

Wynn Still Has Vaudeville Spirit

By Joseph Finnigan

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pg. G5

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HOLLYWOOD (UPI)—Ed Wynn is returning to the vaudeville stage he left long ago to become a star of radio, movies and finally television in a career which spans more than 60 years.

Wynn, the bulb-nosed comedian with a lisping voice, is star of ABC-TV's "Hollywood Palace" show Sept. 26.

Ed worked the original Palace Theater, that New York showplace which for many years featured the world's top song and dance acts.

"I was on the opening bill of the Palace March 28, 1913," said Wynn during lunch at the Brown Derby Restaurant. "The first show was all European acts except me."

For his appearance on the video version of "Palace," Wynn said he recalled and tried to recapture some of that old vaudeville feeling.

"It was an extraordinary

experience," he said. "It's hard to recapture what you did 40-50 years ago. I didn't feel myself until about the second costume change. I wear eight costumes in the show, and it's the first time I've appeared on a stage in a tuxedo."

Wynn is 78 years old, but he says, "I feel as if I'm 62.

"I celebrate my birthday on the date when I first went on stage, which was Aug. 8, 1902. That day was a great day for me and my family. Celebrating my birthday on that date makes me feel 16 years younger. I know I'm 78 but I feel 62.

"And I'm mentally active. Now that I've finished that Palace show I'll take three weeks rest and then I'll do a Red Skelton Show."

EVEN THOUGH Ed is pushing 80, he has the attitude of a young performer

looking for professional acceptance of his work.

"They want me for more of those Palace shows," he said. "You couldn't get more of a compliment than that. The thing that pleases me most is that the producers are happy with what I did. And the audience like it."

Wynn lives in a Beverly Hills apartment. When he isn't working, he spends time with his son Keenan and grandchildren. Time doesn't hang heavy on Ed. He's known as a top performer, and producers hire him often.

"I'm in demand," he said. "Since June I've done two pictures, three television shows and was a voice for a radio show."

And then with a wave of his hand and a broad smile, he joked, "You're looking at a successful actor now."

If Ed Wynn just reached that conclusion, he's the last to find out.

CAMERA ANGLES: Charles Bronson plays a beatnik in "The Sandpiper"; with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton . . . Chuck Connors plays a rehabilitated drug addict in the "Synanon" movie . . . Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen have been set to write the title song for the "Sylvia" picture . . .