

August 19, 1955

The finished "Oklahoma," two-and-a-half hours of it, got three screenings Tuesday at Metro before assorted audiences of press, cast and celebs. The press was pledged to refrain from formal reviews—pledges that some kept in full and others kept only in part—but there could be no secret of the fact that Arthur Hornblow's production of the Rodgers & Hammerstein classic is a blockbuster in the Todd-AO process.

It's impossible to estimate what the boxoffice of this picture will or could be. If Magna, which is releasing the film for its two-a-day dates, can fulfill its plans to put it into 60 worldwide situations at roadshow prices for long runs, the gross of "Oklahoma" should run far beyond any picture in the history of the film business. And between the roadshows and future printdown distribution, who knows but that some of the grandiose estimates upwards to \$75,000,000 world boxoffice won't become reality instead of high-flying fancy.

But one thing is certain. "Oklahoma" presages a new era in the motion picture industry. The Todd-AO process offers audiences the same type of story participation that they get in the legitimate theatre; the six-track sound is the finest and most exciting experience of its type that theatre audiences have yet enjoyed. It makes obsolete all sound systems as now known; it dwarfs all other dimensions other than Cinerama; and with all this, "Oklahoma" is great entertainment and as American as a hot dog and root beer.

"Oklahoma" could possibly play so long that it will be in opposition to its stars when they are playing old character parts.

(Army Archerd, on vacation, resumes here Aug. 23.)

August 31, 1955

GOOD MORNING: "The Ben Hur" script is completed and the film rolls in April. Todd-AO's leading the race for method of filming. . .

. . . And David Niven, with a week left on his Paramount pact for "Birds and Bees," was given permission to wing to London today to start "Around the World in 80 Days". . .

'Okla' Troupe Back

Bulk of the "Oklahoma" company has planed in from Nogales location, including Oscar Hammerstein II and director Fred Zinnemann.

Remainder of troupe remains for a few more days' shooting under direction of Zinnemann's assistant, Art Black.

'80 Days' for Howard

London, Aug. 30.—Trevor Howard has been signed by Michael Todd for "Around the World In 80 Days" in Todd-AO, starring Cantinflas and David Niven.

Hornblow Consultant Producer to Magna

Arthur Hornblow, Jr., producer of "Oklahoma!" in Todd-AO, last week signed with Magna Theatre Corp. to serve as a consultant producer, starting Jan. 1, 1956. Deal is non-exclusive, with Hornblow able to participate in his own production plans.

Hornblow is currently vacationing in Europe.