

December 1, 1954

Mike Todd Plans 'War and Peace'

New York. — Tolstoy's "War and Peace" has been scheduled for Todd-AO filming by the Michael Todd Co., the producer announced yesterday at a press conference in which Phil Reisman, president of his company, also participated. Todd said he is negotiating with the government of Yugoslavia to shoot exteriors there, starting Sept. 15, with the plan of utilizing units of that country's army in a contemplated cast of 50,000 to 60,000. Interiors will be done in England.

Todd said he plans to spend \$7,500,000 on the production. He is negotiating with Fred Zinnemann to direct and Robert Sherwood to do the screenplay.

Bambi Linn Winds Role

Bambi Linn, who has been here the past six weeks dancing the feminine lead in the dream ballet sequence of the Rodgers & Hammerstein production of "Oklahoma" in the Todd-AO process, completed her assignment yesterday and flew back to New York.

Never have we heard such shouts of approval from theatremen as from those who saw the "Oklahoma!" footage Tuesday night. Shouts were for AO (American Optical) hailed as best yet in the wide-screen division. As for the acting, singing, dancing and Fred Zinnemann's direction — well, all we can say is that you'll shout too! . . . Says Oscar Hammerstein II: "Now I know what being a movie producer is — and there was a time when I couldn't care less about what goes on inside a Brownie or what happens to film after it's left at the drug store" . . . Except for a few

December 6, 1954

SELZNICK PROCEEDING WITH 'WAR & PEACE' DESPITE TODD

Italian Version Also Is Planned

New York. — Mike Todd's announcement Wednesday that he was planning a \$7,500,000 Todd-AO production of Tolstoy's literary classic, "War and Peace," brought immediate reaction yesterday from David O. Selznick.

Said Selznick: "I'm amused by the discovery in unexpected quarters of Tolstoy, since my initial announcement concerning 'War and Peace.'"

"The unknowing might be led to believe that a deluge of productions of this classic is imminent, in all sizes and shapes. I personally have no fear of this happening.

"I, too, have been contacted by the Yugoslavian government; however, I doubt that Tito's troops are uniformed and equipped in the manner of the armies of Bonaparte and Alexander in 1812 (which, however, would be valuable information, if true); and to supply 50,000 of them would take an awful bite out of anybody's budget. I'd be afraid to make pictures on that scale.

"Mike Todd is quite a showman, and I don't question his quaint boast that he's read the book."

Selznick, who has Ben Hecht as his scenarist, said he plans to go ahead with his "War and Peace" project despite the plans of others.

A production of the Tolstoy work in Italy also has been announced by Dino De Laurentiis.

December 9, 1956

"AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS has been acquired by Mike Todd and will probably be the second production in Todd-AO.

—Variety

Screenplay by RICHARD SALE

December 17, 1954

Zinnemann Will Direct Todd's 'War and Peace'

Fred Zinnemann, just finishing "Oklahoma," will direct the Robert E. Sherwood script of "War and Peace" for Mike Todd when this picture gets under way. Todd, however, first will do "Around the World in 80 Days" in conjunction with Alex Korda, starting in early February at the Shepperton Studios, London.

Zinnemann meanwhile is reported in negotiations for an assignment at Warners.

December 23, 1954

'War and Peace' Race

With Ponti-DeLaurentiis readying a film version of "War and Peace" in Italy and Mike Todd also planning to do the Tolstoy classic, David O. Selznick is reported ready to get his script of the same property before the cameras first, with release through MGM.

'Oklahoma!' For Rivoli

New York.—Rodgers & Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" has been set to open at the Rivoli the end of March. A roadshow engagement here, as well as in other key cities, is planned for the Todd-AO \$6,000,000 film.