Won., S#pt. 29, 1975

Just for Variety
By ARMY ARCHERD

GOOD MORNING: "Every actor should get the chance to work with Marlon Brando," volunteers Jack Nicholson, who just costar-red with him in "Missouri Breaks." "He is the greatest actor. It was easy working with him and the movie will be something very unus-ual." Jack admits he and Warren Beatty hoped to make something unusual with "The Fortune." "I did it because that, too, was adven-turous — but the 'finesse' just didn't work. I'm sad — I had the best participation I've ever had in a film on that one, also, the best part" . . . Jack is awaiting word from Brando to star in his (Nichol-son's) "Moontrap," to be directed by Nicholson. "I prefer not to act," he says. What happens to hopes of Bob Evans and Bob Towne to star Nicholson in a second pic with "Chinatown" character, Har-ry Gittes? ... He will do a two-scene role as a labor organizer in "The Last Tycoon." Nicholson recommended Sam Spiegel cast Hen-ry King as — the director — in the Elia Kazan-directed epic about Hollywood . . . Gary Grant has his attorneys investigating suits vs. People mag and the Associated Press, the former for printing he has false teeth. "I want to get into court and open my mouth," said Grant. And the AP suit involves their quotes from a Red Book yarn (which Grant claims doesn't exist), saying he never loved any of his wives. The wire service yarn brought him a flood of international fone calls, sezze — none from his ex-wives. Grant recently won $10,- 000 from Esquire for printing his head on a fake body, he gave the dough to charity . . . Last week, after the MGM board meet on the lot, Grant was invited by Frank Rosenfelt and Dan Melnick to visit the giant carousel set of "Logan's Run." When Grant started to leave the set, the 400 extras broke into applause. He still has no plans

to return to acting.
* * *

Bing Crosby's guest on his Christmas show this year will be Fred Astaire, with whom he waxed an album in London. The Crosby clan, as usual, will also be on hand for the Yule show — this year on CBS . . . John Amos, whose contract negotiations delayed his start on "Good Times," has been out of the last two segs — because the story lines didn't involve him, we're told . . . Jimmy Komack nab-bed Tony Orlando to play a Freddie Prinze look-alike guestint in "Chico And The Man." How about a reciprocal visit by Freddie to Tony's show as his look-alike? . . . Raquel Welch gets a giant $25,- 000 as guestar on McLean Stevenson's NBC spec on which she'll sing "I Feel Like Making Love," the tune nixed by CBS from her Cher guestint . . . Sonny and Cher's attorney's had their 23d court session with Judge Mario Clinco Friday (26) . . . Burt Reynolds, directing Mike Douglas In the latter': dramatic bow. '"Gator," foned from 8a-vannah, Ga., to report Douglas is terrif playing a Governor who would be President. Anyone we know? . . . Linda (Mrs. By) Wein-traub wrote "The Family Tree," a half-hour sitcom with music. Mo-town's Berry Gordy dug it and now ABC is developing it with 'em as a series. Proud husband Sy W. retired from showbiz in 1969 after sel-ling his "Tarzan" pix . . . Jack Carter played a burlesk comic-mur-derer in "Ellery Queen" last week and is an agent in this week's "Cannon" guestarring Joan Fontaine . . . Orson Welles is out of "The Big Bus," the pact didn't work out. Too bad — whatta wild role! And they had already made his pajamas . . . Anne and Kirk Douglas weekended at the LBJ ranch where he was on an arts panel. He'll be in Houston Nov. 1 to m.c. the bow of the Summit, an $18,000,000 en-tertainment-sports arena.
* * *

For the first time, the Lettermen have booked an opening act — and she's Playboy's singing doll Barbi Benton, who bows with em at Valley Forge . . . Playgirl's October centerspread, Steve Bond, is in Pine-Thomas ' "Ca t Murkil l And Th e Silks'* — wit h

threads . . . Claudia Lapidus, here for brother-in-law Ted Lapi-dtis' shoppe-opening in BevHills, stopped in Van Cleef & Arpels and made a sizeable contribution to our local economy . . . The Max Factors debuted Stephen B., a perfume by award-winning designer Stephen Burrow s with a BevHill s Hotel sweet-smellin g soiree . . . Lisa Kirk's talk session with Dinah Shore tomorrow re-

sulted in Kirk talking a series of her own . . . John Vivyan is making good progress in intensive care at UCLA following a heart at-tack . . . Howard Morris checked out of Century City Hospital after tests for a viral infection . . . Dorothy Malone was welcomed back to town with a party at the West wood Bratskellar ... At Gladstone's, Quincy Jones and Peggy Lipton lobster'd with Herb Alport and Lani Hall.

(Trade Mark Registered)
Copyright '1970 by Daily Variety, Ltd.
Founded 1933 by Sime Silverman
Syd Silverman, President

Published Dally Except Saturday. Sunday and Holiday with a Special Edition the laat week in October by Dally Variety Ltd . 1400 N Cahuenga Boulevard. Hollywood. Califor-nia — 90028 Telephone (213) 469-1141 Telex #974-281

Vol.169 ;:»: Soplomoor 29, 1975 No. 16

Second class postage paid at Los Angeles, California
Thomas M. Pryor, Editor
Principal Offices
New York, Variety, 154 Weat 4«th Street. N Y . 10038 1212) Judaon 2-2700 Telex #1-26338. Washington, DC, 1050 Potomac S . N W 20005 (202) 9654301, Telex #89568.
Chicago, 400 Michigan Ave , (312) Delaware 7-4984. Telex #2-53268
London, 49 St James's Street. Piccadilly. SWIAIJX. Tel. 4934561 Telex #24547. Some, Via Ma re he 23, Tel. 46-29-75.
Paris, 80 Ave Charles de Gaulle. Tel 722-07-12.

Film Review

Royal Flash
(British—Period Action
Comedy—DeLuxe Color)

Twentieth Century-Fox releate, produced by
David V Picker, Demi O'Dell Stan Malcolm Mc-
Dowell, Alan Bales, Florinda Balkan, Oliver Reed
Directed by Richard Letter Screenplay, George
MacDonald Fraier, bated on his novel; camera
(DeLuxe Color), Geoffrey Uruworth; second unit
camera, Peter MacDonald; editor, John Victor
Smith; muiic. Ken Thome; production design,
Terence Marsh; art direction, Alan Tomkins, sound,
Gerry Humphreays, Simon Koye. assistant direc-
tor, Vincent Winter Reviewed at 20th Fox Studios,
LA., Sept 23, 1975 MPAA Rating: PG Running
time: 98 mm.
Flashman Malcolm McDowell
Rudi von Sternberg Alan Bates
Lola Montei Florinda Balkan
Otto von Bismarck Oliver Reed
Duchess Irmu Britt Ekland
Kraft si em Lionel Jeffries
de Gautet Tom Bell
Sopten Joss Ackland
Hansen Christopher Cazenove
Old Roue ' Roy Kinnear
Mr. Greig Alastair Sim
Headmaster Michael Hordern

"Royal Flash" Is a royal pain.
Richard Lester's formula period
comedy style, as enduring as it
is not particularly endearing,
achieves its customary levels of
pointless, posturing, cutesy silli-
ness. Malcolm McDowell heads
the cas t a s autho r scrlpter
George MacDonald Eraser' s
bohemlan Victorian military
officer. David V. Picker and
Deni s O'Del l produce d a t
Twickenham Studios and on
German locations. Trimmed a
couple of reels for the domestic
market from its London version,
the 20th Fox release lacks the
intangibles that put over the
"Musketeer" plx, so outlook
seems uneven.

McDowell, fleeing a bordello
raid, falls in with Florinda
Bolkan, playing Lola Montez, in
turn alienating Oliver Reed's
Otto von Bismarck. The latter,
with accomplice Alan Bates and
hit-men Lionel Jeffries and Tom
Bell, force McDowell to imper-
sonate a Prussian nobleman for
purposes of marriage to duch-
ess Britt Ekland. Complex politi-
cal, sexua l an d surviva l
strategies lurch the plot forward
throug h its distressin g 98
minutes.

Films like "Tom Jones," "The
Paleface." "Rugglea Of Red
Gap, " etc. al l manage d
somehow to combine some
physica l visua l comedi c
element s alon g wit h
dramaturg y tha t worked.
"Royal Flash," however, is
virtual prototype Lester: often
lavish and/or bizarre sets which
make dramatically tiny the
people placed in them; a sight-
gag situation; some broadly
drawn reaction shots; some run-
ning and jumping.

It might work if Lester let it all
hang out, but paradoxically, he
seems reluctant to do so, and the
result is nearly always over-
produced, underplayed, and at
best worth a smile or mild
chuckle.

The players are as competent
as the film allows, and their
work in other films is proof of
their talent. Production credits
are standard. Murf.

New York Film Festival Gets

OH To A Rocky Start With ^Conversation' Screening
By ADDISON VERRILL

New York, Sept. 28 — The 13th New York Film Festival laid a mighty egg with Friday night (26) opening at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall. Despite upbeat ticket sales for the entire event, a new

streamlined opening night procedure and even a break in the eightday run of soggy weather to lift the spirits, fest was fouled in its own
choice of Luchino Visconti's "Conversation Piece" as the first night attraction. It proved an unmitigated disaster, the very word stressed by the Times and Post critics.

Corwin, Tushinsky Get

Tent 25 Veep Stripes
Bruce C. Corwin, Metropoli-
tan Theatres Corp. proxy, and
Fred Tushinsky, senior veep of
sales and marketing for Super-
scope, have been named vice
presidents of Variety Club of
Southern California Tent 25,
reports proxy Milton I. Moritz.
The two succeed William W.
Rob! and Arthur Silber, who
have resigned.

Sellier Sun's Sr. Veep
Charles E. Sellier Jr., 31-year-
old veep in charge of production
for Sun Classic Pictures, has
been named senior veepee of the
company.

But first the good news. With
what most agree is an especial-
ly interesting slate of films this
year, the festival is in no box-
office difficulty. Ticket malem
have been brisk and the major-
ity of performances were sold
out well before the official open-
ing.

A happy change in the open-
ing night procedure came this
year with the streamlinging of
the usually interminable "wel-
comes" from fest officials and
reps of N.Y. City government.
With some bad press notices for
this performance at the fest last
year, Film Society of Lincoln
Center prez Martin E. Segal this
year opted not to participate on
stage, leaving the official fest
welcome to Film Society Chair-
man William F. May, who kept
it mercifully brief.

For the first time in many
years, the fest administration
did not extend an invitation to
the New York Mayor's office to
take part in one of the city's big
cultural happenings.
May's speech of welcome was
brief and to the point as he in-
troduced fest director Richard
Roud after the screening of
Fran k Mouris ' short film,
"Coney."
Roud apologized that no one
connected with the opening night
pic was present. That situation
had sparked plenty of back-
stairs hustling in the days im-
mediately preceding the open-
ing. Director Visconti was work-
ing in Europe and his health
would probably not have al-
lowed him to make the trip any-
way. Topliner Burt Lancaster
was off on location and Silvana
Mangano would not leave hus-

band Dino De Laurentiis in L.A.
It was fortunate that none of
the "Conversation Piece" prin-
cipals were present. Visconti's
turgid, badly postsynched (in
English) and depressingly pre-
tentious feature sparked au-
dience giggles about a half hour
into its two-hour-plus running
time. The giggles swelled to
roars of laughter and by the time
Lancaste r uttered the line,
"Things have turned out far
worse than I could have im-
agined, " the house was rife with
derision.

Walk-Outs
There were numerous walk-
outs in the sold-out house and the
film's conclusion was greeted
with boos and catcalls, the likes
of which haven't been heard at a
fest opening night in some time.
It can be argued that any film
by a director of Visconti's sta-
tur e deserve s a fest slot,
especially one without a U.S. dis-
trib, bu t th e choic e of
"Conversation Piece" for open-
ing night was especially poor
judgment.

Festival opening was fol-
lowed by the usual party at the
New York State Theatre. Fest
runs through Oct. 12, when Fran-
cola Truffaut'a "The Story Of
Adele H ' closes the event.

Two Juves Signed For

Disney's 'Matecumbe'
Producer Bill Anderson has
signed Johnny Dor an, 13, and
Billy Attmore, 10, for the juve
leads in Walt Disney Prods.'
"Treasure Of Matecumbe." Pic
star s Pete r Ustinov and is
directed by Vincent McEveety.

Who's Where

Hal Brown, v.p. in charge of
sales and distribution for Amer-
ican International Television
Inc., to N.Y. for meetings.

Marily n J. Tenser, exec
producer, George M. Josephs,
g.s.m., Don Foster, western divi-
sion manager of Crown Inter-
nationa l Pictures, to New
Orleans NATO convention.

Ronald Kass, Sagittarius En-
tertainment proxy, in from N.Y.,
Montreal.

Hannah Russell, prex y of
Harrison Music Corp. to N.Y.,
Paris, London.
Howard Keel to St. Paul to
star in the revue, "Gene Kelly's
Salute To Broadway."

Debbie Reynolds to Sparks
engagemen t at the Nugget
Circus Room.
Pierre Cassette in from N.Y.
Robert Wagner on concertour
of the southwest.
Mark Lenard in from N.Y.
Ro n Warmot h in fro m
Missoula, Mont.
Al Ross to N.Y.

Philip Abbott to Detroit.
Harry Bernsen to Houston,
New Orleans, N.Y., Toronto,
Chi.

BernNadette Stanis to Chi.

Hurra y Olso n t o N.Y.,
Providence, R.I.
Richard O'Brien to Gotham.
Budd Friedman in from N.Y.

NEW SUBSCRIBER! MOVING!

140 0 N. Cahueng a Boulevard, Hollywood, Co 9002 8 $40 Annually $25 Semi-annually

I

I

-
$50 Anr
SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Attach your check
For fast service.

MOVING? ATTAC N LABEL

Showing current address
Print new address below

I

E I

NAME.

STREET.

CITY STATE ZIP

L Subscriptio n Payabl e I n Advanc e ______- J