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RESTAURANTS TO REMEMBER

★ THEATERS
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Assignment TV

By TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY

The most interesting battle of the new television season is now being fought backstage. The opposing forces are Ed Sullivan, Andy Williams, Dean Martin, Steve Lawrence, Danny Kaye, and the Hollywood Palace.

They are battling for that thin strip of mutually-held territory known as Guest Talent. TV's biggest musical variety shows are discovering something the public knew long while ago: there just isn't enough good performing talent to go around!

The most frantic of the lot is likely to be Sullivan. The other hosts can always play Las Vegas or sing to a Hammond organ in a dimly lit bar out of town. Sullivan is a Pointer exclusively. At the present time he has two big problems: He has turned his studio audience into a nest of teen-age female screamers and he is completely out-classed by "The Hollywood Palace," which has better production, better color, and a better rounded program. To buck the competition Sullivan invaded Hollywood for five shows this season.

"THE HOLLYWOOD PALACE" has a glossier look to it, due largely to the talents of Art Director Jim Trittippo who has provided the performers with backgrounds that sparkle. They are particularly splashy in color. Its performing stars can match Sullivan's any week.

NBC is depending a lot on Dean Martin's personal contacts to keep his show loaded with the big names it needs. Andy Williams has already been quoted as being a little touchy when it comes to possible rivalry with Martin for talent. Steve Lawrence is in the worst shape of all.

The lining-up of guest talent will not be as difficult for Bob Hope and Perry Como because they're doing fewer shows but for the programs they do they will face the same spacing problems in competition with the weekly shows of similar nature. . . . One recent week Hope's producing staff was trying to keep Phyllis Diller's appearance on the Lawrence show from happening the same week as theirs.

AT FIRST the talent drought would appear to be a lucky break for those performers who make their living off these shows entirely but it is not. Many of them fear overexposure more than under-exposure and with good cause. Not all of them are worth watching too frequently, to say the least. The vicious tax brackets keep many of the best in semi-retirement.

At other times such a shortage of older talent would be a bonanza for young performers hoping for that big break. Unfortunately many of the young people who might have developed some recognizable artistry have frittered away their beginning years on rock 'n' roll which makes no demands on talent. John Davidson is the only "unknown" I can recall to become a star last season, who is still in his early twenties and can sing.

THE TALENT shortage doesn't apply solely to musical-variety shows. There are dozens of new situation comedies in the planning stage for 1966, 1967, and 1968 which have had to be shelved for lack of suitable performers.

Today television is being carried on the backs of variety performers who were middle-aged when TV started 15 years ago. In the not-too-distant future when the arteries on the old reliables have hardened and Geritol has replaced martinis at their cocktail hours, television viewers will be left with no one but Frank Sinatra Jr., Joey Heatherton, Tuesday Weld, Troy Donahue, and approximately 100 combinations of long-haired Brits strumming their guitars, looking quite middle-aged, and croaking about their lost youth.

Ask Delay In Change Of Reserve

Supervisor Kenneth Hahn has asked President Lyndon B. Johnson to withhold any action to change the present identity and organization of the nation's ready reserve units until Congress reconvenes.

Hahn is chairman of the military and veterans affairs committee of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

In a letter to the President, Hahn said Los Angeles supervisors are on record in support of the present structure of a strong Army reserve and a strong National Guard.

"I find it hard to understand Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's position of wanting to eliminate well-trained military personnel in reserve units while at the same time stepping up the draft call to train new soldiers," Hahn said.

He said the 63rd Infantry Division, which includes more than 7,500 officers and men from the Los Angeles area, is one of the units which would be eliminated. Approximately 90 per cent of the 63rd's men would be "washed out" or put into a pool and would not have a unit with which to train, Hahn added.

"Present tense world conditions would not seem to warrant reduction of the number of capabilities of our ready reserve forces," he said.

ADELINE DALEY

Soap Opera? Merely Therapy

Whew! This is a sigh of relief because I just learned that McCall's has given its stamp of approval for women to watch television soap operas. Indeed, the author of the piece, the highly-intellectual Marya Mannes, admits that she, too, is hooked along with 20 million American housewives on "The Guiding Light," "The Secret Storm," and the grand-daddy of 'em all, "As the World Turns."

According to the magazine, "Soap operas are helpful because they provide housewives with a short respite each day from worrying about the dismal state of world affairs."

I hate to prove to be a big disappointment to McCall's, but there are days in this household when I forget that Red China or the Dominican Republic even exist. How can I be expected to get all worked up about our foreign policy along with Walter Lippmann when it's

raining in our garage. I mean the water from the leaking dishwasher in the floor above is seeping through the ceiling like Rangoon during the rainy season.

And let's face it, is Walter Lippmann worried about the possibility of our floors caving in?

But don't think that I'm NOT going to use McCall's lofty excuse to justify my watching soap operas. "I've worried about Viet Nam enough for one day!" I plan to reply to my husband the next time he criticizes my choice of TV fare.

And now I'll be able to admit that I'm in the middle of watching "As the World Turns" when somebody phones and asks if they're keeping me from anything. (I need the therapy.)

Previously, I have always lied, "Oh, I'm not doing much. Just thumbing through the Atlantic Monthly. I find it so stimulating. Oh, the noise in the background? I

have the TV on. I'm waiting for the United Nations session to go on. I wouldn't dream of missing U Thant."

In the meantime, I have one ear cocked towards the set, trying to pick up stray bits of dialogue. And, believe me, it's quite a feat to carry on a telephone conversation while you're straining to hear whether the doctors will tell Neal he is going blind. And am I going to miss finding out who gets custody of little Tommy in Lisa and Bob's court battle? And what's happening to Ellen, in love with Donald Hughes, but betrothed to another man, Dr. David Stewart, the foster father of her illegitimate son, Danny, whom she hopes to win back? Or have I lost you by now?

Come to think of it, maybe I'd be better off worrying about world affairs to get my mind off worrying about the dismal state of most of the characters in television soap operas.



TO CONVENTION . . . President-elect Charles Pecora of the Torrance-Lomita Board of Realtors and Mrs. Pecora are shown as they prepared to fly to Chicago last week to attend the National Association

of Real Estate Boards Convention. Pecora attended a number of events planned for the nation's Realtors to increase their knowledge of modern trends in real estate.

Annual Fish Topic of Friday Meet

The Harbor Aquarium Society will meet Friday at 8 p.m. in the Recreation Hall at McMasters Park, Artesia and Yukon Avenues.

Guest speaker will be Don Lund of the Los Angeles Aquarium Society, who will present a slide-tape program on the subject of annual fish. Showfish of the month will be all live bearing fish.

The door prize will be a five gallon aquarium with hood. All fish fanciers are welcome.

JOHN BIRCH FILM DUE
A film on the life of John Birch will be shown by the John Birch Society's Wilmington Chapter on Dec. 7 at 8 p.m. at the Bethel Baptist Church, Neptune and L St., Wilmington.

Reading at Chapel Theatre Next Week

A new phase of activity will begin at Chapel Theatre in Torrance when readings will be held for an entirely different type of production. Chapel will present "An Evening With Tony Baynes" with Baynes starring and directing three one-act plays to be presented on weekdays at Chapel's rehearsal hall.

Baynes, who directed the current production, "Someone Waiting," now showing at the playhouse, was winner of Chapel's best director award last season. He announced that actors involved in production will automatically be a part of the first Actors' workshop project at Chapel.

Readings will be held at the theater, 4164 Pacific Coast Hwy., behind Smith Bros. Indian Village restaurant, at 7:30 p.m., Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 29 and 30. Roles required include a 12 or 13-year-old girl for "This Property is Condemned" and six people for "The Pot Boiler" which is a hilarious comedy about a zany director trying to produce a melodrama—all doing the worst goofs possible onstage.

Further information may be obtained by calling Box Office at 372-9636.

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Gardena Native Wins First Civic Art Award in Contest

"Gardena Scene—1950," a painting depicting the area around Artesia Boulevard and Normandie Avenue in the early 1950s, has won first prize in the first annual Civic Art Award competition sponsored by the Gardena Valley Art Association.

The winning painting, by Constance Cole, will be placed in the Gardena City Hall. It was one of 60 entries by some 35 artists in the first annual contest.

A native of Gardena, Mrs. Cole served as the town photographer from 1947 until 1953. Her father owned the

Town Hardware Store and her mother was a teacher in Gardena.

Mrs. Cole began painting in 1960, working first in water colors. She studied under Ies Macklen at the Gardena Adult School.

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