

MANULIS TO OFFER SERLING TV DRAMA

Plans 'Aftermath' June 19 on
'Playhouse 90'—Banner
to Leave 'Chevy Show'

By OSCAR GODBOUT

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HOLLYWOOD, Calif., May 18 — Martin Manulis, producer of "Playhouse 90," has had a year's patience rewarded by getting a chance to present a Rod Serling drama once considered too controversial for television.

Last summer Mr. Manulis, anxious to stage "Aftermath" on the Columbia Broadcasting System series, found "some of the show's backers did not share his enthusiasm. The theme of "Aftermath" was that social prejudice must by its nature ultimately result in physical violence.

It was reported that representatives of some advertising agencies involved with "Playhouse 90" felt this dramatic foundation came too close to existing social problems and that segments of the audience might react unfavorably. The project subsequently was shelved.

Now the scenario, superficially revised and retitled "A Town Has Turned to Dust," will be televised June 19 on "Playhouse 90." The theme remains the same, but the setting has been set back to the Southwest of 1870. The story line deals with the lynching of a Mexican and the aftermath of the crime.

John Frankenheimer has been assigned to direct the drama. He originally had the assignment when it was being prepared as the opening show of the season now closing.

On June 26, "Playhouse 90" will present "The Great Gatsby," the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel dealing with the Prohibition era. The program will be directed by Franklin Schaffner from an adaptation by David Shaw.

Switching Networks

Robert Banner, producer and director of the "Dinah Shore Chevy Show," confirmed yesterday that he would not renew his National Broadcasting Company contract and would move to C. B. S.-TV in a program-creating arrangement.

Mr. Banner and Bob Banner Productions, Inc., will be charged with the creation of several special programs and new series for next season. The producer, recipient of an Emmy this season for his direction of the Dinah Shore show, will own an undisclosed percentage of the programs he originates under the new arrangement.

He had directed Miss Shore's fifteen-minute N. B. C. musicals for three seasons before the programs went to hour length this season. Previous to that he had produced and directed a Fred Waring program and directed the "Omnibus" and Dave Garroway shows.

Rod Steiger will star in "A Thing to Live For," a "Schlitz Playhouse" drama to be filmed beginning Wednesday. The post-Civil War story of life in the Deep South was written by Paul Monash. . . . Sparks-Walker Productions is preparing a new series based on exploits of the Sioux Indian tribe. The untitled project is to be filmed at Universal-International and on location in South Dakota.

Named at Desilu

Desilu Productions has named Bernard Weitzman to be vice president in charge of business affairs, labor relations and talent contracts. Mr. Weitzman has been with Desilu for the last four years.

June Lockhart and Joseph Cotten will star with George Montgomery and John Smith in "The Medicine Man," a forthcoming episode in the new "Cimarron City" series to have its debut on N. B. C.-TV in the fall.

The new Western series scheduled to replace the "Tennessee Ernie Ford" show on N. B. C.-TV for the summer has been re-titled "Buckskin." It will get under way July 3 with Jody O'Connell, a 10-year-old actor, and Sally Brophy in starring roles.