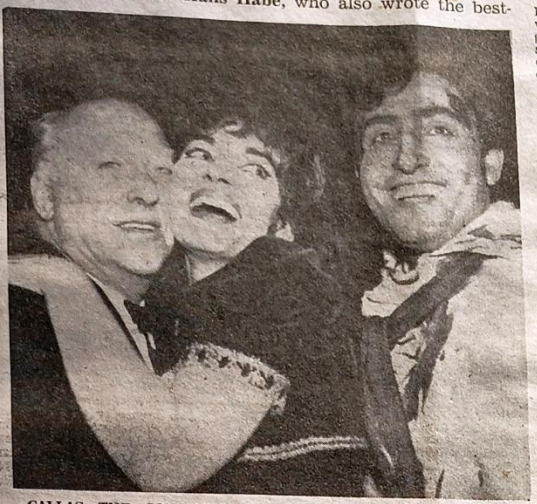
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LEND ME YOUR EARS:

Romy Schneider To Star In 'Countess'

ITALIAN MOVIE DIRECTOR LUCHINO VISCONTI has reportedly signed Romy Schneider as the star of his first international English-language movie "The Countess." The film is based on the novel by German author Hans Habe, who also wrote the best-seller "A Thousand Shall Fall." It is said that Visconti plans to shoot the movie on the novel's actual locations which include Venice, Leningrad and places in Poland and Hungary. The novel is a romance based largely on a true story set in the early years of this century. Visconti has reportedly been wanting to make the story for years. Austrian-born Miss Schneider, 26, was instrumental in obtaining the movie rights of the book for Michael Arthur Productions, a company formed by her agent and lawyer. The movie, which will have a budget probably in excess of $3 million, is expected to start production toward the end of this year. The delay is caused by Miss Schneider's previous commitments. She is planning to take a short vacation at Innsbruck during the winter Olympics next week and will then go on to Italy for a meeting with Visconti.



CALLAS THE CONQUEROR — Maria Callas is flanked by Italian tenor Renato Cioni and Sir David Webster, administrator of the Royal Opera House after performance of Puccini's "Tosca" which won the most fantastic ovation and tributes seen for many years at Covent Garden. An audience of 2,000 stood and cheered the 40-year-old soprano for 35 minutes after the final curtain (AP photo)

Here And There

A cloud of mystery still hangs over the "Christine Keeler Story." A hastily put together film of the same name has disappeared en route from Copenhagen to Paris for dubbing into the French version, a production executive announced. Rome's John Barrymore is playing the part of late Dr Stephen Ward . . . French twist king Johnny Hallyday has admitted punching a teenager in the audience of the Beatles show at Paris' Olympia musical hall. Hallyday said he hit a 16-year-old youth because of his attitude towards his fiancée, singer Sylvie Varan, also on the Olympia bill . . . two screenwriters, Frenchman Robert Paul Dagan, from Brussels, and German Jakob Lorey, of Berlin, jointly shared a $1,000 prize won in the Common Market contest for screenplays for short run documentary features. Theme of the screenplays under the contest regulations was to be the building of Europe. Fifty competitors from all over the world took part.

Film Flack

A New York real estate developer has disclosed plans to build the largest movie production center ever located in Manhattan in an effort to "re-establish New York as the film capital of the world." The developer, Allan Haymes, said the $22 million center, to be called Film City, will house 57 sound stages and complete technical facilities for movie-making. Haymes also built Filmways Studios in the Bronx, one of the major movie production sites in the New York City area. Film City would occupy the entire east side of 11th Avenue between 44th and 45th Streets, going back 350 feet on each of the side streets. Haymes said he recently purchased the property for about $2 million . . . the New York State Education Department's case against the Danish-produced motion picture "A Stranger Knocks" has arrived in the Court of Appeals. The Department has branded the film obscene and wants it kept from general exhibition until two scenes involving sexual intercourse are deleted. Trans-Lux Distributors, seeking a license for the film, held that the two sequences complained of were not obscene and were essential to the story. The distributors also challenged the constitutionality of the state law requiring that Education Department approval be obtained before a picture can be exhibited to the public. Trans-Lux argued this was a form a censorship incompatible with the constitutional guarantees of freedom of the press and freedom of speech. Charles Brind, chief counsel to the Education Department, argued that the film, by depicting sexual intercourse, was obscene under present legal standards. Brind cited previous decisions upholding the state censorship law as constitutional.

Via Venetopics

Norbert Auerbach, continental manager of United Artists, is in Rome for talks with Dear Film executives . . . the Beato Angelico Gallery at 42 Piazza della Minerva is holding a show of ceramic sculpture by the Rev. Angelico Zarlenga of the staff of Fenwick High School in Oak Park, Ill. The show runs until Feb. 2, after which the statues will be sent to St. Dominick's Church in New Orleans . . . new art show by O. De Cataldo has recently opened at the San Marco Gallery on Via del Babuino . . . William Holden and French actress Capucine turned up unexpectedly on Barbados recently aboard producer Sam Spiegel's luxury yacht Malahne. Holden said he was there to wait for Spiegel's arrival for talks about new projects . . . Italian tenor Mario Del Monaco is reportedly suing a Yugoslav film company for failure to make a contracted film with him in the starring role. The company has since merged with another film company. Del Monaco claims that he refused recording and opera offers while waiting to be called for filming. It was not reported how much damage he is seeking.

If you have any news for "Lend Me Yours Ears" about your or your friends' parties, social gatherings, arrivals, departures, engagements, marriage, etc., please telephone Rome: 587.118 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. or write to 8 Via Dandolo, Rome, Italy.

Diana Dors Asks Court To Drop Divorce Hearing

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 23 (AP) — British-born film star Diana Dors will ask that her divorce suit against comedian Dickie Dawson be stricken from the superior court's calendar, her attorney said Wednesday.

Attorney Marvin Mitchelson said Miss Dors and Dawson "had a long, understanding talk last weekend and resolved many of their difficulties."

Mitchelson said he will ask to have the suit taken off the calendar for Jan. 30, when the court has to hear the actress' complaint, charging extreme cruelty.

If the couple has reconciled, why doesn't she dismiss the divorce suit?, the attorney was asked.

"We are not going to do that," Mitchelson said. "We are just not going to try and get a hearing.

"She believes they have their problems better in hand. So, for the sake of their children, and to make every effort to save their marriage, they are going to give it another trial."

Miss Dors, blonde and buxom, filed her four-page divorce complaint last Thursday. The 33-year-old actress said Dawson, 31, kept her "a virtual prisoner" in their Beverly Hills home. She said he had threatened her life and safety, embarrassed and humiliated her before friends and family and once picked the lock on the door of her room.



DIANA DORS
. . . changes

Poor Devil Gets Caught Fleeing

LONDON, Jan. 23 (AP) — It was a devil of a fix even for a devil.

There was opera singer Leigh Maurice, playing the role of the devil in Prokofiev's "Love For Three Oranges" and unable to exit right, left or center of stage.

For minutes which must have seemed hours he hung on a wire with his feet dangling in full view of the audience, instead of just flying away as any decent devil would.

Finally the curtain was mercifully rung down while workmen detached the singer from the wire.

"This was the last night of the opera," said a spokesman for Sadlers Wells Opera House. "Previous performances have gone without a hitch."



REVIEW CAMPAIGN—Maj. Gen. Harrison A. Gerhardt (right), commanding general of SETAF, reviews publicity for the 1964 National Health Agencies and the Federal Service Joint Crusade fund-raising campaign with Lt. Col. Oscar E. Duttweiler, chief of Operations Branch, SETAF G-5 Division, who has been selected as command project chairman. Commenting on the campaign, Gerhardt said, "These agencies deserve our full support. I encourage each SETAF member, soldier and civilian alike, to take an active part in the campaign through voluntary and generous contributions" (U. S. Army photo)



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