

# ROSS REPORTS — TELEVISION INDEX

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## MID-WEEK SPECIAL

### NEWS - COMMENT - POSSIBILITIES

Howard Lindsay and Dorothy Stickney will play the King and Queen in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella" over CBS on March 31. The husband and wife acting team will make their musical debut on the special TV show. Ralph Nelson, currently a Playhouse 90 director, will fly to New York during the first week in February, to prepare for his work as director of the R&H musical. He'll return to his Playhouse 90 post in April.....CBS will present the second Frank Capra-produced film in AT&T's Science Series for the Bell System on Wednesday, March 20, 9-10pm EST. Called "Hemo the Magnificent," the color film explores blood and its mysteries of circulation and elements. Actor Richard Carlson and scholar Dr. Frank Baxter are featured in the film.....The Feb 4 Producers' Showcase presentation of "Mayerling" will have 40 performers in speaking parts, of the total of 150 performers in the cast. The NBC press release listing some of the performers who will be in the cast, snobbishly explains it all this way: "Performers who have often been featured on TV in lead roles will play comparatively minor parts for the privilege of working with so outstanding a creative talent as Anatole Litvak, who will produce, stage and direct the poignant love story."

Warner Bros. will begin production of "The Jazz Age" on Jan 24 in Hollywood, the film biography of Helen Morgan, the late blues singer. Last night CBS announced that it has acquired the rights to present the life of Helen Morgan on Playhouse 90 during the current season. Mrs. Lulu Morgan, mother of the late Broadway star, sold the TV rights. Although the writer of the TV play is not set, production has been tentatively scheduled for April.....Burlesque, re-created in the guise of its heyday of comedy and music of 40 years ago, comes to TV next Sunday, when Bert Lahr performs and narrates in "The Big Wheel" on Omnibus, with an original script by S. J. Perelman. The program will present the classic routines and acts of pre-World War 1 burlesque, long before the strippers and blue routines ruined the medium.

The Screen Actors Guild board has approved the agreement with several Roland Reed companies whereby actors will be paid more than \$100,000 in overdue residual payments on four TV film series. The action also affirmed that all Roland Reed companies have been removed from the Guild's "unfair" list. The four series are My Little Margie, The Stu Erwin Show, Space Ranger, and Waterfront. Other companies involved in the original production of the first two series named had already made separate arrangements to pay for their share of the residuals owed.....Guild Films resumed production of four episodes in the Captain David Grief in Hollywood this week, with filming at Goldwyn Studios. Location shooting for the South Seas stories will be done off the coast of California, instead of Hawaii as in the earlier episodes. Stuart Heisler continues as director.....Beat the Clock moves to Friday, 7:30-8pm EST over CBS, replacing My Friend Flicka, effective Feb 8, but CBS has renewed its contract with TCF TV Productions for future production and re-run rights for Flicka.

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Walt Disney Productions' new contract with ABC for the 1957-58 season involves over \$9,000,000 for 130 hours of programming for three film series. Disneyland will again have 26 hours of new programming, with repeats and re-runs of previous films accounting for the 52 weeks of the year. Mickey Mouse Club will start its third season on ABC in October by cutting back to a half-hour Monday-thru-Friday series. Disney will produce 65 hours of new material, with the remaining 65 hours required for the year coming from re-runs. The new series coming from Disney will be Zorro, 39 half-hour films about the character created by Johnston McCulley in his novels written in the 20's. (The most famous was the first, "The Mark of Zorro," also done twice as a motion picture). William Tunberg is writing the TV scripts for the series which will be ready for airing as an evening series in October.

Academy of Television Arts and Sciences has sanctioned efforts to create a new television writers' workshop. Mort Abrahams, exec producer of NBC's Producers' Showcase, who volunteered his services to help organize the unit, has announced that there will be a meeting in February of producers, writers and agents, under the auspices of the Academy, aimed at exploring means to reach tentative workshop goals. Abrahams reports that among top TV names who have promised to help organize the workshop are: Paddy Chayefsky, Nat Hiken, Marlo Lewis, Max Liebman, Tony Miner, Reginald Rose, Rod Serling, Leo Davis and Joe Schrank..... On another front, the Academy has already been assured of the attendance of most of TV's top names at the "Emmy Award" nominations, to be telecast by NBC on Feb 16.

All 25 of the nation's non-commercial educational television stations will carry the five series of programs to be produced by NBC as part of its Educational Television Project. The programs will be transmitted live from New York over NBC's regular network facilities, Monday thru Friday, 6:30-7pm EST, starting tentatively on March 11. Edward Stanley, NBC manager of public service programs, heads the project, with David Lowe as over-all producer of the programs. The five programs will cover the fields of mathematics, music, government, literature, and world geography and economics. Lowe will also produce the mathematics programs, which will have noted author James R. Newman as conductor.

On Jan 22, 1947, at 8:30pm PST, KTLA(LA) presented from a converted garage, the first commercial program in the West, sponsored by Tupman Motor Cars. Star of the program was Bob Hope, with guests Cecil B. DeMille (who predicted that Hollywood would one day become the TV capital of the world), Dorothy Lamour, Jerry Colonna, William Bendix, Peter Lind Hayes, William Demarest, Ann Rutherford and others. The sponsor got three commercials, with Bob Hope and William Bendix handling a comic intro to the first one.

PEOPLE GOING PLACES: Lee Polk joined WCBS-TV(NY) as a staff director, with his first assignment to Eye On New York.....George William "Willie" Thall has resigned from the talent staff of WLW-T(Cinn) to join another TV and radio organization..... Cal Tinney named director of the new News Dept of WBNF-TV(Binghamton).

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