

# VOODOO MAJOR FEATURE OF NEGRO 'MACBETH' PRODUCTION

## Actor Goes Into Trance Before Coming on Stage, Members of Cast State

Federal Theater Negro Players Given Free Rein in Presenting Characters, Director Says; First Local Performance Tomorrow.

BY JOHN W. THOMPSON  
Voodoofism furnishes one of the major features in the Federal Theater Project's Harlem production of "Macbeth" which is to open at Keith's tomorrow night for a five-day engagement.

But it isn't fake voodoofism. It's not the imitation stuff because the "Macbeth" cast contains an authentic voodoo doctor, Abdul Assen.

Abdul has devoted his life to study of voodoofism in Africa. In the current play, members of the cast said, Abdul goes into a nightly trance before appearing in the play to cast a spell on Macbeth.

### Players Arrive Tonight

The New York company is scheduled to arrive in Indianapolis tonight, coming direct from the Texas Centennial in Dallas. Said to be a theatrical experiment, "Macbeth" is presented by a cast of 125 Negroes. It was originally staged at the Lafayette Theater in Harlem in April and after a successful run of 10 weeks it moved to Broadway, then went on to Newark.

Orson Welles, a young man in his twenties, and former leading man for Katherine Cornell, wrote and directed the unique presentation of Shakespeare's play. Though he changed the setting to Haiti from Scotland, he did not tamper otherwise with the original script.

Nat Karson did the three settings in which most of the play's action occurs: a tropical jungle, a majestic castle and a seaborad town.

Since its debut, the large cast has gone through the nightly drama without the aid of a promoter or a working script to guide it.

### Actors Given Free Rein

"Although it smacks of the proverbial Hollywood method of procedure," said Mr. Wells when questioned about this, "let me assure you that the absence of a script is not due to carelessness or neglect. It was done deliberately."

"When I put the performers through their paces I strove to avoid stalling their actions and the flow of their lines by routinizing their emotions. I relied solely upon spontaneous direction."

Mr. Wells said this method is a bit risky because there's no telling just where an actor's emotions will lead him but the "free rein" given

### WHERE, WHAT, WHEN APOLLO

"China Clipper" with Pat O'Brien, Beverly Roberts, Humphrey Bogart, at 11:30, 1:41, 3:44, 5:47, 7:50 and 9:55.

### CIRCLE

"Mary of Scotland" with Katharine Hepburn and Frederic March, at 11:15, 1:30, 3:35, 5:45, 7:50 and 9:55. "Sharkey-Louis fight pictures at 11:30, 4:40, 6:45 and 8:30.

### LOEWS

"Kelly and Charlie Chase" at 12:21, 2:32, 7:54 and 10:25. Also "Trapped by Television" and "Lyle Talbot" with Mary Astor, at 11:30, 1:44, 3:54, 5:51, 7:55 and 9:17.

### LYRIC

Noble Sissle and Eubie Blake in "Vanderbilts" on stage at 1, 3:45, 6:45 and 8:30. Also "Charlie Chan at the Race Track" with Warner Oland and Helen Wood on stage at 11:30, 2:34, 5:31, 8:30 and 10:30.

### ALAMO

"Parole" with Ann Preston and Henry Hunter. Also "Building Courtage" with Eddie Cantor.

### AMBASSADOR

"San Francisco" with Jeanette MacDonald, Clark Gable and Spencer Tracy. Also "The Thin Man" with Laurel and Hardy.

### OHIO

"Mr. Deeds goes to Town" with Gary Cooper and Jean Arthur. Also "The Thin Man" with Warren William and June Travis.

The players has done its intended work.

"I do not want to check in any way the unerring instinct for the theater that these people have," said Mr. Wells "and they came through for me far beyond my expectations." "Macbeth" is to be presented each evening starting tomorrow through Saturday, with a special matinee

performance Saturday.

### EARLY TOWNS RECREATED

Both Salem Village and nearby Salem Town, as they existed in the Massachusetts Puritan period, are to be recreated for Frank Lloyd's production, "Maid of Salem," starring Claudette Colbert.

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## CARTOONIST'S IDEA OF SONG FILM SCENES



When the famous cartoonist, Jefferson Machamer, went to Hollywood recently, he only intended to visit. But Twentieth Century-Fox producers got him to do the bit above, which shows his impressions of "Sing, Baby, Sing," the musical picture which is to open at the Apollo Friday.

In the upper left-hand corner one sees what Mr. Machamer thinks scenes.

Just below them are the Three Ritz Brothers whose singing and comedy is a highlight of the new picture. On the other side of the cartoon are shown Ted Healy and Patsy Kelly as Mr. Machamer thinks they appear in "Sing, Baby, Sing."

Below, in one of the climaxing scenes of the picture, Mr. Machamer has depicted Mr. Healy, Miss Kelly, Gregory Ratoff and Mr. Menjou. That dancing nymph in the center at the top is supposed to be Mr. Menjou with an ice bag on his head enjoying the doubtful results of a large evening.

## THE BARKER

BY JOHN CREECY

Daily Short Story

### Follow the Stars' to Open at Lyric Friday.

OLD CASSINGHAM had a voice like two pieces of sandpaper rubbing together.

"No, sir," he said testily to Ed Walker, manager of Unit 4 of Cassingham's Colossal Carnivals. "Pop Thipp is through—he's dead wood. I want you to get rid of him tomorrow. Replace him with a younger man."

Ed got up and looked out the window of the office window. Down on the midway he could see Pop Thipp, barking from the platform in front of the Palace of Wonders, could hear him shouting. There was only a small crowd listening to him.

"Listen, Mr. Cassingham," Ed pleaded. "Won't you give Pop just one more chance? He hasn't lost any of his stuff, really. It's just an off day. If you'd take a closer look at his work—"

"TALK so a person can hear you," old Cassingham snapped. "You know I'm deaf!"

Ed leaned over and yelled justly enough to make his employer hear. But Cassingham didn't like being argued with.

"I've had a close enough look at him through this window," he said curiously. "He's through, I say. Can't draw the crowds."

"But, Mr. Cassingham," Ed persisted, "Pop's been a loyal employee of yours for nearly half his life. He's old now—he can't turn to anything else."

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