

Movie Business in Manila Holding Up Well

Reasonable prosperity in the movie business in the Philippines is attested by construction, now underway, of another modern movie theater on the Escolta. It is being built by Eastern Theatrical Enterprises, Inc., and word is that it will cost in the neighborhood of P1,000,000. Another straw indicating favorable winds in the movie business is the success, in the provinces particularly, of the movies of the Philippines that are made in Manila. Those made at the Tait & Harris lot on calle Inverness, in the company's large new soundproof studio, hit a very satisfactory pace.

The American agencies have been interviewed for a summary of the situation as to their films. American films catch on best, of course: the public likes their tempo, they give the people their songs and favorite dance music.

The business side:

Four agencies kindly answered a memorandum, pertaining only to first-run theaters. One theater reported January and April better than the same months last year, February and March not so good. Another had a better January this year than last year, with February to April below last year. Another was 8% below last year in January, nearly double last year in February, 11% over last year in March and 25% in April. Another ran 57% below last year in January and 39% in February, and 10% above last year in March and April.

The Ideal, enjoying good patronage too, was being rebuilt last year and comparisons are therefore not available. This theater runs MGM films. Greta Garbo in *Queen Christina* has been its best boxoffice hit this year, and the best since

September. Second and third boxoffice hits since September, Crosby and Davies in *Going Hollywood*, and Laurel and Hardy in *Sons of the Desert*. Its 3 most popular men stars are Ramon Novarro, Clarke Gable, Robert Montgomery; and women stars, Greta Garbo, Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford. Its upstairs patrons prefer sophisticated social drama; main floor patrons, religious spectacles; and something to suit both, historical pageantry.

Radio's best boxoffice picture this year was *Tarzan and the Blonde Venus*; and since September, *King Kong*. Its best 3 boxoffice pictures since September, *King Kong*, *Flying Down to Rio*, and *Bird of Paradise*, with *Aloha* next. It handles Acme films. Its 3 most popular men stars are Richard Dix, Joel McCrea and Bill Boyd; and women stars, Dolores del Rio, Irene Dunn and Katherine Hepburn. Its upstairs patrons prefer social drama; main floor, melodrama and westerns; to please both, guess. If you could guess a *King Kong* every time you would always be in the money.

Lyric features Paramount and Universal pictures. Its business since January has run steadily and remarkably ahead of last year's same period. The boxoffice was best pleased over *Too Much Harmony*, then *Take a Chance*, then *The Way to Love*.

Eastern Theatrical have the Fox and the Metropolitan.

Best boxoffice picture at the Fox this year was *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*, which was also the best since September, with *Mystery of the Wax Museum* second. Three most popular men stars, Paul Muni, Eddie Cantor, Edward

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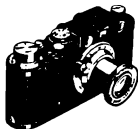
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G. Robinson: women, Janet Gaynor, Elissa Landi, Lillian Harvey. Its up-stairs patrons like action drama: main floor, quick-moving melodrama—which gets over up-stairs too if direction and action are up to expectations.

Eddie Cantor in *Roman Scandals* was Metropolitan's best offering this year, the boxoffice shows, and *Colleg Humor* best since September. Gold Diggers of 1933 ran third. Patrons here have the same preferences in pictures as those at the Fox.

The Grand was closed toward the latter end of last year, for remodeling, new seats and cooling and ventilation. In December it opened under new management, and in January ran Universal's *Invisible Man*, its best boxoffice picture since reopening. It releases Columbia pictures for first runs. *Lady for a Day* and *Below the Sea* rank second and third after *Invisible Man*. But the boxoffice also showed *Mag Inang Mahirap*, a Tait & Harris feature, very popular with main floor patrons—bearing out what has been said above about the newer, better Manila pictures.

Unabated popularity of the movies has been a primary factor in the prosperity of Manila newspapers ever since the depression, setting in, reduced revenue from other lines of advertising. Business from the movies offsets this loss of other revenue very materially. So the movies both entertain you and provide you better newspapers.



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