

# HOLLYWOOD CANVAS

## Erich Maria Remarque Happily Returns To Film Capital—New 'Old Bailey'

By THOMAS M. PRYOR

HOLLYWOOD.

**E**rich Maria Remarque is writing the screen version of one of his novels for the first time and regards it as a "delightful new adventure." Also, for the first time in almost thirty years, he is working in an office, reporting every morning at 9 o'clock and ending his day's work between 5 and 6 P. M.

Tucked under his arm as he leaves his air-conditioned bungalow office at the Universal-International studio is a hulging black leather portfolio containing pages of dialogue and descriptive narrative titled "Also Time to Love," which had its genesis in his novel, "A Time to Love and a Time to Die." (There's a superstition about death in a movie title, you know).

Mr. Remarque, who can remember meeting newspaper deadlines in Germany, is racing one now for the first time since he became a novelist. "The picture script has to be ready in four to five weeks," he said. "That's not a long time. A novel takes me two to three years, but this screen play is not so difficult. Dialogue moves fast, and it's interesting for me because I'm writing in English, which I never do with a novel."

Mr. Remarque's literary reputation was firmly established in 1929 with "All Quiet on the Western Front." That was made into a classic movie by a company appropriately named Universal. Did that influence him to accept the studio's offer to adapt "A Time to Love and a Time to Die"? "To tell you the truth," he replied, "the heat was so unbearable in New York last month that I just could not refuse the invitation

Triumph" and now "A Time to Love and a Time to Die." He missed only with "Spark of Life" (a novel about concentration camps) and is confident that his latest book, "The Black Obelisk," will be bought next.

### Startling Replica

A friend who has visited London's famous Old Bailey could hardly believe his eyes the other day as he accompanied us on a visit to the set of "Witness for the Prosecution." Stepping inside a sound stage at the Samuel Goldwyn studio, our companion suddenly felt as though he had been transported bodily from the land of make-believe to the musty, austere British courtroom. "Amazing," he exclaimed. "It's incredible. How in the world do they do it?"

That's just the kind of reaction that the Messrs. Hornblow and Small and their director, Billy Wilder, hope for, of course. The reproduction of Old Bailey was not a lucky accident. It was carefully planned and cost the producers \$75,000. The Old Bailey set, which like the original measures 43 feet by 56 feet and has a 27-foot ceiling, is the first Hollywood work supervised by Alexandre Trauner. The Hungarian-born French art director spent days studying the architectural appointments of Old Bailey, figuring out a way to make the room more flexible for the camera to move about in without deviating from the authenticity Mr. Hornblow insisted on preserving.

### Nifty Mnemonics

M. Trauner, a short, friendly man who never goes anywhere without his pet dachshund, was



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studio's offer to adapt "A Time to Love and a Time to Die"? "To tell you the truth," he replied, "the heat was so unbearable in New York last month that I just could not refuse the invitation to come to California." Mr. Remarque has lived in a two-and-a-half room apartment on East Fifty-seventh Street for several years and is an admirer of Father Knickerbocker's preserve.

**Credo**

However, there apparently were more compelling considerations. "As a writer get older," he said, admitting to 60, "I feel he should look for new experiences. There's always something to learn. You know there is an old saying that a novel never gets completed, it's just abandoned by the author. I never wanted to adapt any of my books because I was too close to them. But I was away from 'A Time to Love and a Time to Die' long enough not to feel a part of it any more. It was published in 1954, so I could come back to it with a fresh approach.

"It is very interesting writing for the movies. The difference between writing a novel and a movie is like driving a truck and a sports car. In the movie the story must move fast. Keep it going and it will come out all right. You have a good term in English — storyteller. That's what you have to be in the movies."

Mr. Remarque has a formidable batting average. Six of his eight novels have been turned into films. These were "All Quiet," "The Road Back," "Three Comrades," "So Ends Our Night" (formerly "Flotsam"), "Arch of

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**Nifty Mnemonics**

M. Trauner, a short, friendly man who never goes anywhere without his pet dachshund, Lena, wanted to photograph every nook and corner of Old Bailey. Finding this was not possible, he made "a mental photographic record" and then obtained blueprints of the building to guide the construction work in Hollywood. Although solidly built of Austrian oak, the movie Old Bailey is flexible. The sixty panels that enclose the seat of justice are all removable so that Mr. Wilder will be able to point his camera at the performers (Tyronne Power, Marlene Dietrich and Charles Laughton) from the angle or angles he envisions as the most dramatic. Moreover, the floor is a union of nineteen sections that can be added or removed as the director desires. Mr. Wilder can even point his camera at the performers from the domed ceiling.

Some 5,000 feet of oak panel board and 7,000 feet of sawed oak, so heavy it broke some of the machine knives, according to Juan Lipari, construction coordinator at the Goldwyn studio, went into building the set. M. Trauner is not a man who is impressed by statistics, but he has a collector's admiration for the genuine. The English coat of arms above the judge's chair was sculptured, and the sword that hangs in the "Dieu et Mon Droit" emblem was cast in a brass foundry.

M. Trauner brushes aside admiring comments with the observation that "the reality is better than the fake."

**MOVIE FEAT**

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**A** PORTFOLIO of international critics as the Fascist light of his seventh national Festival. As all, "I Angry Men," provided by starring Hepburn, Fonda, won top prize. At he 100 from forty-five entries here during a one-day vote ended last Tuesday, stressed passion, some terror a few, humor. Some had marvelous scenery, some beautiful.

When all had been seen the international board of went back to Fonda's about a jury's verdict awarded it the "Golden for the best feature film. ing from applause when thure first was shown anovation that greeted the a critical opinion coincided popular feeling. Reginald I script and Sidney Lumet's tion were highly praised as as the acting of the all cast.

**Runners Up**

The qualities that won victory were timely ones fit American film industry to because the festival ret that other countries now gaining in the factors that for screen distinction.

For example, Spain's was a feature called "Who Lord Forgives." It has the of naive plotting that goes opera and it is performed lly on horseback yet no one dismiss it as horse opera. critics were entranced by beauty of scenery by photphy that caught the marlight of Spain and the fine of the actors and by a mo religious procession. It w special feature award of a ber Bear."

Another "Silver Bear" one for the best male ac

