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'SMELL-O-VISION' TO GET FILM TEST

'Scent of Mystery' Will Open
in Chicago—Premiere Here
for 'Magician' Aug. 27

By RICHARD NASON

Even before the advent of sound films, movie men have envisioned the possibility of adding another dimension to motion pictures—that of smell. Every few years some adventuresome producer has tried it. But these early efforts usually have involved only one odor filtered crudely from a single source with unpromising results.

Soon, however, the movie industry, and the public, will witness a more definitive test of whether smell can be practically joined with the sight and sound of movies. The occasion will be the premiere of Michael Todd Jr.'s "Scent of Mystery" at the Cinestage Theatre in Chicago some time late this year. The melodrama will open here directly afterward.

The skepticism resulting from early attempts to introduce smell to films is anticipated by Mr. Todd's name for the process.

"It is called Smell-O-Vision," he said yesterday, "to get the jump on those who'll call it that anyway."

Called Clear Advance

But it was obvious from Mr. Todd's account of his trials to date that Smell-O-Vision marks a clear advance over the earlier and somewhat laughable attempts at "smell," just as clear, in fact, as the sound track did over the cruder earlier attempts to link sound and picture.

The analogy is not a pre-judgment because Smell-O-Vision does just that. It synchronizes the odor machine to the action by means of a magnetic

track on the film. Furthermore the process emits its odors through sources situated at every seat in the theatre. It is capable of rapidly transmitting a wide variety of distinct odors by means of a console-type of machine "played" by impulses from the sound track.

Mr. Todd had just returned from Spain, where he had spent four months shooting his mystery drama at the amazing number of 149 separate locations. Jack Cardiff, the prize-winning English cinematographer turned director, was in charge.

Filming Described

"This is not a small film hitched to a big gimmick," the 29-year-old producer said. "It's shot in a 70-mm. process, in color. It will have six tracks on the film feeding eight sound systems and one smell system. The process has been installed at the Cinestage for about \$24,000. But subsequent installations will be much cheaper.

"The help-up now," the son of the late Mike Todd continued, "is the application of the sound and smell tracks. We use forty smells in this all told. They are integrated with the action either for humor—as a sight gag would—or to add romance or suspense. The system was developed by a Swiss osmologist named Hans Laube over the last twenty years or so. How many theatres do we hope to play? Well if it pans out as we plan, we will have about 100 installations throughout the world." The film's stars are Denholm Elliott, Peter Lorre, Paul Lukas and Diana Dors.

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New Swedish Import

Ingmar Bergman's "The Magician" will have its American premiere at the Fifth Avenue Cinema on the night of Aug. 27. The drama, which has been imported by Janus Films, has been selected as the official Swedish entry at the forthcoming Venice Film Festival.

Mr. Bergman is known here for his "The Seventh Seal," "Smiles of a Summer Night"

and "Wild Strawberries." The last-named is in its third month at the Beekman Theatre.

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Comedy Opens Today

Today's new film is "It Started With a Kiss," a comedy romance starring Glenn Ford and Debbie Reynolds, at the Capitol, Broadway and Fiftieth Street. Aaron Rosenberg produced and George Marshall directed the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer presentation. The screen play by Charles Lederer is derived from a story by Valentine Davies.