

70 MM

NEWSLETTER

No. 27
SEPTEMBER 1993

Dans les palais de Katmandou et les vallées perdues du Bhoutan, le réalisateur du "Dernier empereur" tourne en secret l'enfance de Bouddha. Avec Keanu Reeves.

Bertolucci

Little

Bertolucci dirigeant un acteur sur le lit royal.

Buddha

PAR FRANCOIS FORESTIER PHOTOS BERTRAND LAFORET
(Avec les notes de Charlotte Fraisse, productrice exécutive pour Ciby 2000.)

In the palace of Katmandu and the lost valleys of Butan the director of "The Last Emperor" shoots in secret the childhood of Buddha. A film without drugs, violence or sex. And without actors, according to Bernardo Bertolucci. Little Buddha approaches its premiere date and I have very high expectations for this epic movie. Especially the use of Arriflex 65/ Arriflex 35 and Vistavision 35 mm cameras (for the special effects) is one of the unique features which makes this film interesting, even before it's first screening. Little Buddha has already had a lot of publicity. In the last months a lot of articles were published in different film magazines such as: Film Review (U.K), Screen International (USA), Premiere (USA and U.K), Film Echo (Germany), Panorama (Italy), Studio (France) etc.

Please read the interesting article (p. 6-7) about "That's Entertainment III", which will be released the end of this year.

There is a new column in this newsletter, the Classified Advertisements. If you have some materials which have to do with film which you want to sell or to buy, send in your advertisements. A free service to members!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Johan,

"Baraka" was shown in Copenhagen from June 4. and two weeks ahead in 70mm. It was not the biggest succes I have seen, however, it played fairly well. There were more people the last day than June 4.

There are no new 70mm on the horizon apart from "Fires of Kuwait" in Omnimax. Both "Spartacus" and "Baraka" is running here and there in 70mm in Denmark.

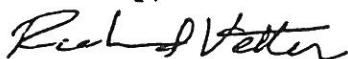
The 35mm digital sound systems (SR.D, SDDS and DTS) seems to threaten 70mm prints. Not even "Jurassic Park" is shown in 70mm. I mean what is the point in making the sound sounds better when the picture is getting smaller and smaller!!!!!!

Strangely enough old 70mm films are being transferred to video directly from 65mm negative. That is to improve picture quality. And it really helps a lot. Next month "Oklahoma!" and "South Pacific" is out with new transferes and a THX LaserDisc treatment. "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang", "Spartacus", "2001" and "West side story" have also been done from largeformate negative.

Thomas Hauerslev
Kong Georgs Vej 12, st
DK-2000 Frederiksberg
Denmark

Best wishes and keep up the good reporting.

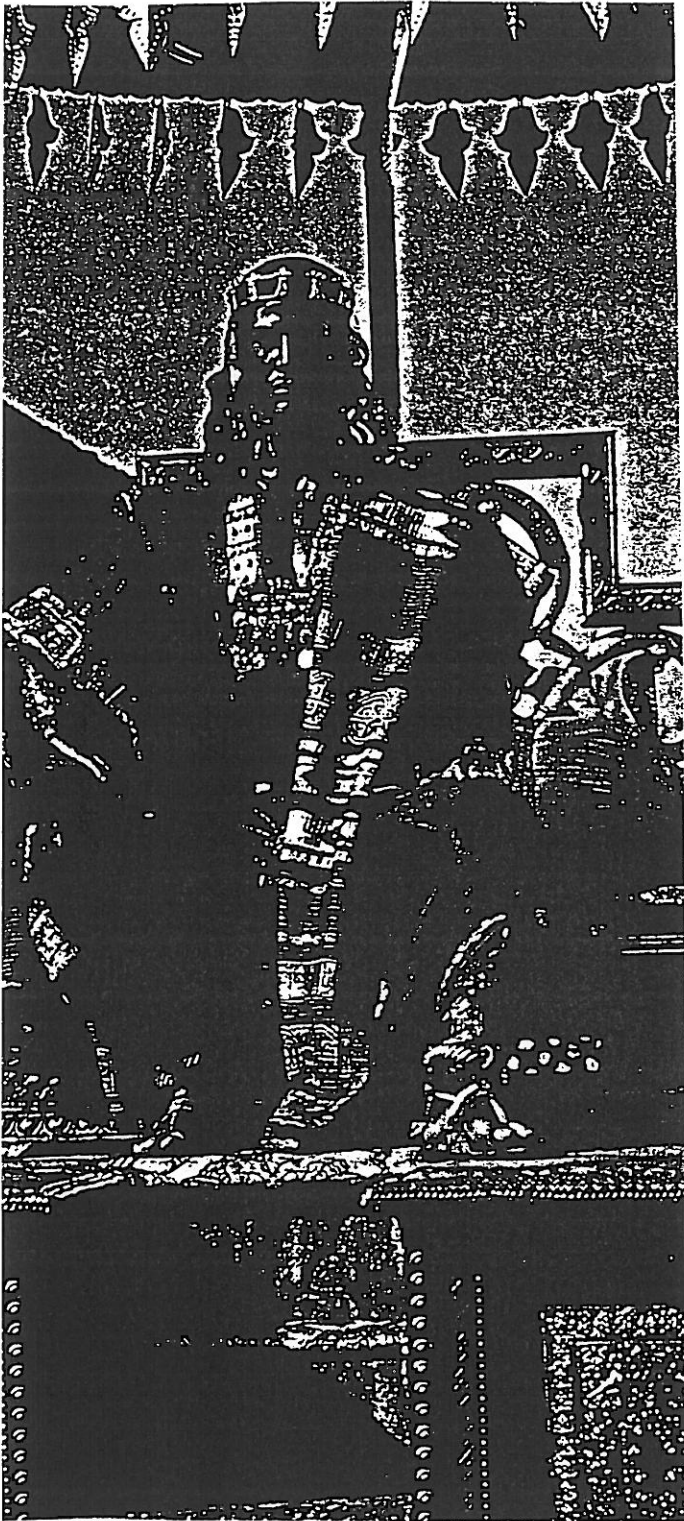
Sincerely,



Richard Vetter
Director, Todd-AO Camera Division

TODD-AO
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uddha (above) is the first film to use 35mm and Cinemascope 70mm formats in the same shoot

1ay 1993

Storaro sees the potential in 70mm

One of the greatest cinematographers of the age, Vittorio Storaro, whose credits include *Last Tango in Paris*, *Apocalypse Now* and *The Sheltering Sky*, renews his working relationship with the writer/director Bernardo Bertolucci on *Little Buddha*, presently in post-production in London and Rome. Shot on 35mm with an anamorphic lens and on 70mm, the project looks set to star in the pantheon of movie "greats", and is the first film to have twinned the two formats.

The potential of 70mm as a format has rarely been fully exploited by the industry. Lean's epic *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *Ryan's Daughter* (1970) are all cited as outstanding examples in the 70mm medium. Since the 70s, the use of the medium has fallen away, partly as a result of the fall from favour of the "big" or "epic" picture which is ideally suitable for the widescreen. *Far And Away* attempted to revive the trend in 1992, but filmmakers have tended to steer clear because of the preconception that 70mm is ferociously expensive.

Storaro chose to work in 70mm "...because it is the right format for the big screen, and in keeping with the essence of the project." To give the picture the feeling of intimacy that the storyline requires, Storaro started shooting in Cinemascope (2.35:1), using 35mm with an anamorphic lens, a process by which an image is squeezed onto a negative with compressed verticals, and then restored to its original widescreen proportions on projection. But the life of the *Little Buddha*, Prince Siddharta, and the search for enlightenment is a project of epic proportions, the recounting of a legend, in which Storaro deemed 70mm as the best format to convey "a perfect world, a magic world" to enable the audience to perceive the image and the story through a child's eyes, therefore mirroring the story book format of the film.

There are "psychological" elements with using 70mm to be taken into account Storaro says. These are the

benefits and dangers to the crew and those associated with the project of working on a "big" film, but Storaro feels that he "was able to prove that with today's technology, you do not have to alter the budget so much" to achieve artistic freedom and credibility.

Storaro views 70mm as the coming medium in an age where "multi-screening rooms are getting smaller and smaller, and television sets are getting bigger and bigger. The two sides [of the equation], the optical image and the electronic image, will meet in one system [HDTV]. But there will always be the need for human beings to get together in the cinema to see epics or "big" films because the audience, the conditions of space and a wide screen contribute to the emotions and allow the work to be seen at its most effective."

In Storaro's view, the predominance of the moving image as the art form of the 20th century remains unaltered by the trend towards HDTV. Cinema is not dead, it is just constantly evolving.

The opportunities and possibilities offered by new technology including "live" films like *Tosca* watched by 1.5 billion people, IMAX in 3D, interactive and laserdiscs in the home, will still need film, as it remains the best originating medium. In this situation, film will fall into two categories - firstly, 35mm which will handle the smaller-themed work destined for multi-screening rooms with a short theatrical shelf life - and then onto television: and epics which need a broad canvas to show "the potential of the moving image to the full" which will be shot on 70mm.

The bad track record of 70mm films in the past was mainly attributable to the industry. The lack of "creative and cultural" content in films like *Patton* and *Airport* in no way invalidates the integrity of the format - and perhaps *Little Buddha* will herald a 70mm renaissance!

Little Buddha has a preliminary November release date.

MOVING PICTURES INTERNATIONAL

 *The 70 MM NEWSLETTER is published 6 times a year and sent to *
 *members of The International 70 MM Association. Secretary: *
 *J.C.M. Wolthuis, Katwoudehof 36, 6843 BX Arnhem, Holland *
 *Telephone: ++ 31 85 815 950. Fax: ++ 31 85 458 108. *
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BARAKA

'IT'S A WOW. AN ALL CONSUMING VISUAL EXPERIENCE'

'DAZZLING'
Geoff Brown - THE TIMES

'DON'T MISS THIS AMAZING FILM'
Hugo Davenport - DAILY TELEGRAPH

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'Baraka' (PG) (Ron Fricke, 1993, US)

Anugama, Sebastino, Kohachiro Myata 96 mins. Technically, a wow. 'Koyaanisqatsi' cinematographer Fricke's latest foray into wordless eco-spectacle boasts picture quality to transport the viewer into 'you-are-there' territory. With startling depth and luminosity, a tumble of images whirls you on a world tour through ancient temples and ethnic rites, unfolding landscapes and teeming cities. Japanese snow monkeys; Angkor Wat; Grand Central Station; Auschwitz; a chicken processing plant; Mecca; the changing skies over Utah: Fricke has been there. That's the problem. Any one sequence might work powerfully in its own right, but start putting them together, overlaying them with music, and suddenly the banality of the connections becomes apparent. Yes, the natural world is a thing of wonderment; yes, civilisation is fucked; but this has little new to say. (Trevor Johnston)

WE: MGM Haymarket

BARAKA



Stars: **No actors/actresses**

Director: **Ron Fricke**

Certificate: **PG**

Running Time: **1hr 36mins**

Opening Date: **July 16**

Extraordinary images from all over the world, accompanied by a superb soundtrack.

'A World Beyond Words' runs the banner for *Baraka*, a documentary-style film without words, and a film that almost defies one to find adequate description in order to convey its utterly devastating beauty.

Almost any adjective one summons up will sound inadequate. Watching this film is like being transported around the world without benefit of

commentary, dialogue or narrative, left free to interpret and soak up the myriad images floating before one's eyes in something akin to a living dream. The only accompaniment being a stupendous soundtrack with each piece of music complimenting perfectly the image on the screen.

Film lovers will recall *Koyaanisqatsi*, the cultish hit from 1983 — another wordless trip through images of American culture and industrialisation. Ron Fricke was responsible for the photography on that and has now, utilized this experience in a similar format with the vastly superior *Baraka*.

It took 14 months to travel 24 countries in order to film this sumptuous visual feast, not to mention the location scouting which involved three complete trips around the world.

Baraka (an ancient Sufi word) translates as the essence of life and Fricke together with producer Mark Magidson have captured the essence of life all over this planet showing us the

"EN IMPONERENDE OPLEVELSE" Pol.



"Baraka er overvældende, og hvis man kender den rene fryd ved flotte billeder på et stort lærred er den et *must*" Int.



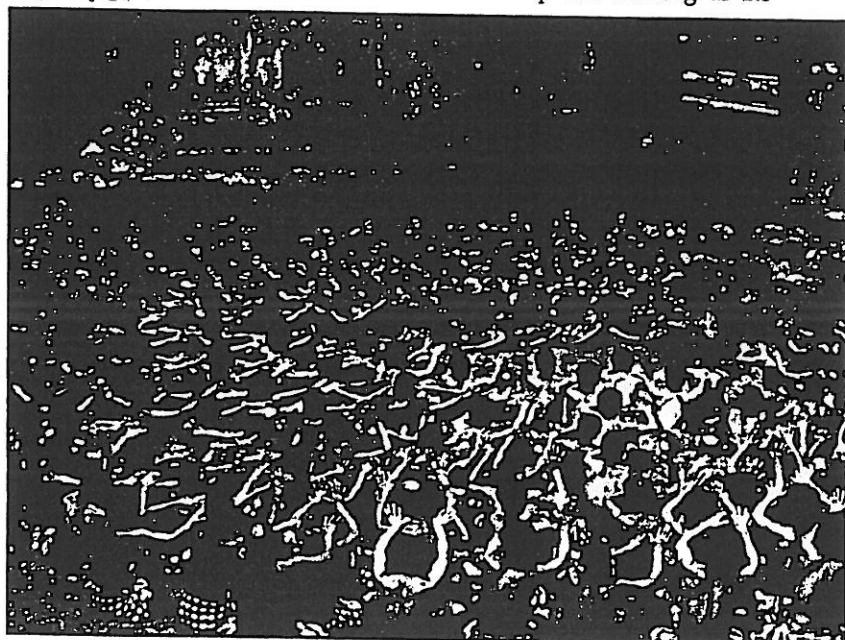
BARAKA

TODD-AO 70MM version

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A RON FRICKE FILM



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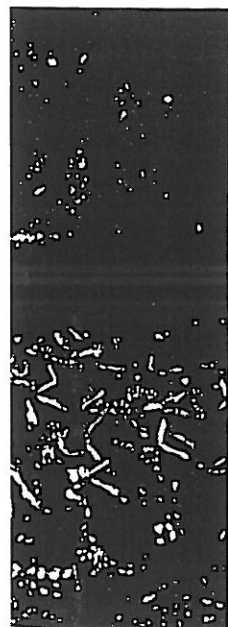
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utiful, the unusual, the
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est, cheapest and most
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I defy anyone to find
e exquisite, spectacular
a cinema screen. Do not
it miss this — it is posi-

g.

Baraka
se *Kecak* Dance



Baraka

USA 1992

Director: Ron Fricke

Certificate

PG
Distributor
Mayfair Entertainment
Production Company
Magidson Films
Producer
Mark Magidson
Pre-production
Co-ordinator
Shelly Palmer
Production Co-ordinator
Linda Ciella
Location Research
Robin Smith
Location Co-ordinators
Australia:
Michael Scott Davis
Brazil:
Neon Rio
Dudu Contintino
Flavio Somogyi
Cambodia:
Michael Freeman
Chhay Heng
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs Press
Department
China:
Yang Hua Dong
China Film
Co-production
Corporation
Jia Qi
Ren Yafei
Ecuador:
Trans Galapagos Inc
Carlos Saavedra
Orlando Falco
Egypt:
Media International
Centre/Mic
Magdi Youssef
Alaf Fawzy
France:
Why Not Productions
Marcel Castera Kahn
Hawaii:
Teamwork
Communications/Mau
Barry Rivers
Hong Kong:
Salon Films (HK.) Ltd
John Lamond Jnr
India:
Mohamed Shaif
Indonesia:
Lorne Blair
Laurence Blair
Iran:
Amir Esfandiari
Jalal Khosroshahi
Shahram Asgari
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Carlo Timpanaro
Japan:
Virgin Earth Inc
BeBe Hiroko Ishikawa
Junko Ogura
Kennedy Taylor
William Word
Kenya:
Cineset Productions
Jimmy Mukora
Robin Hurt Safaris
Mouse McConnell
Kuwait:
Omar Productions
Farouq Abdulaziz
Nepal:
Thomas Laird
New York:
Mel Lawrence
Poland:
Elzbieta Pyrich
The World Monitor
Thailand:
Kamonwan
Sonsomsock Wilson
Turkey:
Istanbul Film Agency
Fatih Aksoy

Post-production

Supervisor
Alton Walpole
Post-production
Co-ordinator
Gay Browning
Original Treatment
Genevieve Nicholas
Constantine Nicholas
Ron Fricke
Concepts & Scenario
Ron Fricke
Mark Magidson
Bob Green
Director of Photography
Ron Fricke
In colour
70mm
Consultants:
Richard Vetter
Lee Parker
Video Consultation
Sarah Gartner
Miguel Grunstein
Video Effects
The Post House
Editors
Ron Fricke
Mark Magidson
David E. Aubrey
Additional:
Alton Walpole
Music
Michael Stearns
Music Research
Grant Wakefield
Music Extracts
"Sanya", "Iionshirabe"
performed by
Kohachiro Miyata:
"Mantra" from
"Mantra/Stabat Mixer"
by Somei Satoh:
"African Journey"
from "Exotic Dance"
by and performed
by Anugama &
Sebastiano: "Rainbow
Voice" from "On
Hearing Solar Winds"
by the Harmonic
Choir/David Ilykes:
"Wandering Saint"
from "Expressions
of Impressions" by
and performed by
L. Subramaniam:
"Host of Serafim" by
and performed by Dead
Can Dance: "Drovela"
"Wipala" from "Land
of Incas" by Gonzalo
Vargos: "Triste"
by Giro Hurtado,
performed by
Giro Hurtado,
Julio Ledezma,
Cindy Harding, Libby
Harding: "An Daorach
Sheag" performed
by Brother,
Hamish Richardson,
Angus Richardson,
Fergus Richardson:
"The Offerings for
General Protectors",
"A Prayer of Kala Rupa",
"A Traditional
Composition for Gya
Ling, Dung Chen" from
"Sacred Ceremonies"
performed by The
Monks of the Dip
Tse Ling Monastery

Title Design

Michael D. Gibson
Opticals
The Chandler Group
Imagica
End Credit
Pacific Title
"Kecak" Audio Production
and Editing
Miguel Rivera
Location Sound Recordists
Michael Stearns
David Brownlow
Alton Walpole
Bruce Simballa
Bill Mitchell
Dolby stereo
Consultant:
Steve Smith
Sound Transfers
Tom Sherlock
Robert Jansen
Jeffrey Payne
David Lomino
Joe Plantadosi

Sound Effects Design

John Morris
Sound Effects Editor
John Joseph Thomas
 Foley Artists
Margie O'Malley
Jennifer Myers
 Foley Engineers
Eric Thompson
Michael Semanick
Concept Consultants
Ruth Strassberg
Peter Russell
Post-production
Consultant
David Bartholomew

8,708 feet
97 minutes

A montage of documentary
footage from around the world
begins with a group of monkeys
splashing in steaming volcanic baths
in the Himalayas. Shots of the night
sky follow, giving way to a sequence of
devotional images: Buddhist monks, a
Japanese zen garden, Jerusalem's Wail-
ing Wall and some whirling Dervishes.
Volcanic landscapes are followed by a
visit to Ayers Rock, African tribal
dances are followed by scenes of defor-
estation, apparently watched by a Poly-
nesian chieftain. The technological
world is represented by images of dynamite,
shanty towns, a factory farm
where day-old chicks pour off conveyor
belts. The doors of offices revolve in
a fast-motion blur. Amid the bustle of a
Tokyo street, a Zen monk moves with
slow, heel-to-toe steps. Street children
beg in Brazilian gutters, women labour
in an Indonesian cigarette factory.
Shots of burning oil wells in Kuwait
are followed by the Basra road and the
debris - human and otherwise - left by
the retreating Iraqi army. In Auschwitz
and in Cambodia, the faces of Nazi and
Khmer Rouge victims stare out from
sheets of photographs. The film visits
the funeral pyres along the Ganges,
looks upon ruined temples, a solar
eclipse and the tiny tomb where Christ
was reputedly buried. In Japan, a monk
carefully floats a flower and a candle
on a small pool of water.

Baraka follows in a long tradition
of films that use pictures and
music to make implicit, profound
and sometimes portentous statements
about how we live and die in the world.
Notable recent examples of such narra-
tionless narrative are *Koyaanisqatsi* and
Powaqqatsi, the two extant films in God-



Blessings, breath and the essence of life

frey Reggio's planned trilogy of col-
laborations with composer Philip
Glass. The third, as yet unmade, film,
Naqqoyqatsi, similarly takes its title
from a word in the Hopi language,
meaning something like "life is a state
of war". However, it now looks as
though Ron Fricke, Reggio's cinema-
tographer on *Koyaanisqatsi*, has pipped
Naqqoyqatsi at the post.

Like Reggio's films, *Baraka* takes its
theme from human diversity: the
things we do to each other and to the
world. Not to be outdone by Reggio's
espousal of the Hopi language, Fricke
has named his film with an ancient
Sufi word which crams a meaning
encompassing blessings, breath and
the essence of life into three short
syllables. Unsurprisingly, *Baraka* is a
huge film, filmed in 24 countries and
six continents; it took Fricke 14
months to assemble his footage. Specially
adapted 70mm cameras make
much of it breathtakingly beautiful. At
times *Baraka* comes over as an animated
National Geographic.

Baraka is a very green film. The modern
world is represented as a violent
place filled with alienated populations
who ride subways and probably eat the
factory-farmed chickens that we see in
one of the film's longest, most shock-
ing scenes. The implicit message is
apparently that the raison d'être of the
technological age is one of systematic
destruction. Urban man has the Buddhist
monks halfway up the Himalayas,
nor the spiritual ones afforded by any
transcendental strategy. The Tokyo
commuters barely notice the monk
who uses the same street for an exquis-
itely slow walking meditation. Fricke's
images of whirling Dervishes have a
stillness that is simply beautiful.

Of *Baraka*'s soundtrack there is less
to say. Although sound and image are
carefully edited, Fricke does not have
his own composer scoring the entire
film, and consequently loses *Koyaanisqatsi*'s
high integration of sound
and image. Michael Stearns has con-
tributed some effective original mater-
ial; the rest of the music is imported
(the soundtrack design favours breathy
overtone chants). Considering that
comparisons with Reggio's films are
inevitable, Fricke made an odd deci-
sion in allowing an extended shot of
a donkey, cart and mountains to be
accompanied by a long organ drone
which, in both key and sonority, repli-
cates part of Glass' *Koyaanisqatsi* score.

Despite this, *Baraka* is a film of con-
siderable impact. Part of this is to do
with photography and geography
alone: if the locations are not spectac-
ular, then you can rely on the techni-
cians getting every shot in perfect
frame. But the lasting effect is more
melancholic. The ruined temples of
the epilogue recall the boasts of Shel-
ley's *Ozymandias*; there are no refuges
from the processes of the world. It
remains to be seen whether such a con-
clusion is just pessimistic or, in some
small way, represents a transcendental
strategy of its own.

Louise Gray

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A Return to Old Turf for Gene Kelly

■ **Movies:** As one of the hosts of "That's Entertainment! III," the legendary hooper works again at Stage 5, the key setting for musicals in MGM's Golden Era.

By KEVIN THOMAS
TIMES STAFF WRITER

On a recent Saturday afternoon Gene Kelly, dapper in a dark suit, striped shirt and colorful tie, and accompanied by his wife, Pat, visited Sony Studios in Culver City. When it was MGM, he reigned as a major force in a series of classic musicals, as a performer, choreographer and director.

Stage 5 is a 1933 Art Deco structure dominated at one end by a stage with a proscenium that served as a legitimate theater or movie palace in many a Metro picture. It was a key setting for all those backstage musicals in MGM's—and Hollywood's—Golden Era, during which Kelly helped revolutionize the movie musical with his masculine, athletic dancing and choreography.

Kelly, now 80, figured he hadn't worked on Stage 5 since it was decorated to resemble the interior of Grauman's Chinese for the finale of the 1952 "Singin' in the Rain," the movie most often cited as the greatest musical of them all. He was back to appear as one of the hosts of "That's Entertainment! III," yet another of MGM's sampling from its musical treasure trove. →

'2001' in special video reissue

HOLLYWOOD Marking the 25th anniversary of Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey," MGM/UA Home Video department will issue a remastered anniversary edition on both video and laser-disc early this summer.

Special package will include extensive liner notes about the landmark sci-fi film. A 70m six-track stereophonic sound version of the pic also had a limited run recently at L.A.'s Cinerama Dome.

... in the words of Irving Berlin, the song is over but the melody lingers on," remarked Kelly, finishing the first take of his speech. "Have you got a clearance from Irving Berlin?" he kidded co-producer-directors Bud Friedgen and Michael J. Sheridan.

The first "That's Entertainment!" (1974) was a terrific, highly popular compilation of scenes from more than 100 musicals, and was followed two years later by an almost-as-good sequel, which included clips from comedies and dramas as well.

"That's Entertainment! III" will include yet more musical moments, plus never-before-seen outtakes. It is to be released in 70mm late this year to mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of MGM. Other Metro musical alumni serving as hosts are June Allyson, Cyd Charisse, Lena Horne, Howard Keel, Debbie Reynolds, Mickey Rooney and Esther Williams.

Kelly made light of the passing of the years and was the model of polite professionalism, instantly sensitive to all that was going on behind the camera as well as in front of it. Recovering from a cold, Kelly discussed sound levels—"Now, I've got to go up, but I don't want to sound like a *castrato!*"—and, after a perfect take, good-naturedly did it over because the lights were reflected in his glasses. The sense of camaraderie was very much like that on his own sets, recalling one's memories of watching him direct Henry Fonda and James Stewart in "The Cheyenne Social Club" on location in Santa Fe, N.M., in 1970.

Having been loaned out to Columbia to star in the 1944 musical "Cover Girl" opposite Rita Hayworth, Kelly returned to MGM for "Anchors Aweigh," which won him a best actor Oscar nomination. With Stanley Donen he co-directed the landmark "On the Town" (1949), as well as starred in it, and they teamed again for "Singin' in the Rain" and "It's Always Fair Weather."

Vincente Minnelli directed him in the stylish "The Pirate" (1948) opposite Judy Garland and in the landmark "An American in Paris" (1951), which he also choreographed. As a dramatic actor he appeared in such diverse films as "The Black Hand" (1950), in which Kelly is impressive as a young man intent upon avenging his father's death in turn-of-the-century Little Italy in Manhattan, and "Inherit the Wind" (1960), in which he played a pundit based on H. L. Mencken.

Kelly, who continues to live in Beverly Hills, has been taking it easier in recent years.

"I haven't been back here for so long, or before a camera for such a long time," said Kelly, relaxing in his warm dressing trailer parked outside Stage 5. "It's half nostalgia and half *tristesse* for me. I must



SAEED ADYANI

Gene Kelly on "That's Entertainment! III" set: "A musical is the hardest kind of movie to do, the most difficult genre to conquer."



Kelly in "An American in Paris" (1951), left, "Anchors Aweigh" (1945).

have been on Stage 5 thousands of times. If you had done a list of every MGM musical, you would find it probably had been shot there—at least part of it." ("That's Entertainment! III's" executive producer Peter Fitzgerald confides that Sony may tear down Stage 5 because nobody does backstage musicals anymore.)

Kelly said that it was on Stage 5, where under the direction of George Sidhey, he danced with the cartoon mouse Jerry in "Anchors Aweigh," a moment Kelly considers a favorite in a favorite film because it's the one where "I got to teach Frank [Sinatra] how to dance." Interestingly, it was not Mayer but his son-in-law David O. Selznick who brought out the Pittsburgh-born Kelly to Hollywood from Broadway, where he had become a star in the original 1940 "Pal Joey" and won acclaim as a choreographer for "Best Foot Forward." Although Kelly admitted a mutual dislike between Mayer and him, Mayer soon bought out his contract with Selznick.

"The producer here was king," Kelly explained. "Both Joe Pasternak and later Arthur Freed backed me up very much. We could talk to Freed about bringing out people

from New York—people like Comden and Green. Freed would go out on a limb for you and go plead your case to the 'college of cardinals.' Freed could always get Mayer to say yes—he was very *simpatico*."

"With Freed, I got to dance with Vera-Ellen, Cyd Charisse and Leslie Caron. Romantic dances are the heart of the musicals. Musical were always based on romance, and you don't have that kind of music anymore. We thought the musical was an indigenous American art form. A musical is the hardest kind of movie to do, the most difficult genre to conquer. Before the MGM musicals there were two guys who really knew how to do them, [directors] Rouben Mamoulian and Ernst Lubitsch."

"I get lots more mail today than when I was a movie star—from Germany and Japan, from nations that have been flooded with VCRs. I get mash notes from 14- and 15-year-old girls! I don't really like being an actor, I love dancing and choreographing. On my first picture, 'For Me and My Gal,' Judy Garland helped me and pushed me, and I am in her debt eternally. But I hate having to put all this stuff on my face! It's really what I charge for: putting on makeup!"

