

Going to the Movies ^[1]

First Showing of Talking Pictures in Wilmington

Hundreds Viewing and Hearing Sound Pictures Declare System at Carolina Is Unusually Good

Wilmington Star, February 26, 1929.

A gala audience, filling every nook and corner of the house, sat enthralled yesterday at the opening program of sound motion pictures introduced for the first time at the Carolina theatre. The performance marked the premier of the [RCA system of sound reproduction](#), for the first time demonstrated to an audience in Wilmington.

Musical critics, [acoustical](#) ^[2] experts, and engineers, including Michael Fritz, engineer in charge of the Carolina installation, present at the demonstration, were united in their praise of the new system of sound reproduction, developed by the joint efforts of the Radio Corporation of America, the General Electric company, and the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing company.

The feature sound picture chosen for the opening night's entertainment under this program was George Jessle in "Lucky Boy" which was one of the finest entertainments ever screened in Wilmington.

A congratulatory message was received by the Carolina theatre from E.E. Bucher, executive vice president of the RCA Photophone Inc., reading as follows:

"The installation of the RCA Photophone system in Carolina theatre marks, I firmly believe, a new era of entertainment for the people of Wilmington. You are to be congratulated on your vision. Sound reproduction, as developed by the leading factors in the electrical and radio industries of the United States, will bring to the motion picture a wider field of dramatic action, to music a greater popular appeal, and to the audiences of Carolina theatre constantly growing enjoyment and diversion."

Judged by the impressive demonstration witnessed yesterday, the outstanding features of the RCA Photophone system of sound reproduction are:

1. Remarkable volume as well as magnificent tonal quality, which gives reproduced music and speech absolute naturalness. It is difficult to determine under the RCA Photophone system a reproduced orchestral selection for the original;
2. The "fan beam" system of sound distribution, an exclusive feature of this system, by means of which the sound actually seems to come from the lips of the screen characters, and not from all parts of the house;
3. New methods of achieving acoustical perspective so that sounds are not only given the relative tonal values, but all the richness of the original music and speech;
4. A wider range of sound effects made possible by the improved electro-dynamic loud speakers.

From the roar of thunder to the chirping of a bird, the new system reproduces all sounds with extraordinary fidelity. So perfect is the synchronization that one almost forgets that the characters on the screen are not real actors on the stage. There are no unpleasant mechanical or other [extraneous](#) ^[3] noise to interfere with the enjoyment of the performance.

About eight miles of wire were used in the installation of the RCA Photophone system in Carolina theatre. A battery of 12 dynamic loud speakers that "Sprayed" the theatre with a [veritable](#) ^[4] [barrage](#) ^[5] of sound and music is included in the equipment. The result is that the spectators and listeners in the back in the galleries are able to hear just as well as the occupants of front seats and [loges](#) ^[6].

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