

Starting, Readying, Or Might Be

IN ARGENTINA

Buenos Aires.

In the listing below, P stands for producer, D for director, S for stars. Much of the data about future Argentine productions is necessarily tentative and incomplete, but by collating diverse sources in the industry, at this writing there emerges the following overview of expectations in time ahead.

Complete or virtually completed, and slated for release soon, are these titles:

"Mis Días con Veronica" (My Days with Veronica). P, Title Producciones; D, Nestor Lescovich; S, Dora Baret, Oscar Cruz. A love story, written by Jogre Martinez, between an adman and a drafts-woman.

"Desde el Abismo" (From the Abyss). P, Ayala-Olivera; D, Fernando Ayala; S, Thelma Biral, Alberto Argibay, Olga Zubarry.

"Queridas Amigas" (Dear Friends). P, Toba Films-San Nicolas; D, Carlos Orgambide; S, Dora Baret, Luisina Brando, Graciela Dufau.

"Locos por la Musica" (Crazy About Music). P, Palito Ortega for Chango; D, Enrique Dawi; S, Carlos Bala, Graciela Alfano, Raul Rossi.

"Buenos Aires, la Tercera Fundacion" (Buenos Aires, the Third founding). P, Zappetini y Grasso; D, Clara Zappetini; a documentary, utilizing the voices of Luis Medina Castro, Hugo Arana and Ivonne Fournier.

"No Apto Para Menores" (Unfit for Minors). P, Latinoamericana Producciones; D, Carlos Rinaldi; S, Enzo Viena, Thelma Stefani.

"El Diablo Metio la Pata" (The Devil Put his Foot in It). P, Latinoamericana Producciones; D, Carlos Rinaldi; S, Luis Sandrini, Enzo Viena, Maria Aurelia Bisutti.

"Fruitilla" (Strawberry). P, Cinematografica Victoria; D, Enrique Carreras; S, Marty Cosens, Mercedes Carreras, Osvaldo Miranda.

"Contacto en Argentina" (Contact in Argentina). An Argentine-Spanish-Peruvian-Venezuelan co-production. D, Julio Saraceni; S, Maria de los Angeles Medrano, Adolfo Garcia Grau, Javier Portales.

"Comando Azules" (Blue Commandos). P, Palmer Producciones; D, Emilio Vieyra; S, Jorge Martinez, Elsa Daniel, Silvia Arazi.

Now Or Soon Shooting

Being filmed now, or soon to begin shooting, or planned for later in 1980, are the following productions:

"El Cazador de Vidas" (The Hunter for Lives). P, CCN; D, Oscar Barney Finn; S, the naturalist Andy Pruna (but apparently a fiction feature, not essentially a documentary).

"Ese Infierno Tan Temido" (That Very Feared Hell). P, Pino Farina Producciones; D, Raul de la Torre; S, Graciela Borges, Alberto de Mendoza. Based on a text by Juan Carlos Onetti.

"Fiebre Amarilla" (Yellow Fever). D, Javier Torre Nilsson; S, Rodolfo Beban, Graciela Dufau, Sandra Mihanovich, Leonor Benedetto, Carlos Estrada. The script has been adapted by Beatriz Guido and the director, from the script which the latter's late father, the director Leopoldo Torre Nilsson, had been unable to film, allegedly because of censorship trouble.

"Manos Calientes" (Hot Hands). D, Hugo Fregonese (see separate story).

"Dejame con Amor" (Leave me

with Love). An Argentine-Italian co-production. D, Piero Landi; S, the singer Raffaella Carra, Jorge Martinez.

"Los Miedos" (The Fears). P, Alejandro Doria and Lita Stantic; D, Alejandro Doria.

"Toto Paniagua, el Rey de la Chatarra" (Toto Paniagua, the Junk King). D, Carlos Orgambide; S, Ricardo Espalter, Enrique Almada.

"Misteriosa Buenos Aires" (Mysterious Buenos Aires). D, Oscar Barney Finn, Adolfo Aristarain, Alberto Fischerman, Ricardo Wulicher. A four-part omnibus based on the writings of Manuel Mujica Lainez.

"Los Crapulas" (The Scoundrels). D, Jorge Pantano; S, Lando Buzzanca, Juan Carlos Altavista.

"Amarillo Rabioso" (Rabid Yellow). D, Eduardo Calcagno.

"Flor Tetis de Gambetta, una Viuda Descocada" (A Madcap Widow). D, Armando Bo; S, Isabel Sarli, Jose Marrone.

"Fiesta" (Party). D, Mario David; S, a hitherto unnamed disc-jockey.

"Nuestras Raices" (Our Roots). D, Clara Zappetini. Documentary.

"Una Piba como Vos" (A Girl like You). P, Juan Antonio Muruzeta; D, Fernando Siro; S, singer Guillermo Fernandez.

"Tiro al Aire" (Shot in the Air). P, Tamames-Zemborain; D, Mario Sabato.

"La Conquistista del Paraiso" (The Conquest of Paradise). D, Eliseo Zubiela.

"Chocolates Uberallen." D, Oscar Barney Finn; S, Julia Von Grolman.

"De Aqui para Alla" (Hither and Thither). D, Teo Kofman.

"Usurpacion" (Usurpation). D, Manuel Antin.

"Los Ginecologos se Divierten" (Gynaecologists Have Fun). P, Aries; D, Hugo Sofovich; S, Alberto Olmedo, Jorge Porcel, Susana Gimenez.

"Mama de Niebla" (Fog Mother). P, Aries; D, Fernando Ayala; S, child star Andrea del

Boca.

"Entierros a Domicilio" (Home Delivery Burials). P, Aries; D, Hugo Sofovich; S, Alberto Olmedo.

"La Discoteca del Amor" (The Discotheque of Love). P, Aries; S, singer Cacho Castana.

"La Casa Grande y la Casa Chica" (The Big House and the Small House). P, Aries (an Argentine-Brazilian co-production); D, Hector Olivera.

A film with singer Sandro is also slated to begin shooting soon (no other credits known). And Manuel Antin may direct a movie based on writings by jungle chronicler Horacio Quiroga.

Also reported to be in diverse stages of production or planned to roll later in the year, are:

"Seis Pasajes al Infierno" (Six Tickets to Hell). Dir. Fernando Siro.

"Mafalda" by Daniel Mallo.

"El Juicio de Dios" (The Lord's Judgement) by Hugo Fili.

"Ico, el Caballito" (Ico, the Tiny Horse). Animated feature, helmed by Manuel Garcia Ferre.

"Mientras me Dure la Vida" (While I Still Live), by Carlos Ortaduy.

"El Gran Valor" (The Great Asset) by, Enrique Cahen Salaberry.

"Zorrito, Hormigueta y Tapon, Tras el Invento Inventado" (Foxy, Tiny Ant and Stopper, on the Trail of the Invented Inventory) by Hector Doldey.

"Cementerio de Siete Tumbas" (Seven-Grave Cemetery) by Atilio

Kingdom For A Phone

Montevideo.

In some Latin countries it takes 15 minutes just to get a dial tone on the phone; but in Montevideo two of the leading distributors don't even have phones. After applying for a phone it often takes years before one can be installed.

What do they do? Said one distributor: "Oh, we just run down to the main post office and send a telex instead. In town it's easier to just walk over to where you have to go."

Embrafilme To Back 25

(IN 1980)

Rio de Janeiro.

Brazil's government-controlled production and distrib organization Embrafilme is expected to finance some 25 local pix this year, per the company's topper Celso Amorim, who took over the reins last April when Roberto Farias exited.

In a *Variety* interview, Amorim, who formerly headed the cultural division of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, emphasized the need of promoting the exhib sector and also of having Brazilian films enter the video and foreign sales markets.

"We are trying to structure a sector of our production for video and would like to promote closer ties with television," he said. "1979 was a difficult year and the transition in Embrafilme and in the country as a whole created a gap. In films, 1979 was not a particularly bright year due to the long-standing price freeze. But then some investments, especially in cultural activities, don't have a short-range financial return."

The Embrafilme topper said the company was now working with government and private banks and

credit sources and that the target was to keep up production more or less at last year's pace via distrib advances. These, he said, would not go above 10-12 million cruzeiros maximum (about \$250,000).

In order to encourage new talent, Embrafilme solicited film scripts. About 200 were received, of which some 40-50 are to be accepted for projects. "We are now in the process of reorganizing our foreign sales operation; but we must first form new personnel. Members of our new team include international sales execs like Jorge Humberto de Freitas Peregrino, as topper, and aides Ana Maria Falaschi and Aluisio Leite Garcia. There's also a greater interest in exhibition, since we are aware that it's useless to go into production and distribution when we don't have the outlets to play our product."

Amorim's appointment, said industry sources, was first looked upon somewhat askance, but in the course of last year it was felt he had pretty well won over most sectors as a capable administrator who was shaping up Embrafilme and the Brazilian production industry.

Polverini.

"Los Viernes de la Eternidad" (The Fridays of Eternity), Hector Olivera to direct.

"El Bromista" (The Prankster) by Mario David.

"Virgen de Lujan" (Virgin of Lujan). Augusto and Sebastian Rodriguez Larreta Pensing.

"Momentos" (Moments), by Maria Luisa Bemberg.

"Platero y Yo" (Platero and I), by Alberto Fischerman (unconfirmed).

"Les Luthiers." On the musical group of the same name, dir. Luis Puenzo or Carlos Orgambide (unconfirmed).

"Canten, Mariachis, Canten" (Sing, Mariachis, Sing!), by D, Antonio Cumil.

"Los Desangelizados" (no literal translation possible). D, Sergio Renan.

"Los Superagentes Vuelven" (The Superagents Return), by Eduardo Dates (unconfirmed).

"Sin Rumbo" (Without a Set Course), by Rodolfo Mortola.

"La Maestra Normal" (The Teacher), by Carlos Orgambide.

And an as-yet untitled feature is also planned by director Zuhair Jury.

Show Biz Killer: Lack Of Electricity

Montevideo.

Over the three months of Uruguay's last winter (April to July 1979), the capital city of Montevideo was thrown into utter darkness on the average of one night a week due to power failures. Often these total blackouts lasted from 7 p.m. all through the night, thus killing virtually all show biz activities, including, of course, cinema and video.

Moreover, many of the blackouts occurred on Saturday or Sunday. Since most first-run houses don't have their own generators, shows either had to be cancelled or, if pic was already being screened, vouchers were given to the audiences which were good for another day.

Paraguay Gains As Feature Film Mkt.

Asuncion.

The Republic of Paraguay, squeezed inland between Argentina, Brazil and Bolivia has heretofore always been considered as a small filmic "backwater" hardly worth bothering with from distributors' standpoint and "thrown in" as a territory when selling Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.

Though virtually all product for Paraguay is still bought through Argentinian distributors, there are now two points of view regarding the territory. One is that Paraguay is too small to bother much with and that it's too difficult to control receipts. The other view is that the country is coming into its own and is starting to become significant in terms of what it represents in rentals or outright sales.

Asuncion (pop. about 3,000,000) admittedly only has about 10 first-run locations, but top ticket prices are a hefty \$2.30 (exchange is about 135 guaranies to the dollar at year's end) and some pix have chalked up hefty grosses.

Thus Brazilian releases, "Dona Flor" and "Dama do Lotacao" (The Girl On the Bus) both drew about 80,000 spectators, while "Amor Bandido" reportedly did even better. Also hauling in the guaranies were Mexico's Cantinflas pic "Por Mis Pistolas" (55,000 tix), "Saturday Night Fever" and "La Violacion."

Draws Tourists

Commented Buenos Aires-based distrib Enrique Ialuner: "There's been a great improvement in biz in Paraguay. You can see economic growth, partly due to the influx of Argentinian and Brazilian tourists, since Paraguay now is a bargain for buyers. It's impossible to get a hotel room in Asuncion on short notice cause the country's become almost a duty free port."

He added that b.o. prices range from \$1.50 to \$2.30 and that the local currency, the guarani hasn't changed its parity with the dollar for the past 15 years. "Some producers have started dealing directly with Paraguay and Uruguay, as is case of Discina in Montevideo buying directly from EMI."

Seconding the upbeat view on Paraguay was Roberto Fernandez of DISCIPAR S.A. (Distribuidora Cinematografica del Paraguay), who claims to have been the first indie distrib in Paraguay. He sez he went in with Columbia, Fox and Disney product, and then C.I.C. and Warner Bros. followed.

"In the past two years four new locations, each about 800 seats, have opened in Asuncion," said Fernandez, "and there've been lotsa improvements in the interior of Paraguay as well. Billings for us last year were \$200,000. Before, distributors sent in old prints and material already used in Buenos Aires, but now new ones are shipped."

He added that censorship in Paraguay was far more liberal than in Argentina and that "Emmanuelle" played in Asuncion midnight sessions and in drive-ins. Paraguay is estimated to have about 20 hardtops in the country, plus another 60 or so open air situations. An 18% tax is paid on all remittances out of the country, with no other restrictions involved for dollar transfers and less paper work than in Argentina.

Commented Fernandez: "Paraguay is a country in full development, with a stable government, strong economy and virtually no inflation. Before Yank majors never bothered much with Paraguay, but now they're sending new prints."