

# On location

## *Dallas area rounding up studio dollars*

By Mitchell Schnurman  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram

DALLAS — Oliver Stone won't tell how his new film, "JFK," ends.

But for the Dallas area economy, there's no mystery: In the real-life world of economic benefits, publicity and prestige, the bottom line is a Hollywood ending.

Stone will spend up to \$45 million to make "JFK," and \$10 million is expected to be pumped directly into the North Texas economy. Combine that with two movies he's already made here — "Born on the Fourth of July" and "Talk Radio" — and Stone easily becomes the largest benefactor for the area's rebounding film business.

"He's almost like an industry himself," said Roger Burke, executive director of the Film Commission of North Texas. "Oliver Stone is responsible for bringing \$60 million into this economy."

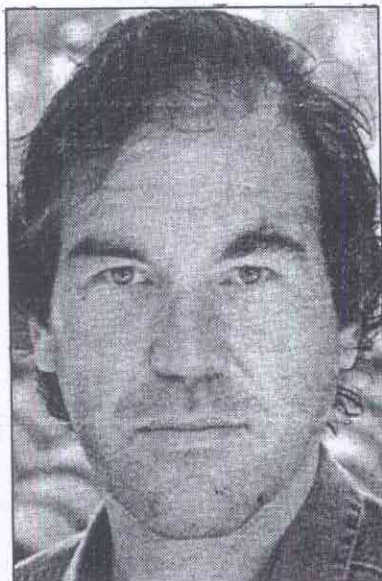
Stone will spend \$17 million here for all the three films, and Burke projects that each dollar will be recycled through the economy 3.5 times.

"The movie certainly is the economic equivalent of any major convention," said Bernard Weinstein, director of the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas.

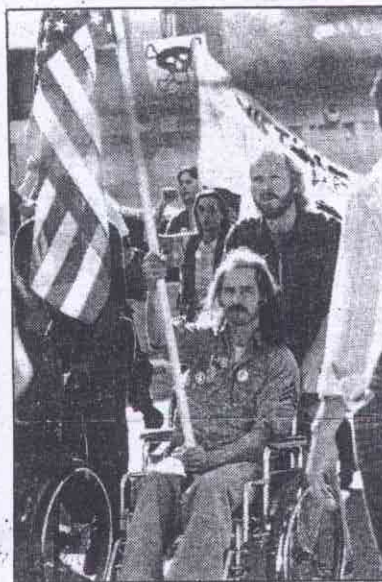
Stone began filming recently at Dealey Plaza, near the site where John F. Kennedy was assassinated 28 years ago. Several hundred people watched as production crews readied a replica of the presidential motorcade. Led by two four-door, 1963 convertibles — a black Cadillac Fleetwood and a Navy-blue Lincoln Continental — **the motorcade was assembled on Main Street, as it prepared to track the route that Kennedy had**



Visitors tour the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas, one of the sites where the movie 'JFK' is being filmed.



**Oliver Stone**  
Three films in Dallas area.



'Born on the Fourth of July' was filmed in Texas.

followed.

A swarm of black-suited, Secret Service look-alikes milled about, while 11 1960s-vintage police motorcycles raced up and down the street.

The excitement over "JFK" and several other films being made in Texas has lifted hopes that Texas may claim the Third Coast title it has long sought. Despite good weather, low labor costs and playing host to a handful of Oscar-winning movies, Texas is having trouble shaking Georgia, Florida and Illinois as prime film sites.

More than 250 film commissions vie to bring in the lucrative business, and most of their budgets dwarf the \$150,000 available to the Film Commission of North Texas.

Burke said the key to operating on a tight budget is to play off successes like Stone. The director, who's won three Academy

Awards, said he saved \$5 million by filming "Born on the Fourth of July" in Dallas, rather than in Long Island, where the movie was set.

Burke used that quote under Stone's picture in a large advertising poster, a technique he's updated with the headline, "Oliver is back in Dallas."

"JFK" is the 12th film to start in Texas this year, said Liz Kline of the Texas Film Commission. In less than four months, Texas has attracted more production budget dollars than in all of 1990, when total budgets fell 64 percent.

About 100 different companies will get a piece of the "JFK" pie, from lumber yards to beauticians to paint stores. Stone restored the Texas Theater in Oak Cliff, where Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested, and altered the facade of the Texas School Book Depository so it looks like it did in 1963.

He hired a landscaping company to cut nearly 30 years' growth off the live oak trees beside the building and even changed the street signs to 1960s-style lettering.

The Stoneleigh Hotel on the northern edge of downtown Dallas is providing 50 rooms for the movie people, including 14 as of

fices.

Stone's crew brought in their own phone lines, copiers, fax machines and personal computers. The Stoneleigh's deal: a 35 percent to 40 percent discount over the one-night rate.

"They're buying a lot of space for a long time," said Gary Bruton, vice president and general manager at the hotel. "It's good for both of us."