

Miss Cornell Captivating in New Comedy

Audience Cheers 5 Minutes; Play Abounds in Hilarious Comment.

By JAMES THRASHER

As Indianapolis' recent dramatic history goes, last night's opening of "No Time for Comedy" at English's must be put down as a red-letter occasion. This should be admitted even by the categorical objectors to the cinema influence which transforms a play's inevitable tryout into a "world premiere."

After all, it isn't every day that we are permitted the adventurous experience of buying a theatrical pig in a poke, and of viewing a new play by S. N. Behrman, a new role for Katharine Cornell without the prejudice of a single preconceived notion.

The play's title, in itself, gives an inkling that Mr. Behrman, a brilliant purveyor of inspired small talk, might have something new up his sleeve. But, in addition to any novelty, he still seems to have his tongue in his cheek—a familiar gesture.

Two Angles of Approach

"No Time for Comedy" presents two angles of approach. One is the triangular plot, which hangs conveniently in every dramatist's front hall. The other might be interpreted as Mr. Behrman's rather sardonic defense of his own type of writing—a type which we may hope to count on to enrich our enjoyment for many years to come.

I have the fanciful notion that the author may have looked upon his coauthors of the Playwrights' Company, noted their brave and current preoccupation with American democracy and the pitfalls that surround it, and decided he ought to look into it. Having done so, he manages to make a good case for living a happy and civilized life in the face of brutality elsewhere.

At least it is a playwright, Gaylord Easterbrook, and his actress wife, Linda, who are the chief protagonists. Gay has been successfully content to write witty and successful comedies for Linda until his meeting with Amanda Smith.

He Takes It Seriously

Amanda makes a play for Gay's affection by the elegant trick of finding hidden depths and latent talents in his creative gifts. Gay, being more playwright than lover, takes the buildup seriously and decides to abandon comedy and come to grips with reality.

Linda sees him as a delightful, if somewhat petulant child, and consequently adores him. And, just as surely Gay is driven to childish revolt by her gentle, amused and exasperating way of keeping one mental jump ahead of him.

The situation is summed up neatly in Gay's speech to the effect that "I hate you because you're so much smarter than I am; Mandy massages my ego, and I like it."

Down the Wrong Alley

So Amanda goads him on to do a play about death and immortality, which is not down his alley. And Amanda's cold, precise husband in turn falls in love with Linda.

When Gay suggests a "honeymoon" to Loyalty Spain (this is believed the surrenders to "find himself," Amanda begins to wilt. And Linda finally solves the whole affair by giving Gay a new toy in the idea for a play about Amanda and herself.

Miss Cornell Delighted

Miss Cornell, in her real debut as a comedienne, gives a captivating performance. She gives Linda a delightful, heart-warming voice and grace, and she envelopes Linda's confident intelligence in a subtle radiance of amusement. Even on opening night, it was a consummate job.

In Laurence Olivier Miss Cornell has made a most fortunate choice of a leading man, handsome and generously blessed with the gift for making the most of some excellent opportunities. Margalo Gilmore and John Williams are satisfying as the other principals, and Robert Fleming does justice to a small but rich assignment.

The review be complete without mention that Gee Gee Smith has a great time with a grand bit for the Negro maid.

It really was a remarkably seasoned performance, as first performances go for Guthrie McClintic's meticulous artistry of direction may be thanked.

The audience—an Indianapolis audience, mind you—cheered for nearly five minutes after the final curtain. During this time the modest Mr. Behrman kept inconspicuously to his orchestra seat and mingled his own tribute to the actors with the general applause.

GABLES HOME AFTER ELOPEMENT



Carol Lombard and Clark Gable, filmdom's leading romantic couple, at Miss Lombard's home in Hollywood after their elopement to Kingman, Ariz., where they quietly secured a license and were married by a minister before newspapermen could catch up with them.

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M-G-M Lists 52 Movies

One-a-Week for Coming Year Is 'Birthday Present.'

Local representatives of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer today announced a "birthday present" of 52 pictures for Loew's patrons in the coming 12 months, following the studio's 15th birthday anniversary sales convention in Chicago.

The one-a-week picture schedule is backed by an announced budget of 41 million dollars.

A partial list of the releases includes such headlines as "Gone With the Wind" with Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh; "The Wizard of Oz" with an all-star cast and color photography; and a film version of Sinclair Lewis' "It Can't Happen Here."

Tracy in New Film "Northwest Passage" will be made with Spencer Tracy, Robert Taylor and Wallace Beery starred. Norma Shearer will be seen in "The Thin Man" series is contemplated.

M-G-M is drawing further on the Broadway stage for the musical, "Babes in Arms" (Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland) and "On Borrowed Time" with Frank Morgan and Cedric Belfrage.

Two pictures are planned for Greta Garbo, including one about Mme. Curie; the Marx Brothers also have two films lined up, and three Joan Crawford vehicles are scheduled.

Nelson Eddy is down for one appearance with Jeanette MacDonald, and another with Hona Massey. "The Life Story of Thomas Edison" will be made in two pictures, the first starring Mickey Rooney, the second, Spencer Tracy.

Hardy Family Goes On Young Mr. Rooney also is slated to appear in "A Yank at Eton," to be filmed in London. The Hardy Family series will carry on, the final will be another Dr. Kildare picture, and a new family cycle is planned.

Clark Gable and Myrna Loy are to be costarred in "The Great Canadian" and Miss Loy, besides her appearance in "The Thin Man" film, is to have a part with James Stewart in an aviation comedy.

Several musicals besides the Nelson Eddy pictures and the annual "Broadway Melody" spectacle are planned. Among numerous books due for film treatment are Rippling's "Kom" and "Soldiers Three," Robert Donat will star in a London production of the famous war play, "Journey's End." And, in line with the current trend, M-G-M will make a picture dealing with present-day conditions in Germany and titled "I Had a Comrade."

Hitchcock's Latest Sets Fast Pace

British Director Turns Out Spine-Tingling Mystery In 'Lady Vanishes.'

Alfred Hitchcock, the British director who excels at suspense, has abandoned his forte to work with plot and counter-plot in "The Lady Vanishes" showing at the Rivoli tonight and tomorrow night.

Whereas in his "The 39 Steps" and "A Woman Alone" the tempo was masterfully retarded to create a pulsating excitement, his latest mystery has the pace of a spy infested "Hilltoppopin'."

Perhaps the most striking difference between it and the earlier Hitchcock masterpieces is that it is more American than British, despite the English cast and Continental setting. "The Lady Vanishes" has thrown restraint to the utmost reaches of the British Empire.

Mystery Plot Thickens

The principal plot is that the lady (Dame May Whitty) not only vanishes, but that at least a score of fellow train passengers deny she has ever existed.

Margaret Lockwood—Britain's contribution to the Hedy Lamarrish girls—who shares a compartment with the lady, and several other passengers know that she does exist, and is not a figment of the imagination as Dr. Harz (Paul Lukas) insists.

Cecil Parker and Linden Travers are fleeing from something, and fear any "investigation." Naughton Wayne and Basil Radford, to whom crickets is 99.44 per cent of their complaint lives, won't admit Dame Whitty is missing because a delay would mean they might miss the international matches.

Philip Leaver in Cast

Philip Leaver, Zelma Vas Dias, Catherine Lacey, Josephine Wilson, Mary Clare and Mr. Lukas are parties to the plot which has resulted in the disappearance of Dame Whitty. The rest of the passengers are too bored to care.

The single person to believe Miss Lockwood is Michael Redgrave, who properly for film stories—has met, fought and conquered her. Being a skeptical man he only believes her when he finally discovers positive proof of the elderly lady's actuality.

That Mr. Hitchcock has not entirely abandoned his suspense technique is shown in the scenes leading to Dame Whitty's final discovery. Packed with suspense is the scene where Miss Lockwood is about to find where Dame Whitty has written her name on the dusty dining car window, only to have the train plunge through a tunnel where the smoke erases the writing.

Similarly spine-tingling is the action of the train's chef in throwing out a window the wrapper of the tea the Dame had asked the steward to prepare. To see that paper flutter past the cars and then stick momentarily on a window near Mr. Redgrave is enough to cause you to shout: "There it is. Look!"

Then there is the shot when you feel there is something peculiar about the nun who is tending Mr. Lukas' patient and you suddenly realize she is wearing high-heeled shoes.

The Hitchcock hand is there, but, because in almost any artist there are times when he drops below his own par, it has just passed over the ingredients lightly instead of mixing them fully and with his usual skill.

Fine performances are given by Miss Lockwood and Mr. Redgrave as the couple who are desperately fighting against the train load of people. Minor parts both, those of Dame Whitty and Mr. Lukas are treated with their old-trouper finesse. (D. M.)

Deanna Moves

The sprightly comedy, "Three Smart Girls Grow Up," Deanna Durbin's latest film, moves today from the Indiana to the Apollo for a second downtown week. With it goes "Beauty for the Asking," featuring Lucille Ball.

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GUNGA DIN' SUIT FILED

HOLLYWOOD, March 31 (U. P.).—Harry Gould, a writer, charged in a lawsuit today that the film hit "Gunga Din" was pirated from a script he submitted to a studio in 1934.

PENNIES FROM SEVEN

Billy Halop, Dead End Kid, has more than 10,000 pennies, a collection he started on his seventh birthday.

DANCE TONIGHT

Amos Ostot Orchestra

25c Before 8:30

INDIANA

2 HITS

AMBASSADOR

DOORS OPEN 10:15

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Jack Holt—Beverly Roberts "Strance Case of Dr. Meade"

ALAMO

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INDIANA

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FREDDIE, 15, GETS HIS FIRST TUXEDO

HOLLYWOOD, March 31 (U. P.).—Freddie Bartholomew, who was thrilled not so many years ago when his aunt let him don trousers instead of knee pants, was resplendent today in his first tuxedo. It was a present on his 15th birthday from his aunt and guardian, Miss Mylicent Bartholomew.

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