

January 14, 1955

Bill Goetz May Join Mike Todd For '80 Days'

New York.—Bill Goetz, whose indie unit now is producing on the Columbia lot, may join Mike Todd and British interests in a coproduction of "Around the World in 80 Days" in the Todd-AO process, it was learned yesterday. If a deal is concluded, the multi-million-dollar film would be made in England, with Columbia releasing. Goetz, now here, returns to the coast next week. Sources close to Todd said that, although no deal has been consummated, it might materialize over the weekend.

January 17, 1955

Haggiag Joining Todd In 'War & Peace' Sweepstake

Rome.—Robert Haggiag, co-producer of "The Barefoot Contessa," is reported joining forces with Mike Todd in his Todd-AO version of "War and Peace" to be made with the cooperation of the Yugoslav government as an Italo-Yugoslav co-production. Dino De Laurentiis and David O. Selznick also have announced "War and Peace" films.

January 18, 1954

Huston Film for AA May Be in Todd-AO

New York.—Mike Todd and William Goetz returned here yesterday from a quick plane trip to London, Belgrade, Amsterdam and several other European cities. Todd is expected to plane to Hollywood today, returning here Saturday to meet John Huston, arriving from abroad. It is reported that Huston's first production for Allied Artists, Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King," will be made in the Todd-AO process. Goetz will leave for the coast tomorrow.

January 19, 1954

'Oklahoma!' Cost \$9,000,000; Most Expensive Film to Date

By the time Rodgers & Hammerstein's recently completed Todd-AO film version of "Oklahoma!" reaches the theatre screens, the production will have run up a negative cost of some \$9,000,000, making it the most expensive motion picture to date, according to latest figures on the project.

Contributing to the enormous cast, aside from the new big-screen process being broken in, are the many elaborate musical and location numbers, the large professional cast, CinemaScope, Technicolor, the extended location shooting and other requirements of a large-scale production.

In going ahead with the project despite the unprecedented cost, Rodgers & Hammerstein and the various groups contributing to the film's financing have been encouraged not only by the new boxoffice records racked up by special attractions but also by a vast pre-sold audience that "Oklahoma!" is expected to have.

The stage production already has been seen by some 12,000,000 persons and its world-wide legit gross to date is estimated at better than \$30,000,000. The Todd-AO film version is figured to reach a greater number of movie theatre patrons in a much shorter time, so that even at lower prices the gross can be considerably higher.

Plans now are to hold the world premiere about mid-May at the Rivoli Theatre, New York, followed by openings in Hollywood, Chicago and 47 other key cities on a two-a-day road-show basis. The picture will be the first release of Magna Theatre Corp. Arthur Hornblow, Jr., produced it for R. & H., with Fred Zinnemann directing.

January 21, 1954

Small Sells Stock In Magna Theatres

New York.—Edward Small is reported to have sold his Magna Theatres Corp. stock for approximately \$17.50 per share or a total of \$350,000. Stock was acquired when the company was first formed, at which time Mike Todd allowed a number of friends and acquaintances to buy in at 5 cents a share.

January 28, 1954

Precious Cargo

The most valuable single shipment in the history of the Emery Air Freight Corp. leaves tonight for the Consolidated Film Laboratories at Fort Lee, New Jersey. It is the work print of the Rodgers & Hammerstein production of "Oklahoma!" in the Todd-AO process. The 14 reels, 2000 feet each, of cut 65mm film, have been fully insured by producer Arthur Hornblow.

January 29, 1954

Paramount First In 'War and Peace'

Paramount looks set to come in first with a film version of "War and Peace," with disclosure yesterday by Dino DeLaurentiis that a camera unit from Rome started filming backgrounds in Finland this week for the Ponti-DeLaurentiis production of the Tolstoy classic to be distributed by Paramount. DeLaurentiis left last night for New York for a 10-day stopover before returning to Italy. Director, cast and other assignments on the film will be completed in time to start principal shooting in June, he said, and the VistaVision picture is expected to be ready for release in February, 1956, ahead of Selznick and Todd.

January 31, 1954

... Mike Todd signed Robert Sherwood to script and Fred Zinnemann to direct HIS "War and Peace" ... Ponti-Di Laurentiis signed King Vidor to direct THEIR "War and Peace" ... Both versions will be shot in Yugoslavia. Joe Schenck meets the press at his home this ayem with a Todd-AO announcement on release and distribution of "Oklahoma!"