

September 12, 1956

Magna Gets \$3,060,000 In 'Oklahoma!' Rentals

New York.—Magna Theatre Corp. received film rentals totaling \$3,060,000 from "Oklahoma!" in the six months ending July 31 according to George P. Skouras, president. After deducting distribution, print and other costs, there remained a net income of \$1,960,000.

Film rental figure reported by Skouras must include the \$2,000,000 received from RKO as an advance guarantee against foreign rights. Since its first showing on Oct. 13, 1955 through last July 31, "Oklahoma!" has been seen by 2,397,653 persons. It is now playing in 21 theatres in U.S. and is due to open in Boston and Seattle this month. Skouras said the picture also will be shown in the Todd-AO process in Germany, Japan, Venezuela, France and Italy.

'Oklahoma!' to Run 48 Weeks at Rivoli

New York.—The Todd-AO "Oklahoma!" completes its Broadway run at the Rivoli Theatre on Oct. 3 after a 48-week engagement, it is announced by Ted O'Shea, v.-p. in charge of sales for Magna Theatre Corp. The roadshow run resulted in a gross of \$1,673,675 at Rivoli through Sept. 9.

'80 Days' Seizure Won't Affect Release, Says Todd

"Technical seizure" by the County Tax Assessor's office of "Around the World in 80 Days," in the test suit by producer Michael Todd involving California's negative tax law, will not affect processing of the picture at the Technicolor lab here, nor will it interfere with the Oct. 16 world premiere at the Rivoli, New York, or any subsequent release here or abroad, Todd stated over the weekend.

The producer said he is prepared to post necessary bond for the \$93,000 tax claim pending trial of the suit in Superior Court.

September 19, 1956

... You can look for an early announcement of daily matinees for Mike Todd's "Around the World" at New York's Rivoli Theatre. The current 10 performances a week aren't enough for the heavy ticket demands.

Todd, UA Setting Up 14 '80 Days' Roadshow Dates by Year's End

New York, Sept. 18.—United Artists, in association with Mike Todd, is in the process of setting about 14 roadshow runs of "Around the World In 80 Days," which, it was revealed, was brought in at a negative cost of slightly over \$5,000,000. Of that amount, the UA ante came to \$2,000,000, and Todd and his associates raised the balance on their own.

Theatre Oct. 17, with other two-day engagements, all in key cities, to break around the year-end holidays.

London.—"O what a beautiful evening" it was for producer Arthur Hornblow, Jr., when he attended the European preem of his "Oklahoma!" at the Odeon Leicester Square. Even he, I think, was amazed at the terrific reception it got from the hepped-up audience of cabinet ministers, diplomats, stage and screen stars, socialites and other celebs. And they didn't wait for the curtain to come down before they started the wrist exercises; most every one of those endearing songs received its quota of pounding palms which sometimes drowned the succeeding dialog. That's one thing you can't do with a movie—hold up the action until the audience is through expressing its appreciation. And, boy, how they expressed it! If the modest Mr. Hornblow ("Not bad, eh?" he remarked to a critic after the press preview) had any doubts about this picture, believe me he hasn't got them now. And the audience was only reiterating what the press already had said. To quote only one critic, Emery Pearce of the Daily Herald: "'Oklahoma!' is by miles the sweetest, song-fullest, most colorful, heart-tuggingest treat I've had in years." And that goes for me, the next guy, and most all the guys in this part of the tired old world. Another happy feller at this out-of-this world preem was Bob Wolff, RKO chief in London. And why not? This picture, along with the wonderful lineup he's got coming up, will put RKO right back on the map in the biggest way you ever saw. And let me give a final pat on the back to RKO's publicity chief David Jones for his work in organizing the biggest preem for the biggest picture that has come our way for many a weary month.

Important trade interest centers on "80 Days" in terms of its box-office durability in the American Optical system. Fact that both UA and Todd are high on its prospects is shown in the lack of any planning for release of the Todd-AO production in printed-down form.

On another aspect of the situation, it is reported Todd is given a free hand on calling the turns on how the film should be premiered in such major cities as NY, L.A. and Chicago. Presumably others, too, if he so desires.

In line with this, it is recalled the producer did an out-in-the-open burn at the manner in which Magna Theatre (George Skouras) staged the bow of "Oklahoma," first of the Todd-AO entries, at the Rivoli last year.