

Movie Magic Transforms Arboretum

By JOHN SCHENK
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They are making a movie at the Arboretum. Again?

If one lives in the Los Angeles area for any length of time the business, and it is exactly and only that, of making motion pictures becomes a commonplace occurrence.

For Foothill Inter-city residents the Arboretum has been their contact of the reality of film making for decades. Until recent years the site of botanical gardens, a bird sanctuary and historical monuments was also the location of Tarzan's movie tree house. A storm toppled the oak that housed it.

"Trader Horn"

The film in question is Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's remake of "Trader Horn." The same company financed two years of African location shooting over 40 years ago to produce such a popular picture that unforgetting exhibitors have been asking for a new color version for some time now.

With Red Taylor as Horn this version will be shot no farther from Hollywood than the Sacramento River, and that only if local weather complicates shooting. Otherwise (photo, Ventura County and other exotic locales will sub for the once Dark Continent with the superb animal footage from "King Solomon's Mines," the one with Stewart Granger, providing proper primeval romance.

Work on films begins notoriously early but Monday, the first day of the six week "Trader Horn" shooting schedule, things were still in preparatory stages at 8 a.m.

Native Type

A native type stood waiting in costume, a fez and colorful skirt affair embellished with sunglasses and terry cloth robe. The morning chill had yet to be burned off by the sun.

"Every picture I've been in I get killed. It's the same with this one though it takes a bit longer than the last one where they threw me out of a 26th floor window after hanging me upside down by my ankles," said the actor.

After only two years of professional acting, New York based Ed Bernard is a veteran of commercials, television and three films. Being killed a lot did not seem to bother him. His outlook was positive and manner cheery as he chatted with actors and crew alike.

Pampas Grass

"We need a big bunch of pampas grass for right here in front of the camera," someone said.

"Pampas grass?"

"Yeah, green."

A prop man placed potted pampas grass near the camera track while someone else hoisted down the greenery to keep everything dripping and steaming.

Stars always have to have their late entrance. Red Taylor made his by 25 minutes but wasted little time gloating in it. Scenes had to be reorchestrated and the native came he was visible. Taylor suggested and supervised the placement of a keel for it.

Before filming started Taylor slipped getting into the canoe and soaked one leg. The scene he was doing with Bernard changed slightly with each new take and finally Bernard ended up in the water, too.

Improvisational

"That was an improvisational thing," said Bernard. "The film medium is all really improvisational but it has to be good. That camera catches every twitch."

"It's all kind of boring," said one of the crew who had been watching Taylor escape for over an hour. "Let's go."

This is not to reject that there is still some magic in motion pictures. It just depends on whether you can place the proceedings into a more realistic context, if you have time to just sit quietly in the warm sun and watch and if you like people.



RED TAYLOR gets assist across the Arboretum lake which subs for the treacherous waters of Africa. The camera was shooting tight and no sound was recorded so illusion of movies would remain.



PLAYING THE TITLE ROLE in MGM's planned summer release, "Trader Horn," Red Taylor listens to co-star Ed Bernard who has taken to a bath robe to ward off the morning chill between takes. Bernard plays Apoque, a



ED BERNARD stands knee deep in the Arboretum waters preparing to deliver his lines for several close up shots. His co-star Red Taylor, foreground light clo-

thing, gets down in the mud with the cameramen to Bernard a point of focus for reading his lines.

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