in film entertainment, this year becomes an outstanding example of scientific advancement in the film industry when MGM releases **Gone with the Wind** in a giant screen 70mm presentation.

Instead of trying to remake this masterpiece, which David O. Selznick produced in 1939, MGM preferred to bring to the screen the original work that won ten Academy Awards – an unheard-of honor that was not equaled until **Ben Hur** (USA, 1959) won eleven Oscars.

This is the sixth worldwide release of **Gone with the Wind**. It is again a singular achievement in motion picture history. Millions of people all over the world have seen and want to see again this film to relive every exciting moment, and more millions of a new generation will be seeing it for the first time.

Thirty odd years ago, when they were shooting **Gone with the Wind**, Technicolor film was an expensive, complex novelty that projected an almost square and relatively small picture. High fidelity wasn't heard of, much less, stereophonic sound.

**Images on Giant Screen:** yet, MGM is releasing **Gone with the Wind** in 70mm, which projects images on a giant screen that nearly rival the size of a football field, and in full stereophonic sound. The problem was how to achieve these presentation techniques of today, using the original film of yesterday.

Fortunately, over the past 43 years, MGM has built one of the finest film processing laboratories in existence (author's note: in Culver City, Los Angeles, California), staffed with men who apply the latest technical, scientific and electronic advances to make motion pictures as perfect a representation as producers want them to be.

These same engineers had just overcome the problems of making 70mm release prints of **Doctor Zhivago** (USA, 1965) from original 35mm negative when word came from the president of MGM: ... "*in prepare **Gone with the Wind** for 70mm presentation.*"

The next problem was to put together a useable color negative of the complete three-hour and forty-minute film. When **Gone with the Wind** was made, Technicolor was a process that used three separate rolls of film (author's note: nitrate film) being exposed simultaneously in the same camera. Each of the three films was sensitive to black-and-white images only – there was no such thing as a color negative.

Author's note: in the beginning, film was made of cellulose nitrate – "nitrate" for short. Its use dominated moviemaking until the 1950s. Nitrate film gave photography a full range of vivid, shimmering blacks and whites and grays. It had produced the dramatic light and shadow in some of America's most important movies – like in the film "**Citizen Kane**" (1941). With the advent of the three-strip Technicolor process in the late 1930s, nitrate film had served the full-color spectrum just as well.

By using red, blue and green filters for these three simultaneous negatives, Technicolor was able to work out a system of matrices, which could then transfer color dyes onto celluloid, which in turn became the positive print that could be projected in theatres. To make the new color negative, each of those three filtered black-and-white negatives (one on top of the other) had to be used to expose a new single color sensitive emulsion.

Author's note: since there had been no way of determining which of the three images was correctly aligned to begin with, the magenta record was arbitrarily established as the standard and the yellow and cyan images were conformed to it – known in the industry as YCMs, for the yellow, cyan and magenta colors they represented.

This resulted in what is called an "intermediate positive", which then had to be enlarged and printed to make a new color negative.

Further complicating the process of making the new color negative was the age of the old three-strip negative. The film had shrunk with age, and each reel had shrunk to a different size.

Author's note: the highly flammable nitrate negatives are in the collection of the International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House in Rochester, New York.

In all, there were 78 reels amounting to nearly 60,000 feet of film, which, when printed on the new intermediate positive, amounted to 19,770 feet.

**Change in Shape:** once this intermediate positive was made, still in 35mm, the next step of enlarging the film to 70mm, would seem to be a relatively simple task. That would have been true if it weren't for the change in the shape of motion pictures since 1939.

When **Gone with the Wind** was made, the projected image on the screen was only a third again as wide as it was high (a ratio of 1.37 to 1). Today, the image on a 70mm projection in a theatre is a little over twice as wide as it is high (a ratio of 2.20 to 1).

As a result, if the old negative were simply enlarged to this new size, about a third of the top or bottom of the original picture would be cut off. The MGM laboratory engineers came up with the solution by applying the same techniques they had devised to convert CinemaScope pictures to ratio suitable for television viewing.

In the latter case, the problem had been cutting off the sides. So, they developed a scanner-printer and viewing device that allowed a technician to move the lens of the viewing device

from one side of the wide frame to the other – in effect, reshooting the film to make certain that essential action was included in the new print.

Each movement of the lens on the viewer was electronically coded so that when the intermediate positive was put on the printer-enlarger, the lens of that device repeated the movements precisely.

Instead of moving horizontally, enlarging **Gone with the Wind** required modification of the equipment to scan the intermediate positive vertically to pick up all the action without cutting off something at top or bottom.

**Eliminate Scratches:** the shutters on the printing devices used in making the new 70mm negative clicked 1,280,000 times. In every step of this complicated laboratory feat, wherever one strip of film was being transferred to another, a liquid `film gate´ was used to reduce the grain and eliminate scratches. This was important because in 1939, film emulsions were inherently more grainy than the products of today.

Author´s note: the `liquid-gate´ printing method has become widely accepted as a standard operating procedure in most advanced laboratories. When the film passes through the printing gate, it is immersed in a liquid, which has the same refractive index as the film´s cellulose base. In effect the liquid temporarily fills in base scratches with a material which refracts light to the same degree that the base does, so that, for practical printing purposes, the scratch becomes "invisible" at the moment of exposure.

**The Sound:** with the sights of **Gone with the Wind** ready for the giant screen, the sounds also had to be brought up to today´s quality standards.

Author´s note: except for a few of the film´s music tracks, none of the original dubbing tracks had been available. All that was available was a "flat" optical negative of the "mixed" composite track with dialogue, sound effects and music inextricably blended together.

Working with the original optical sound track on nitrate film, the MGM Sound Department was able to separate the voice tracks, music and effects onto separate magnetic tapes. Using the latest electronic devices, they were able to equalize and put these sounds on the release prints for directional dialogue and effects in stereo.

Some of the original music tracks were found in film storage vaults and have been added to enhance certain portions of the film. Likewise, sound effects that were not necessary in the original small screen presentation have been blended in where needed.

Author´s note: some of the sound effects had been enhanced and new ones, for example for off-scene effects, were additionally added, such as the sound of a fountain in the background, the rustling of a tree, the clopping of horses` hooves, etc.

**The Result:** in less than a year, MGM overcame the obstacles of incompatible shapes of the original 35mm version, age deterioration and shrinkage, the relatively primitive three-strip color process (author´s note: due to its great importance for color film in the cinema, Technicolor is often seen as the inventor of color film) used in shooting **Gone with the Wind**, and the single composite optical sound track to prepare the spectacular new 70mm presentation in full stereophonic sound.

The new 70mm film is 24,713 feet (author's note: 7532,5 metres) long, with a running time of three hours and forty minutes – the same as the original that premiered in Atlanta in 1939 (author's note: as far as I know, the film has never been cut).

**Gone with the Wind**, a film property that has become a part of the world's cultural heritage, is no longer in danger of being lost through deterioration of the original negative. Audiences will be able to enjoy it in the limitless future.

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Below a translated article (partly commented by me) on the subject from the German trade magazine "Filmblätter" dated Feb. 1968, (issue 23).

Written in the chapter: "Technik in den Filmblättern".



## **GONE WITH THE WIND** printed to 70mm with the "Metro Method"

When a film that was made in 1939 makes a glamorous comeback in our time, this is surely something deserving of wonder. And that wonder is increased if one considers that this film – now almost 30 years old [article originally written in 1968, ed] – is being offered in a thoroughly modern guise, in panoramic wide screen format (author's note: AR 2.20:1) and stereo sound, as has now happened with the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film **Gone with the Wind**.

Yet the technicians who produced this `wonder´ had to overcome all manner of difficulties, most of which had less to do with the principle of the copying method and more to do with the effects of wear and tear, shrinkage and so on.

The possibility of creating a high-quality color dupe negative depended above all on the most accurate possible registration of the original negatives. **Gone with the Wind** was originally made using the old color film method (Technicolor) – that is, using three separate black-and-white negatives that were exposed simultaneously behind respectively red, green and blue filters.

Re-using these three different original negatives was naturally extremely difficult as a result of shrinkage, damage to the perforations and patched repairs, since these defects affected the accuracy with which the negatives could be matched.

Author's note: facing the technicians was the challenge of re-registering almost 60,000 feet of the three original separation nitrate negatives so that a sharp 35mm master interpositive of about 19,770 feet in length could be produced.

To bring these negatives, which one could almost call deformed, into a useable condition, the MGM laboratories developed what has become known as the "**Metro Method**".

Starting from experiences with the 'wet printing' technique, which had already been perfected for copy production for **Doctor Zhivago**, a printing system was created that can be adjusted for many different shrinkage levels (author's note: the "**Metro-movement**"). A further process was developed to correct scenes in which severe displacements occurred.

Next, a specially modified optical sound copying unit was used to combine the original 3-strip nitrate negatives (known in the industry as **YCMs**, as in the colors involved for printing: Yellow, Cyan and Magenta).

Author's note: at the time, the MGM Laboratory had designed a key piece of equipment known as the "**Metro-movement**" – a special projector movement for an optical printing machine which could be adjusted to accommodate various degrees of shrinkage so that the three negatives were accurately re-registered. This system was also suitable for the use with the so-called "**liquid-gate**" wet printing technique (used in all intermediate printing stages).

A 35mm Eastman interpositive was then created from this, again using the wet printing method in order to minimise the possibility of scratches, surface graininess and so on. At this stage the aspect ratio was still 1.37:1, the standard for motion pictures back then.

**Enlargement and Reduction:** for the new version of the film, a 35mm projector was developed with a movable mask at the screen. This mask gives a field of view for the projection with the exact aspect ratio of 70mm film (2.20:1), and this aspect ratio remains constant regardless of the position of the variable mask.



**The conversion of the original 35mm print of **GWTW** to its attenuated 70mm form.**

Image above: a specially designed 35mm projector with a movable mask at the screen, indicating the 70mm 2.20 to 1 aspect ratio, was used to "re-edit" the picture. Nine up and down positions of the movable mask were made available to the operator. Any of these nine positions could be approached at one of two rates of speed. Thus, it was possible to create what seems to be a new scene with a different camera angle, or simulate a camera's up and down pan. The result of these manipulations was that the action and center of interest was not cut off by the incompatibility of the 1.37 to 1 and 2.20 to 1 aspect ratios.

[Image taken from the book "Pictorial History of **Gone with the Wind**" (1983)  
by Gerald Gardner and Harriet Modell Gardner]

A total of nine up-and-down positions are available when selecting the desired screen capture. These variants can also be fixed with the aperture closed or alternatively can be changed using a motor – with two different speeds.

The second of these options makes it possible to simulate the upward or downward panning of a camera in various scenes. The many possibilities for manipulation allow the images to be transferred to the new format while paying close attention to the dramaturgical considerations – the image content, the formal structure and the relationships of the different scenes. In other words, mostly nobody's heads are cut off and the focus is on the part of the picture that is relevant to the action.

**Electronic Control:** while the working copies were being demonstrated, high-accuracy recordings were made by the operator. These contained both the exact foot numbering and the image settings and also the position data for the mask – plus, of course, whether the mask should be adjusted with the shutter closed or with slower or faster movement.

This information, in the form of a binary code, was transferred to a control tape that then controlled the actual printing process in a copying machine specially designed for the purpose.

The 35mm interpositive prepared previously was now enlarged onto a 65mm negative, and all movements of the mask were automatically repeated by the movements of the lens of the copying machine. The lens moves up and down in order to reproduce exactly the positions that were defined in the projector described above using the variable mask.

The 65mm negative thus created is used for producing color-corrected contact copies on 70mm color stock. For this purpose, a printing machine is used that changes the density corrections from one scene to the next, thereby achieving the required color balance. This printing machine is controlled by a tape containing the exact exposure data.

Next, a magnetic strip, onto which the soundtrack can finally be copied, will be affixed to the prints thus created.

**The Sound:** converting the original single-strip optical sound to six-channel stereo magnetic sound, however, posed almost as many difficulties as the image conversion. Although the optical sound strip had been renewed time and time again over the preceding decades, it was nevertheless affected by scratches, background noise and dirt.



This interference could be largely eliminated using electronic processes. In line with this process, the result should actually be described as *'electronically processed for stereo reproduction'* rather than simply *'stereo sound'*.

But the sensation that was aroused by the revival of this, one of the most popular films ever, made all of these technical efforts worthwhile. And the costs – producing the new negative alone required about US\$250,000 – will surely be recouped. A question remains: will other films be copied and made available in modern versions using this method, which was developed with **Gone with the Wind** into a mature process? Or will this 'enlargement through reduction' remain a sensational one-off?

Whatever the answer ... one film has been preserved in this manner and is thereby not *'gone with the wind'* in the history of film. (W. Olf.)

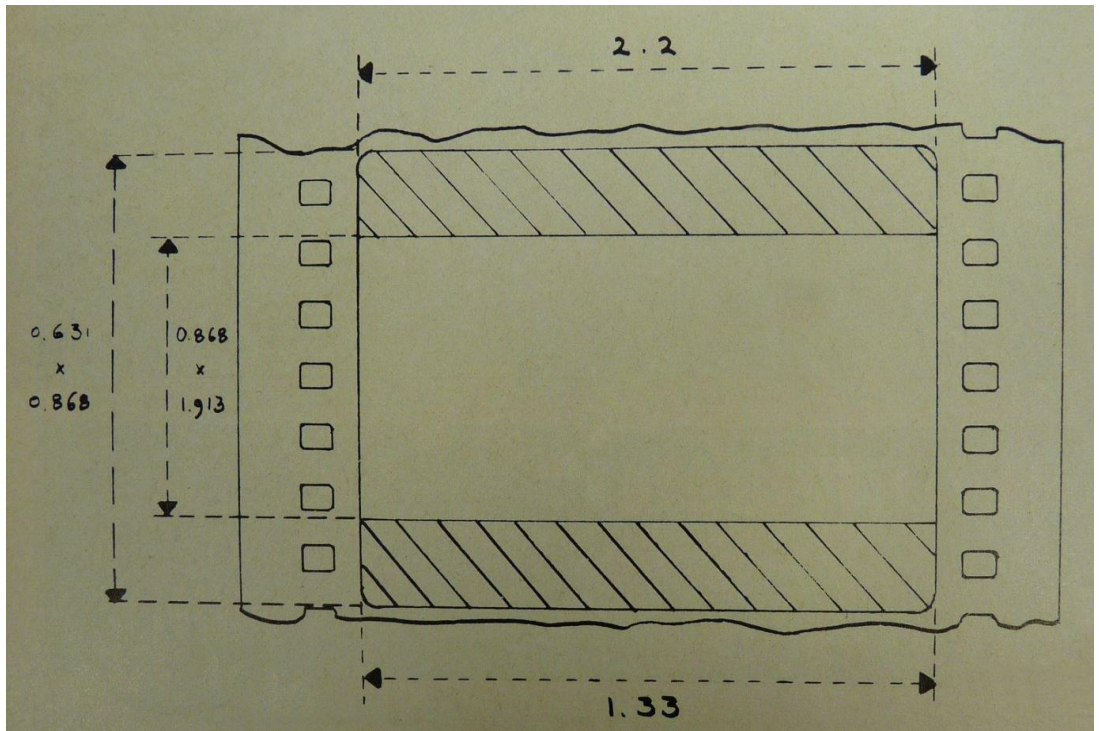


**The film's old and new version in one image.**

The image above shows a scene from **Gone with the Wind** in its original format of the film's 1939 version, but two demarcation lines on the image show an image section with a 2.20:1 aspect ratio. This section matches the new 70mm wide screen version of the film – here only an example of a selected section according personal taste.

Photo: MGM – from the German trade magazine "Filmblätter" dated February 1968, (issue 23) – in the chapter: "Technik in den Filmblättern".

**Image right:  
the 35mm frame  
(AR 1.37:1)  
blown-up  
width-wise  
to 70mm  
(AR 2.20:1).**



The diagram above shows relative frame areas of the film's "normal" 35mm version, and the new 70mm vertically scanned version of **Gone with the Wind**. The shaded area in the drawing shows the missing information for the new 70mm wide screen version compared to the film's original version. Now, in wide screen, almost 1/3 of the film's original frame area information is cropped. The small numbers (in inches) on the left side inform about the sizes of the original 35mm frame area and that of the new 70mm film.

Original 35mm full aperture size: 0.868in (22mm) x 0.631in (16mm) = 0,547in<sup>2</sup> (352mm<sup>2</sup>)

70mm print aperture size: 1,913in (48,6mm) x 0,868in (22mm) = 1,660in<sup>2</sup> (1070mm<sup>2</sup>)

[Image taken from the German trade magazine "Filmblätter" dated February 1968, (issue 23) – chapter: "Technik in den Filmblättern"]



**Left, faded  
70mm film  
snippets of  
GWTW with  
magnetic sound  
tracks kindly  
provided by  
Hans Hänßler.**

Below an article taken from  
New York "VARIETY"  
dated 07.09.1966:

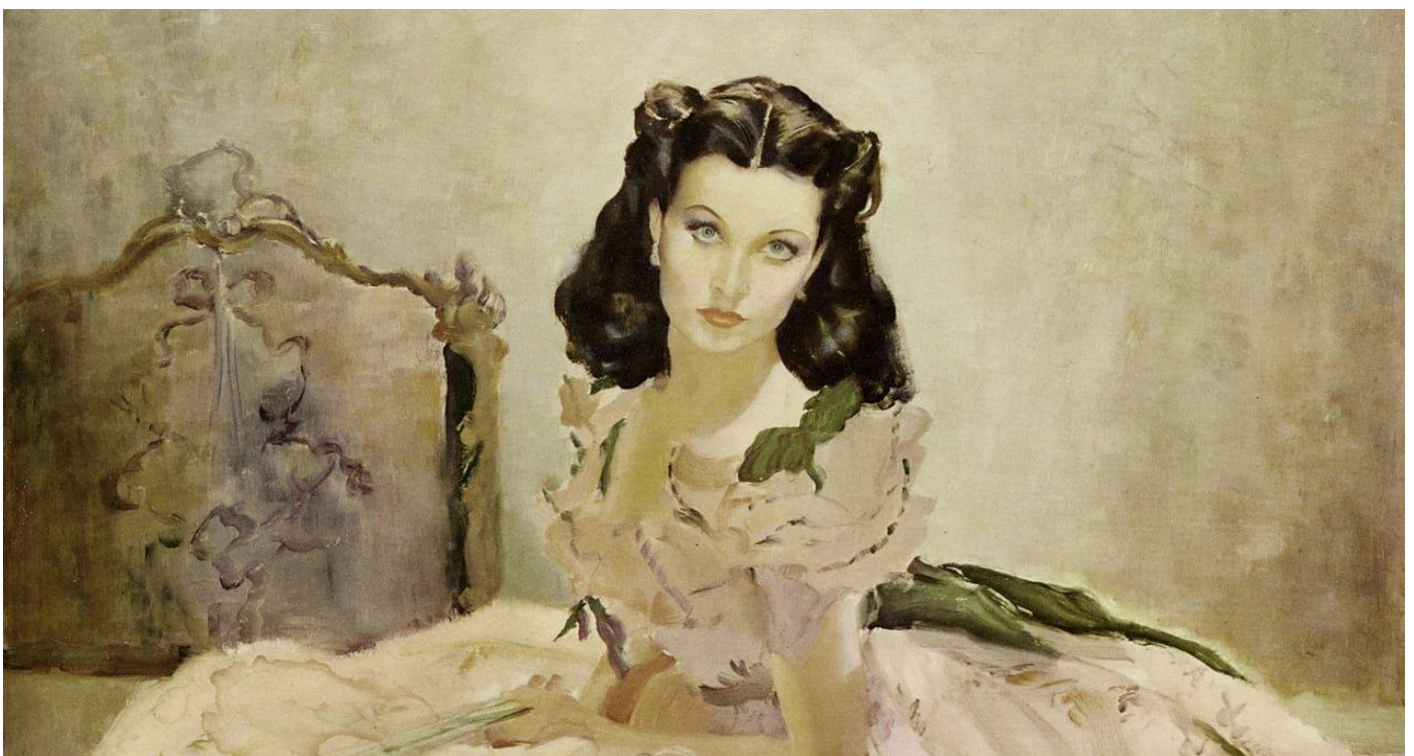


### **Gone with the Wind as 70mm Roadshow**

**Gone with the Wind**, MGM's all-time domestic boxoffice champion, will be re-released next year as a 70mm roadshow attraction, with overseas dates skedded for April ([author's note: it had already been in Australia in March of 1967](#)), and U.S. bookings planned for October. Test of 70mm print was conducted recently in New York.

Since 1939, when the David O. Selznick epic had its premiere, the film has been released six times ([author's note: in North America](#)) and domestic rentals to Metro have been \$41,200,000. Overseas take is also huge, but estimated as somewhat else.

For seventh time around, Metro is planning a brand-new campaign, plus an Atlanta premiere designed to recall the much-publicized original ([author's note: the film's new 70mm version opened at Atlanta's "Loew's Grand Theatre" on 04.10.1967](#)). Biggest news, however, is plan to have hard-ticket sales for a reissue, and to increase the screen size for 28-year-old film.



**Vivien Leigh as Scarlett O. Hara.**

## The Film's very first 70mm Premiere Presentations

They took place in Australia on 25.03.1967 – at 2 theatres simultaneously:

(A) at Sydney's "**Ascot Theatre**", located at 246 Pitt Street, where it ran for 24 weeks and 4 days – until 13.09.1967,

(B) at Melbourne's "**Palladium Theatre**", located at 100 Bourke Street, where it ran for 19 weeks and 4 days – until 09.08.1967,

and a little later, on 25.05.1967, at Hobart's (Tasmania's capital) "**Avalon Theatre**", located at 52 Melville Street, where it ran for 7 weeks – until 12.07.1967 (see advert below).

Information source: the Australian film enthusiast Doug Loudon (living in Sydney) reports on the premieres: [1967.pdf \(in70mm.com\)](#)

**Now in 70 mm.**  
IN WIDE SCREEN AND FULL STEREOPHONIC SOUND

DAVID O. SELZNICK'S  
PRODUCTION OF  
MARGARET MITCHELL'S  
WINNER OF THE OSCAR AWARD

**GONE WITH THE WIND**

TECHNICOLOR® NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN

STARRING  
CLARK GABLE · VIVIEN LEIGH  
LESLIE HOWARD · OLIVIA deHAVILLAND

EXCLUSIVE SEASON starts  
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Book in advance at ASCOT THEATRE  
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	Leaves	Front Seats
NIGHTS—12.30 a.m. Mon. to Sat.	1.50	1.00
7.30 a.m. Sat. and Pub. Hols.	2.00	1.50
12.30 p.m. Mon. to Sat.	1.00	0.50
2.30 a.m. Sat. Pub. Hols.	1.50	1.00
12.30 p.m. Sat. Pub. Hols.	1.00	1.00
12.30 p.m. Mon. to Sat.	0.50	0.50
Sat., Pub. Hols.	0.75	0.50
Mon. to Sat., Pub. Hols.	0.50	0.50

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IN WIDE SCREEN AND FULL STEREOPHONIC SOUND

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PRODUCTION OF  
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STARRING  
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EXCLUSIVE SEASON COMMENCING  
At 7.30 p.m. every  
**THURSDAY  
MAY 25**

**Avalon**  
Book Theatre, 3 2880  
FitzGerald's, Dickson's

Social Secretaries:  
THIS IS A 'MUST SEE'.  
for your members.  
Demand your contributions  
for parties of 25 or  
more.  
Ring 3 2880 for details.

Here is a video clip about the movie's 70mm Premiere at Sydney's "**Ascot Theatre**":  
[The Winner Is Sydney - Ascot Theatre Pitt Street 1967 | Facebook](#)

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Further 70mm Premieres of **Gone with the Wind**

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– In Japan (Tokyo) –



風と共に去りぬ (**Gone with the Wind**) 70mm advertising,  
and right the leftover of a Japanese entrance ticket.

Artist Howard Terpning had devised an entirely new campaign for the film's 1967 70mm reissue of this landmark film with an extra dash of sex appeal: Clark Gable with his white shirt open, holds Vivien Leigh (her red gown cut low) against a backdrop of garish orange flames. And this is the art that most people associate with the picture to this day – not making it seem like a movie more than 80 years old.



A Japanese leaflet on the 70mm film.



Above left an announcement ad (dated 27.03.1967) with the hint "advance ticket sales from tomorrow, the 28th" (明28日前売開始). The movie opened in 70mm at Tokyo's Hibiya (日比谷) "Scala" (スカラ座) Theatre on 07.04.1967 – right a leaflet on the film.

初の70ミリ化によって躍動する数々の名場面が強烈な感銘を与える!

猛火に包まれたアトランタの町、ダラへの詩情豊かな道…  
懐じの名場面が空前の迫力であなたを感動させる!

70mm  
〈メトロカラー ステレオ・サウンド〉

4月7日 世界初の70ミリ  
4月7日(金) 大公開  
〈絶賛前売中〉

★4月7日～15日は毎日3部上映★

年券(月一金)	1.35	5.50	
16日までの日・祝日	0.30	1.35	5.50

小 日 一般400/学生250/幼児100-1,000  
中・日・夜 一般500/学生350/幼児200-1,200  
★4時間の長編ですが、お茶にご覧いただけます  
★絶賛前売をご利用下さい  
★感銘が予想されるので早めの観覧をご利用下さい  
★指定席は男子約、団体観覧は要申請  
スカラ座(199)5335 / M.G.N.映画(94)5331

日比谷 スカラ座

風と共に去りぬ  
GONE WITH THE WIND  
10部門のアカデミー賞受賞 文部省特選  
クラーク・ゲーブル/ビビアン・リー  
レスリー・Howard/オリビア・デ・ハヴィランド  
製作デビッド・ロ・セルズニック/監督ビクター・フレミング/原作マーガレット・ミッチェル(河出書房新社)/脚本マックス・スタイナー(ヤマト音楽ビクター)/MGM映画提供

Another announcement advert dated 29.03.1967 – opening of **Gone with the Wind** (風と共に去りぬ) in 70mm at Tokyo's Hibiya (日比谷) "Scala" (スカラ座) Theatre on 07.04.1967 (see in the advert above right: 4月7日大公開).

DAVID O. SELZNICK'S PRESENTS MARGARET MITCHELL'S  
"GONE WITH THE WIND"  
CLARK GABLE VIVIEN LEIGH LESLIE HOWARD OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND  
THE STUNNING DREAM  
METROCOLOR

ミネラマ  
風と共に去りぬ  
クラーク・ゲーブル  
ビビアン・リー  
レスリー・Howard  
オリビア・デ・ハヴィランド  
製作デビッド・ロ・セルズニック  
監督ビクター・フレミング  
脚本マックス・スタイナー  
原作マーガレット・ミッチェル  
音楽マックス・スタイナー  
主唱者MGMミュージック  
MGM映画提供



The **GWTW** 70mm film advertised in **CINERAMA**.  
At the time, in Japan, it had been not uncommon to advertise 70mm films as Cinerama screenings when they were projected onto big, curved screens in cinemas.



The Osaka "Hankyu Plaza Theatre" (阪急プラザ劇場) even ran the 70mm version in D-150 projection back then. **GWTW** (風と共に去りぬ) opened there on 25.04.1970. The greatest romance ever, impressive on the big D-150 screen! (D=150 の大画面に限りなき感動を呼ぶ史上最高の大ロマン!). Monopoly in West Japan (西日本独占).

## Gone with the Wind in 70mm in the USA

It opened at Atlanta's "Loew's Grand Theatre" (it had been the film's World Premiere venue on 15.12.1939) in 70mm on Wednesday, 04.10.1967, where it ran for 40 weeks.

An article about the film's opening from "Boxoffice" magazine dated 09.10.1967:

### Gone with the Wind in Festive Rebow

ATLANTA – Three days of festivities, with all the splendor and excitement of an elaborate coronation, were climaxed here last week with the opening (04.10.1967) of the sixth re-release (author's note: or 7th release in the USA) of David O. Selznick's **Gone with the Wind** at the Loew's "Grand", where the picture originally bowed December 15, 1939.

Four members of the cast, headed by Olivia de Havilland (author's note: [Melanie Hamilton in the film](#)), were on hand for the festivities, which started Monday (02.10.1967) with a ten-band parade after the celebrities arrived from New York. With her were the actresses Evelyn Keyes, Ann Rutherford (author's note: [performing Suellen O'Hara and Carreen O'Hara, Scarlett's sisters, in the film](#)) and Victor Jory (author's note: [Jonas Wilkerson in the film](#)).

Here from Macon (Georgia), was Susan Myrick, technical director (author's note: [in 1939, her friendship with GWTW author Margaret Mitchell had led to Myrick's role as a technical advisor and dialect coach during the film's production. She made sure that the film accurately portrays the accents, customs and manners of the South](#)).



Robert O'Brien, president of MGM, headed a list of dignitaries from Hollywood and New York. After the parade they were escorted to the Regency Hyatt House, their headquarters, where a press reception was held.

Tuesday's (03.10.1967) activities for the personalities started with a luncheon given by the city, with the mayor as host. A formal dinner preceded a ball in the Regency. Peter Duchin and his orchestra provided the music.

Wednesday (04.10.1967) a luncheon was held in the Swann House, home of the Atlanta Historical Society, and at 6 p.m. there was a pre-premiere buffet. An after-premiere party also was held in the Regency.

The ball and first-night performance of the picture, now in 70mm and stereophonic sound, were sponsored by the junior committee of the 'Members Guild of the High Museum of Art'.

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**GWTW** opened in 70mm at New York's "**United Artists Rivoli Theatre**" on 10.10.1967, where it consequently ran for 54 weeks.

The poster features a central illustration of Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh in a romantic embrace, with Gable holding Leigh. The background shows a plantation scene with a large house and a horse-drawn carriage. Text on the poster includes: 'In the splendor of 70mm. wide screen and full stereophonic sound!', 'DAVID O. SELZNICK'S PRODUCTION OF MARGARET MITCHELLS', 'GONE WITH THE WIND', 'Winner of Ten Academy Awards' with an Oscar statuette, 'CLARK GABLE', 'VIVIEN LEIGH', 'LESLIE HOWARD', 'OLIVIA de HAVILLAND', 'A SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL PICTURE - VICTOR FLEMING', 'IN 70mm WIDE SCREEN STEREOGRAPHIC SOUND METROCOLOR', 'MGM', 'RESERVED SEAT ENGAGEMENT STARTS OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup>', 'UA RIVOLI THEATRE Broadway and 40th Street / CI 7-1033', 'MAIL ORDERS NOW!', and 'For Theatre Party and Group Sales, Call Ann Banderpost 262-2061'. A small note at the bottom reads: '\*Opening night performance sold out: Sponsored by United Cerebral Palsy, for ticket information call MO 1-0900.'

**An announcement of GWTW at New York's "United Artists Rivoli Theatre".**

By the way, the New York "**Rivoli Theatre**" was the venue that had introduced the TODD-AO projection process (the new motion picture era) with the Public World Premiere of Rogers & Hammerstein's **Oklahoma!** (USA, 1955) on 13.10.1955. (Previously, press previews were held at the theatre on 10th October)

More information on the first Todd-AO theatre – New York's "**Rivoli Theatre**" is available here: [The Rivoli Theatre \(in70mm.com\)](http://TheRivoliTheatre(in70mm.com))

Information on **GWTW**'s North American engagements on Thomas Hauerslev's website: ["Gone with the Wind": The North American 70mm Re-Release Engagements \(in70mm.com\)](http://www.in70mm.com)

An article from New York "VARIETY" dated 18.10.1967:

### **Metro Technicians Re-Wire 88 Theatres For *Gone with the Wind* Sound Spectrum**

MGM's effort to beef up the soundtrack of 70mm ***Gone with the Wind*** so that it approximates present standards for roadshow offerings has largely been accounted a success. But re-recording involved the inclusion of background noise, which reveals itself as an intermittent hum if played on modern equipment, especially at more than a certain volume level.

As a result, Metro is sending its technicians to all 88 theatres, which have booked the 70mm print, and is changing the frequency response of the equipment, by rewiring to eliminate the extreme highs and lows of the sound spectrum. First house to get the "de-hi-fi" treatment was New York's "**Rivoli**", where audience at second press preview got the hum full blast until the volume level was turned down shortly before intermission. Change enables the theatre to increase the sound, without getting the hum, and the effect (even without the highs and lows) is still expected to be "twice as big" as that of original 35mm soundtrack.

Likelihood, according to local exhibitors, is that Metro will absorb the cost of the change-over, including cost of reversing the process when the **GWTW** run is over. But sources close to the company say that it could be "the subject of negotiation" between the distributor and the theatres.

A short article from "Boxoffice" magazine dated 04.09.1967:

### **October *Gone with the Wind* In Record Ticket Sale**

HOLLYWOOD – The Auxiliary of the 'Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center' reports a record sale of tickets for its benefit premiere of ***Gone with the Wind*** scheduled October 11 at the "**Carthay Circle Theatre**" ([author's note: the film opened there on 11.10.1967 and ran for respectable 56 weeks](#)). The premiere will mark the first release of the classic film by MGM in 70mm and stereophonic sound. Proceeds of the benefit will go toward providing funds for a Coronary Care Unit at the hospital.



**A billboard about the film at the Los Angeles "Carthay Circle Theatre". Picture from the "Duke University" libraries, a private research university in Durham, N. Carolina.**

## The Film at Boston's "Gary Theatre" – opening on 18.10.1967



*Ben Sack, president of Sack Theatres, talks with entrants in the Honeywell Employees Ass'n costume contest at the New England bow of MGM's "Gone With the Wind" in the Gary Theatre in Boston. The association sponsored the premiere performance and held a contest for members and their families. Ushers were dressed in period costumes, mint juleps were served and magnolias presented to the women. William Parker, a board member of MGM, and his wife were among the guests, which included federal and state officials. Alan Friedberg, Sack executive vice-president, directed the promotion.*

**Above an illustrated article on the film's premiere at the Boston "Gary Theatre" (Massachusetts) from the trade magazine "Boxoffice" dated 27.11.1967.**

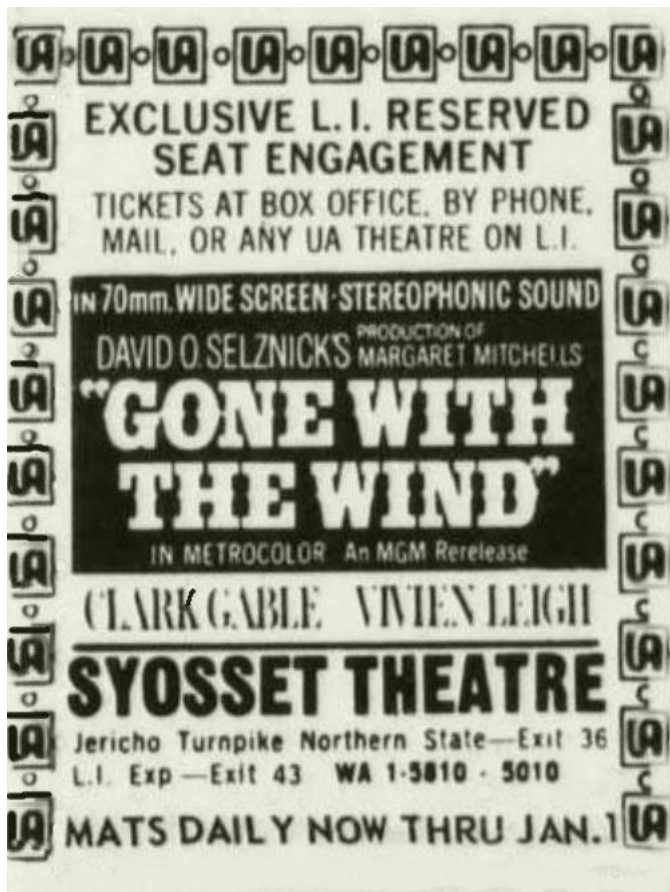
**GWTW** ran there for 30 weeks.

An article from "Boxoffice" magazine dated 27.11.1967:

### **Gone with the Wind 400 In Omaha Opening Week**

OMAHA – There was little doubt that the 70mm version of **Gone with the Wind** was off to a whirlwind engagement in Omaha as the first week at the "Indian Hills Cinerama Theatre" wound up with a four-times-average percentage (author's note: the film opened there on 08.11.1967 and ran for 32 weeks).

The week's gross was up among the best figures ever recorded at that theatre, and Jack Klingel (Cooper Foundations city manager) said that advance sales also had hung a new record. Motion pictures encountered a variety of strong competition for entertainment and recreation money, and some of the first-run product came up with lower percentages than had been expected.



Left an advert taken from the newspaper "Farmingdale Observer" dated 04.01.1968.

**GWTW** at the "Syosset Theatre" (Long Island / New York).  
The film opened there on 21.12.1967 and ran for 52 weeks.



The venue on Thomas Hauersev's website: [Syosset Cinema, Long Island, New York \(in70mm.com\)](http://www.in70mm.com)

Right an announcement advert taken from the "The Kentucky Kernel" (a student newspaper published by the University of Kentucky) dated 01.03.1968.

**GWTW** opened at Lexington's (Kentucky) "Strand Theatre" on 06.03.1968 and ran for 9 weeks.

Information about the cinema is available here:

[Strand Theatre in Lexington, KY - Cinema Treasures](http://www.cinema-treasures.com)




**Gone with the Wind** in 70mm in Europe

The film's European 70mm premiere took place at the 21st Cannes Film Festival in the "Palais des Festivals et des Congrès" (aka "Palais Croisette") on 10th May 1968. According to Cannes director Robert Le Bret at the time, the film was picket as a tribute to the late Vivien Leigh (she had passed away on 08.07.1967), and to show that art and boxoffice can be one and the same in the film world.

**GWTW in London (UK)**

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**Gala Premiere**  **Tuesday 7.45 p.m.**

In the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Richard of Gloucester  
and His Excellency Mr. David Bruce, CBE, United States Ambassador to Great Britain.  
Sponsored by the British Film Institute to aid the Vivien Leigh Award for young film makers.

Now in the splendour of 70 mm.  
wide screen and full stereophonic sound!

DAVID O. SELZNICK'S PRODUCTION OF MARGARET MITCHELL'S  
**"GONE WITH THE WIND"**



**CLARK GABLE · VIVIEN LEIGH**  
**LESLIE HOWARD · OLIVIA de HAVILLAND**

A SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL PICTURE · VICTOR FLÉMING  
DIRECTED BY  
METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER    SCREEN PLAY BY SIDNEY HOWARD · METROCOLOR (A)    MGM

**EMPIRE**  
LEICESTER SQUARE

also showing at ABC City Centre BRISTOL  
ABC Olympia CARDIFF · ABC 2 GLASGOW  
ABC Futurist LIVERPOOL · ABC Deansgate MANCHESTER

The film at London's  
"Empire Theatre"  
(on Leicester Square).

It opened there on Tuesday, 10th  
September 1968 at 7.45 p.m.



**EMPIRE**  
LEICESTER SQUARE

MATINEE  
Sunday, September 29th, 1968  
**GONE WITH THE WIND**

**CIRCLE 15/- JJ 9**

TICKETS CANNOT BE EXCHANGED OR MONEY REFUNDED  
FOR TIMES OF PERFORMANCE PLEASE SEE PRESS TO BE RETAINED

The venue on Thomas  
Hauerslev's website:

[Empire, Leicester Sq., London  
\(in70mm.com\)](http://Empire, Leicester Sq., London (in70mm.com))

Further openings were: in Manchester at "ABC Deansgate" and in Liverpool at "Futurist" on 15.09.1968 / in Glasgow at "ABC 2" on 16.09.1968 / in Bristol at "ABC City Centre" on 19.09.1968 and in Cardiff at "Olympia" on 22.09.1968.

**GWTW** ran in 70mm at London's "Empire" from 10.09.1968 till 21.01.1969, then, the run was interrupted for the screening of **Where Eagles Dare** (UK, 1968) from 22.01.1969 till 11.03.1969, followed by **GWTW** in 70mm again from 12.03.1969 till **13.07.1969** (see advert below). So, the film ran there (19 + 17 weeks, 4 days) for 36 weeks and 4 days.



A London newspaper advert dated July 1969 – final performances on July 13.

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**Gone with the Wind** in 70mm in Essen (West Germany)

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CINERAMA  
EUROPA-PALAST  
in ESSEN



It opened in 70mm at Essen's "CINERAMA Europa-Palast", located on Viehofer-Straße 38-52, on 04.04.1969 (here with the German film title **VOM WINDE VERWEHT** added by me to the picture above). The cinema had a deeply curved, louvered Cinerama screen with a size of 27 by 10 metres (88,5 by 33 feet) – measured along the curve. The venue was closed start of the 1990s. Today, the building houses a big nightclub / discotheque with the name "Essence".

An impressive opening advert taken from the 'WAZ' (Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung) newspaper dated 03.04.1969. In the film's German adverts is written "6-Cannel Stereo Sound" (6-Kanal-Stereoton). I suspect that this is an exaggeration.

By the way, when the 70mm film was projected onto a deeply curved Cinerama screen, the image area in the middle had been (due to the curvature) a little bit cropped at the top and bottom.



The cinema's auditorium – image from the author's collection, original source unknown. Don't confuse Essen's "Europa-Palast" with the same named venues that once existed in Oberhausen (Elsässer-Straße) and Düsseldorf (Graf-Adolf-Straße).

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**Gone with the Wind** in 70mm in Hamburg (West Germany)

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JETZT IN **70mm** und **6 KANAL STEREOTON** DER GRÖSSTE FILM ALLER ZEITEN



DAVID O. SELZNICK'S PRODUKTION  
NACH MARGARET MITCHELL'S ROMAN

**VOM WINDE VERWEHT**  
GONE WITH THE WIND

METROCOLOR 10 OSCARS

CLARK GABLE VIVIEN LEIGH  
LESLIE HOWARD OLIVIA de HAVILLAND

EIN SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL FILM · REGIE VICTOR FLEMING  
DREHBUCH: SIDNEY HOWARD · MUSIK: MAX STEINER  
VON METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

CINERAMA - **gründel** Filmtheater  
GRINDELBERG 7a  
Telefon 44 95 35  
Täglich 15.00 u. 19.30 Uhr

The premiere advert left is taken from the newspaper "Hamburger Abendblatt" dated 02.10.1969.



**GWTW** opened at Hamburg's imposing "CINERAMA Grindel-Filmtheater" on 02.10.1969, where it successfully ran during its first season until 18.12.1969 (11 weeks) followed by the festive (dark suit desired) German premiere of Gene Kelly's **Hello, Dolly!** (USA, 1969).

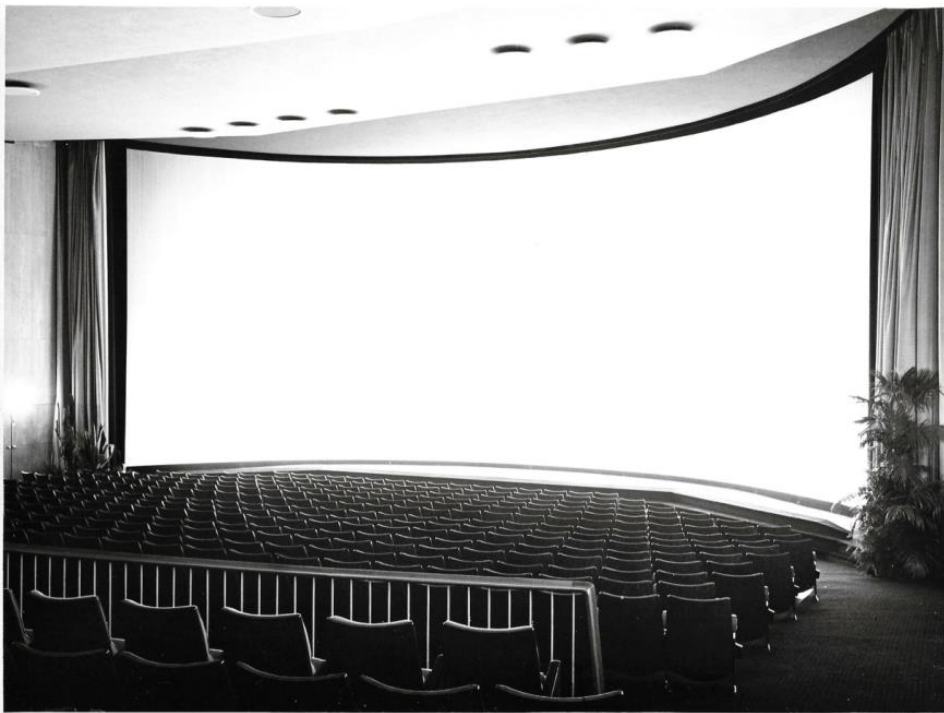
"Rhett Butler's smile has never been so broad" was written in Hamburg's newspapers.

The cinema on Thomas Hauerslev's website: [The Grindel Filmtheater \(in70mm.com\)](http://TheGrindelFilmtheater.in70mm.com)



The Cinerama movie **Seven Wonders of the World** (USA, 1956) ran at the "Grindel" from 22.09.1960 till 22.12.1960, from 25.08.1961 till 27.09.1961, and from 15.12.1961 till 21.12.1961 – presented by Deutsche Cinerama GmbH (Munich). [Image taken from the brochure "Filmtheater in der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg" – season 1961/1962]

At that time, the theatre had still been equipped with a Todd-AO screen with a size of 20 by 9 metres. For the festive German premiere of the Cinerama film **How the West Was Won** (USA, 1962) on 01.02.1963, the venue was equipped with a new deeply curved, louvered screen with the same size as the "**Europa-Palast**" above. The following picture below shows the cinema's impressive auditorium (from the author's collection), and right a **GWTW** advert taken from the newspaper "Hamburger Abendblatt" dated 12.12.1969.



Hamburg's "CINERAMA Grindel-Filmtheater" in all its wonderful wide screen glory – size: 27 by 10 metres (88,5 by 33 feet) measured around the curve. The deeply curved, louvered Cinerama screen consisted of 3000 louvers, each 1,8 cm wide, overlapping to 50 percent – so, 0.9 cm x 3000 = 2700 cm (27 metres).



**VOM WINDE VERWEHT (Gone with the Wind).** An impressive German poster about the film's 70mm version. It has a size of DIN-A-0 (119 by 84 cm).

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## Some Personal Thoughts about this New 70mm Wide Screen Version of **GWTW**

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I had watched the film's 70mm version at the young age of 17 at Hamburg's "CINERAMA Grindel-Filmtheater". Around this time, I had also bought the German MGM **Gone with the Wind** LP record (see the image below). It contains the first actual "soundtrack" from a few (13) of the original Steiner tracks – now 'electronically' rechannelled in STEREO. Film music was and is still a big hobby of mine.

Back then (after school) I had delivered the newspaper "Hamburger Abendblatt" to magazine shops in order to earn some pocket money. I had used my bike for that. Then, on Saturdays, I often bought vinyl records at 'Hugo Sonnenberg' located on Hamburg's 'Mönckebergstraße' – the record dealer with the biggest film music selection.



In my mind's eye, **Gone with the Wind** in 70mm had nonetheless been a money-making project back then, although not a few moviegoers were not enthusiastic about this version.

At the time, I was not particularly offended by the reframing of the epic as the curved screen on which it was being shown at Hamburg's "CINERAMA Grindel-Filmtheater" was enormous (270 square metres) – presented in an impressive Todd-AO (2.20:1) aspect ratio. The film's moving story and the good actors convinced me completely, and the big screen did the rest – how you usually feel, especially when you are young.

As far as I can still remember, the picture unfortunately looked grainy from time to time, and so the sharpness was not always perfect. The film was presented in "Metrocolor" – a film that was processed in the laboratories of the MGM Studios.

Unfortunately, I can no longer remember whether the colors of the film had matched those of the film's original 35mm Technicolor version. I have been informed that the new 70mm prints had been made with a somewhat higher degree of color saturation and a little bit more contrasty, but I didn't particularly notice that at the time.

Haller's, Rennahan's and Garmes's Technicolor photography remains impressive, and per custom in those days of pre-Eastman color stock. In 1966, MGM stopped having Technicolor produce imbibition prints of **Gone with the Wind**, instead MGM made release prints on Eastman color print film from a new color internegative.

**The sound was not convincing in that way as you are used to  
from other new 70mm, 6-channel magnetic films.**

Sound is an important part of the movie experience too – divided into voice, sound effects and music. So, of course, the employment of full stereophonic sound for wide screen features is an important plus. Steven Spielberg once remarked: "*... our ears lead your eyes to where the story lives!*"

It is no wonder, then, that MGM felt that stereophonic sound would be essential to complement the increased visual scope of its 70mm wide screen version of **Gone with the Wind**.

But, in this case, you have to consider the fact that they only had a "flat" monaural sound source for this project – an optical negative on nitrate film of the "mixed" composite track, with dialogue, sound effects and music inextricably blended together.

I suspect that the film's original English 70mm version, which I unfortunately have never seen, had had a slightly more imposing stereophonic sound than that of the German version. They had reported at the time: "*... with portions of the original monaural sound track processed for full stereophonic sound on six channels, and with some enhanced sound effects and new ones added additionally.*"

The German trade magazine "Filmblätter" (see above on page 9) describes the German sound as follows: "*... the result should actually be described as 'electronically processed for stereo reproduction' rather than simply 'stereo sound'.*"

I have noticed that only in the film's German adverts from that time is given the hint: "**6-Channel Stereo Sound**"  
I suspect that this is an exaggeration.

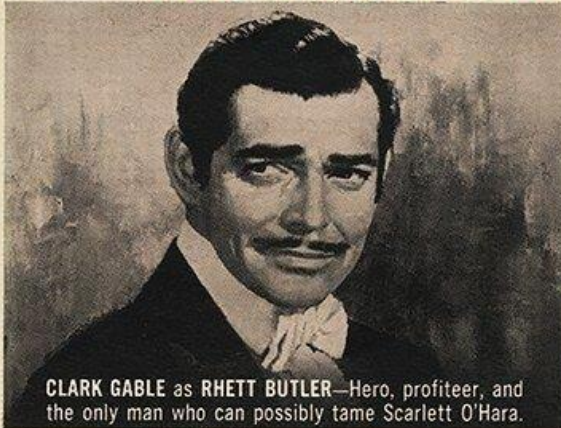
This has been confirmed to me by two projectionists who had personally shown the film here in Germany back then.

I was told that all 6 channels were busy, but not really with 6 discrete, differently sounding tracks (5 channels behind the screen, and 1 channel in the surround).



Advertising: **GONE WITH THE WIND** now in 70mm

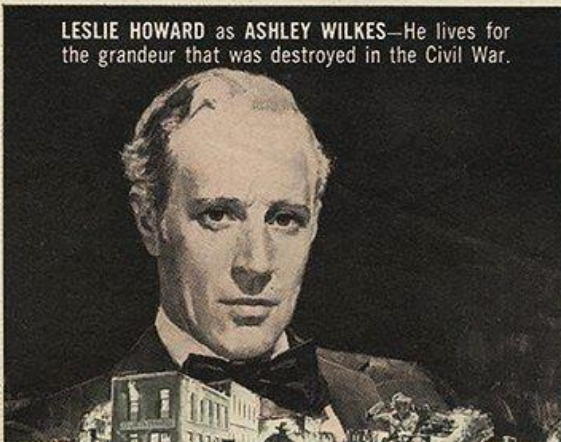
**In the splendor of 70mm. wide screen  
and full stereophonic sound!**



CLARK GABLE as RHETT BUTLER—Hero, profiteer, and the only man who can possibly tame Scarlett O'Hara.



VIVIEN LEIGH as SCARLETT O'HARA—She has all the spirit of a woman and all the courage of a man.



LESLIE HOWARD as ASHLEY WILKES—He lives for the grandeur that was destroyed in the Civil War.



OLIVIA de HAVILLAND as MELANIE WILKES—She sees only the goodness in other people . . . never the evil.

DAVID O. SELZNICK'S PRODUCTION OF MARGARET MITCHELL'S

# "GONE WITH THE WIND"

STARRING

CLARK GABLE  
VIVIEN LEIGH

Winner  
of Ten  
Academy  
Awards 

LESLIE HOWARD OLIVIA de HAVILLAND

A SELZNICK INTERNATIONAL PICTURE • DIRECTED BY VICTOR FLEMING • SCREEN PLAY BY SIDNEY HOWARD • RE-RELEASED BY METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER INC. • Music by MAX STEINER



IN 70 mm. WIDE SCREEN • STEREOPHONIC SOUND • METROCOLOR



WATCH FOR IT AT A THEATRE IN YOUR CITY



"Autant en emporte le vent"  
A French poster (**Technicolor?**)



"Lo que el viento se llevó"  
A Spanish poster



"Tatt av vinden"  
A Norwegian poster



"Via col vento"  
An Italian poster (**Technicolor?**)



*"Borte med blæsten"*  
A Danish poster



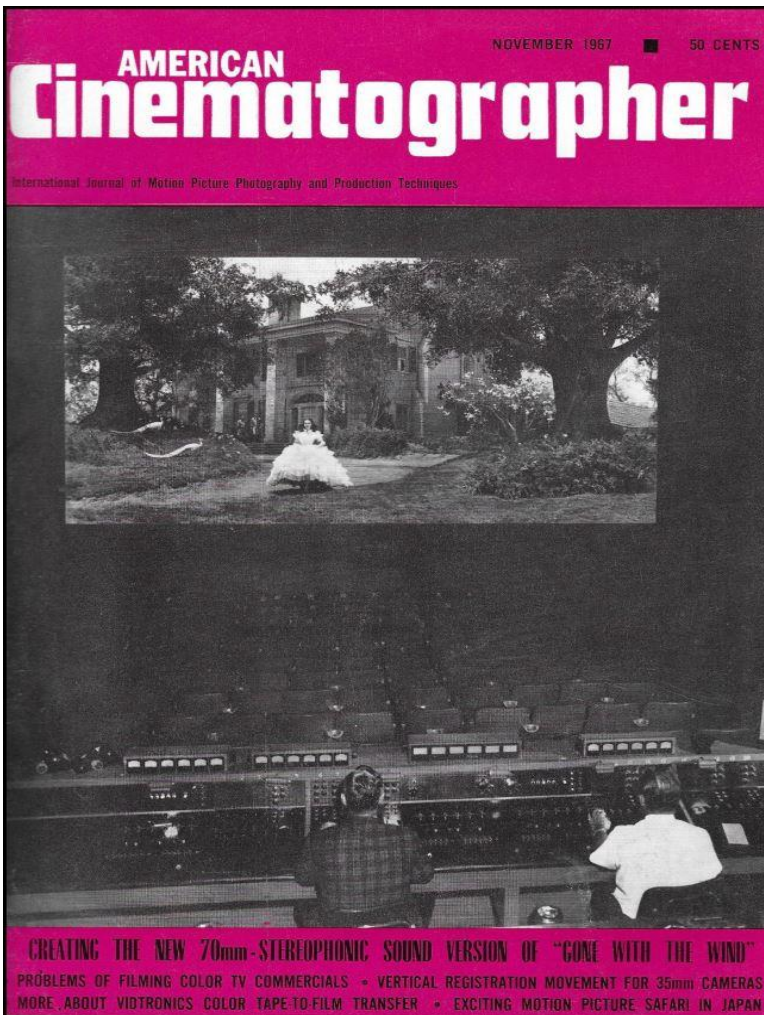
*"Prohujalo sa vihorom"*  
A poster from ex-Yugoslavia



*"Gejaagd door de wind"*  
A Dutch poster



The leftover of a Japanese entrance ticket.



The trade magazine "American Cinematographer" (dated November 1967) reports in detail (6 pages) about ...

*"The Creating of the New 70mm Stereophonic Sound Version of **Gone with the Wind.**"*

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The Selznick Studios  
Retrospective Backlot Tour:  
[\(204\) The Selznick Studios Retrospective Backlot Tour - YouTube](#)

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**Gone with the Wind** museum:  
[\(204\) Gone with the Wind Museum - Marietta, Ga - YouTube](#)

In memory of **Olivia de Havilland** who had passed away at the age of 104 years on 26.07.2020. She had been the number one choice for the role of Melanie Hamilton, the wise and lovable lady in **Gone with the Wind**. Warner Brothers was unwilling to loan her to Selznick but finally relented in late 1938.

**THE END**