

☆.....Jedda is YOUR Film.....☆

You have doubtless heard of the new Australian film, "Jedda," which is to be released later in the year, but do you realise just how much this is YOUR film? Without the Australian aborigine there could have been no "Jedda," either in theme or performance.

"Jedda" is the story of an aborigine baby reared as a white girl by a lonely woman in the buffalo country of the Northern Territory. It tells of the child's reaction to white conventions and her desire to mingle with and learn more about her own people.



Charles and Elsa Chauvel, veteran Australian film-producing team, examine a young girl for a part in "Jedda."

To make "Jedda," veteran producer-director Charles Chauvel had first to select his aborigine cast and then use aborigines as workers in the various phases of production. "Jedda" is the second Chauvel film set mainly in the north of Australia and employing a large number of aborigines. ("Uncivilised" was the first.)

Chauvel's primary ambition in producing "Jedda" was to make a film of the Northern Territory that would show the world the beauties of Australia's most important but most neglected district. The Federal Government, always anxious to publicise the Territory, gave Chauvel some backing and help.

But after the production had got under way, Chauvel realised he would have to concentrate on the aborigine population of the Territory, because without their skill, knowledge and loyalty, there would have been no real development of the resources of this savagely beautiful area.

As many *Dawn* readers live in big cities or on Board Stations, they will find much of "Jedda" as strange and unusual as will the white population of Australia, but it is

important to remember that nothing has been exaggerated, nothing distorted, nothing garbled.

Bill Hatney, that well-known Territorian, was engaged by Chauvel as research officer, and he saw to it that any fanciful Hollywooditis was kept strictly out of "Jedda."

The picture will give city types a much better insight into the relationship that exists between black man and white in the outback and, therefore, it can only do good as far as the aborigine population of Australia is concerned. It shows men and women working on the station homestead and out on the buffalo plains. It brings home more forcibly than any number of written words just how dependent the white boss is on his station hands.

A good example of the co-operation between black and white is seen in the method of transporting colour film from camera to plane while "Jedda" was shooting. "Jedda" was made in Gevacolor, a Belgian process, but there are no colour laboratories in Australia for processing 35 mm. film, and so the prints had to be flown to London. When the day's work had been done, the "rushes" as they are

called, would be sent to the aerodrome to catch the plane for London, but the whole thing was much more complicated than it sounds.

Colour film is sensitive to heat and must be kept cool. But how do you keep things cool in the Territory, miles from isolated homesteads and in the middle of sun-baked valleys?

The Chauvel unit worked out such an elaborate system of transportation for this colour film that not one foot of film was lost through exposure or damage.

Dugout canoes were brought from Cape Don, several hundred miles away, to the Roper River location.



Three-year-old Margaret Dingle, who plays Jedda as a young child, romps in between "takes" with another good little Australian.