



Make-up artists seek right color values.



Technician checks for proper lighting.

a camera artist makes

The First Color Commercial



Bennett Grant, left, and Alice Wallace, as masqueraders, take time for a smoke.

COLOR television will brighten a lot of living rooms, but it's adding new furrows to the brows of the men who make TV commercials. Color multiplies the problems of costuming, staging, lighting and filming, although experts think it also will increase the sales impact.

Vienna-born Peter Elgar made the commercial shown in the accompanying pictures for the Pall Mall company. He believes it to be the first commercial made in color. It will be shown shortly on the first Pall Mall show to be color-cast, and also was photographed in black-and-white for immediate use.

Filming of the 60-second spot took 15 hours. Additional weeks were required to build the set, select the costumes and props, hire the technicians, choose and rehearse the six

actors. When Elgar couldn't find a harlequin outfit of the proper color, he had one hand-printed.

In the film, two masqueraders dance out on the terrace, they are serenaded by troubadours, then light cigarets of the proper brand and speak well of them in the brief sales message.

Elgar, now 49, made many educational and artistic films in Europe, including religious films for the Vatican. He never heard of a spot commercial until March of 1951, when he had just completed a sensitive film of a child learning to read, "The Impressionable Years," for the State Department. He went to an ad agency with an idea for some institutional films. They suggested the spots.

"It is like making any other motion picture," Elgar says, "except that the finished film is 60 seconds long."



Elaborate setting and costumes produce the desired result—a lighted cigaret.