

Cinema Talk

Sound Brings Added Thrills to "Ben-Hur"

(Review)

"Ben-Hur," the world's most sensational motion picture, makes a triumphant return at the Alcyon theatre, with the added attraction of sound synchronization which brings to life the voices of the multitudes in the spectacular crowd scenes. This great picture, which will live through the ages as the most remarkable achievement of silent films, was filmed by Fred Niblo in Italy and America at a cost of four million dollars which is easily evident from a glimpse of its gigantic backgrounds and spectacular episodes such as the thrilling sea battle and the magnificent chariot race by which Ramon Novarro in the title role avenges his Roman antagonist, Messala, who has been the cause of the ruin of himself and his kinsfolk.

Sound effects bring a fresh aspect to this magnificent picture giving its spectacle tremendous realism. For now you not only see the charioteers tearing around the course cheered on by the frenzied spectators, but you hear them as well. The sound effects in the thrilling sea combat episodes are likewise effective. This amazing picture in its re-issued version is something not to be missed!

Facts About "Ben-Hur"

As a Novel: The novel, written by General Lew Wallace in 1880, has been a best seller for fifty-one years. It has been translated into ten different languages and it is the first novel to be translated into Arabic. It is the only novel with a circulation as large as that of the Bible.

As a Play: "Ben-Hur" was first produced as a play Nov. 19, 1899, at the Broadway theatre, New York, where it ran for forty weeks. It played on the road for twenty-two consecutive seasons and grossed about seven million dollars. There was only one company on tour because of the stupendousness of the production. It played for twenty weeks at the Drury Lane theatre in London and is at the present time being constantly revived in all parts of the world.

As a Picture: The screen version was three years in the making. One year and a half was spent in Rome on historical sites and another year and a half filming scenes at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios in Culver City, California. The film premiere took place Dec. 30, 1925, at the George M. Cohan theatre, New York. One hundred and fifty thousand people were employed in the picture, 100,000 in the Antioch Chariot Race alone. One hundred ships were built and launched for the sea fight between the Roman and Pirate navies which was filmed in the Mediterranean Sea. Sections of the city of Jerusalem were reproduced for important sequences of the story,

"Private Lives" Gay Comedy Hit

When Metro - Goldwyn - Mayer invaded Broadway and bought its most popular hit of last season, "Private Lives," it certainly must have had a co-starring arrangement for Norma Shearer and Robert Montgomery in mind. For, in the mind of this reviewer, no two other players in pictures today could have done justice to the sparkling Noel Coward play as have this grand team.

Play Kept Intact

They have brought the hilarious farce to the screen almost intact, plus the addition of a scenic scope the theatre could not hope to achieve. There is no question of the entertainment value of this smart piece as written but the impetus given the story by the clever young farceurs entrusted with the principal roles overshadows even the amazing brilliance of the crackling lines.

Director Sidney Franklin's adept handling of the delicate moments smacks of the cunning of Lubitsch. His pictorial quality is not at all lacking, even in sequences that remain long in one locale and with the two principal players almost constantly before the camera lens. Although the plot gathers topspeed at the very start, it picks up an astonishing momentum that makes us wonder how Miss Shearer and Montgomery ever kept up the wild pace and managed to top each situation's swiftness with a fresh outburst of cyclonic energy.

Excellent Support

Reginald Denny, Una Merkel and Jean Hersholt are featured in the supporting cast. Denny is the man Miss Shearer (Amanda) marries to spite her ex-hubby, Elyot, the part played by Montgomery. Miss Merkel is the Sibyl he weds to spite Amanda and Jean Hersholt lends a colorful characterization to his part of the Swiss Alpine guide.

The story brings the spite newly-weds into adjoining bridal suites at a French hotel. After rowing with their new spouses, Amanda and Elyot discover each other's presence and elope to a chalet in Switzerland. The situations that follow cannot be described. They are so hysterical we don't know how they ever happened to be placed on paper at all. If you don't border on collapse after you see them, there probably isn't hope for your laugh glands.

Incidentally, the picture reveals Miss Shearer as the possessor of a lovely singing voice. In a novel duet with Montgomery she sings "Some Day I'll Find You," a charming melody.

including the Court of Pilate and the famous Grove of Palms. The arena in which the chariot race took place was 1,500 feet in length, the biggest set ever erected on a motion picture studio lot.

Deerpath Theatre

Telephone 321

POLKA BROS.

Lake Forest

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

FEB. 11 - 12

Roland West's

"CORSAIR"

with Chester Morris - Alison Loyd

SATURDAY, FEB. 13

MATINEE AND EVENING

GEORGE O'BRIEN in

"The Rainbow Trail"

ZANE GRAY'S
Mighty Outdoor Western

also IRENE DUNNE in

CONSOLATION MARRIAGE

a Wholesome Comedy - Drama

SUNDAY AND MONDAY

FEBRUARY 14 - 15

Sunday Continuous 2 - 11

HERE IS THE PICTURE TREAT OF THE YEAR!

But, fighting or loving, they couldn't live without each other! The Noel Coward laugh hit is the new picture sensation!

Norma Shearer

and

Robert Montgomery

Stars of "Divorcee" and "Strangers May Kiss" in

Private Lives

From the Witty, Naughty, grand play by Noel Coward that shook the country with roars!

with REGINALD DENNY, JEAN HERSHOLT,

UNA MERKEL

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 16 - 17

BEN HUR

IN SOUND

You've always wanted to see it again — Well, here it is — its thrills and romance greater than ever in SOUND!

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

FEBRUARY 18 - 19

PEACH O'RENO

with BERT WHEELER and

ROBERT WOOLSEY