

News of the Screen

By A. H. WELER

Dalton Trumbo, the Oscar-winning screenwriter currently represented here by "Executive Action," the dramatization of a plot to assassinate President Kennedy, has been signed to write the script of "The Scarlatti Inheritance" from the 1971 novel by Robert Ludlum, which details a plot to put Hitler into power. The film will be produced and directed by Saul Swimmer for the local Royal Productions.

"In essence, the story deals with a wealthy man's attempts to use his inheritance to finance the Hitler movement in 1930-32 Germany," Mr. Trumbo relayed from Hollywood. "And equally important are his mother's efforts to frustrate him and defeat his malevolent, grand plan. I'm partial to the book because it's good intrigue and melodrama but especially because it involves the opulent, decadent Berlin of that period and the most unbelievable, hated people of the last 1,000 years."

Mr. Swimmer reported that no director has been signed yet. "However, we're discussing the leading roles with Ingrid Bergman and Sean Connery. Our idea," he added, "is to start filming this spring in the book's locales—Switzerland, England, Germany and here in New York."

A Novel of Plot On Friedman List

A fictionalized aftermath to President Kennedy's assassination has captivated Steve Friedman, producer of the hit "Last Picture Show." He has paid \$175,000 for movie rights to "Last Man at Arlington," the new novel by Joseph Di Mena. The story of an ex-Green Beret who, a decade after Kennedy, duces six people who had worked in the Administration,

was commended by The New York Times Book Review last week as a chilling "picture of an ingenious assassin" and a look at certain Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency procedures.

Mr. Friedman, who conceded that the novel had "historic aspects," nevertheless declared that "basically I found it to be an exciting political thriller that has all the ingredients to make an exciting, contemporary movie." Tentative plans, he said, call for production to start this summer.

'Hephaestus Plague' Due as Thriller

"The Hephaestus Plague" is scheduled to descend on the movies. William Castle has acquired rights to this first novel by Thomas Page just published by G. P. Putnam's Sons, and he plans to produce the film version of the science-fiction horror adventure for Paramount.

The book is entomology-oriented, somewhat like "Them!" the 1954 thriller about giant ants that threatened civilization. The "Hephaestus" bugs are fire-producing cockroaches freed from a subterranean existence by an earthquake to plague man. The scientist who grapples with the awesome problem of controlling insects that can incinerate whole cities finally learns to communicate with them. No screen writer, director or production date yet, according to a spokesman for the company.

First Deadly Sin' To Be Shot Here

Robert M. Weitanan, who joined with Columbia to produce the movie version of Lawrence Sanders' cops-and-



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robbers novel, "The Anderson Tapes," on local sites, will return here—tentatively this January—to do the same for "The First Deadly Sin," the recently published novel by the same author.

"The First Deadly Sin," which focuses in part on cops, not robbers, is a crime and punishment suspense thriller that courses through the fashionable East Side and centers on a mysterious, brainy, psychopathic mass killer and the dedicated detective captain who eventually tracks him down. The script has been written by Steve Shagan.

"As a native New Yorker," the producer said, "I feel that shooting here is as necessary to the drama as the authenticity of the characters and the book and script's careful attention to police work and other details."

Music Therapy Center Elects

The Music Therapy Center, 840 Eighth Avenue, a nonprofit social rehabilitation agency for emotionally disturbed adults and children, has announced the election of Ralph G. Scobey as president. Also elected were Mrs. Louise H. Harris and Mrs. Lawrence Ottinger, vice presidents; Philip Zimmerman, secretary, and Robert P. Kurtz, treasurer.