

Hernandez Is "New Negro" Say Hollywood Producers

CHICAGO — Juano Hernandez is the "hottest" Negro actor in Hollywood today, the first of his race to achieve four major roles in a year since Stepin Fetchit shuffled to stardom 15 years ago, according to an article in the August issue of Ebony, Negro picture magazine.

The most significant aspect of the big, granite-jawed, dynamic actor's current success is that in his latest movie, "The Breaking Point," Warner Brothers has cast him in a white actor's role and there is no reference to race or color in this movie, based on Hemingway's "To Have and Have Not." Hernandez is cast as a fishing partner of John Garfield.

Of his role in this movie, director Michael Curtiz says, "Hernandez is the 'new Negro' in our movies. No longer do we have janitors and shoe shine boys. Now, we have a dignified, intelligent big man."

Ebony further points out, "This is a symbol of the changing patterns of race relations in motion pictures since, in every role, Hernandez has played a dignified, understanding Negro character."

Hernandez's other major roles this year have been as the magnificent, proud farmer faced by a lynch mob in "Intruder in the Dust," a sharecropper with Joel McCrea in "Stars in My Crown,"

and a band leader with Kirk Douglas in "Young Man With a Horn."

To be cast in non-Negro roles is nothing new for Hernandez, who had 16 years of steady work as a radio actor before he came to the movies. As a radio actor, he portrayed Mussolini, Premier Tojo of Japan, Emperor Hirohito, Chiang Kai-Shek, Eduard Benes, Emperor Haile Selassie and others.

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