

Production Aesthetic

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It's challenging for us to gain a thorough understanding of the 1920's Vaudeville spectacle *Good Times* because the libretto and script and most types of records are lost. Musicals of the 1920s are often seen as purely entertainment and not something worthy of documentation. Fortunately, a critical review of the show appeared in the August 18, 1920 edition of *New York Clipper*. This was digitized in the Illinois digital newspaper collections, which shows us these amazing aspects of Burnside's legendary musicals at the time.

Production

According to the article, this spectacular production housed at the Hippodrome included various types of acts or tricks. The show contained three acts and fifteen scenes; it contained many special effects and a myriad of colors in scenes and costumes, and a wide variety of entertainment and professional versatile performers. R. H. Burnside, who wrote the book and lyrics and staged the show, developed the human and decorative mass on the stage of *Good Times*, which was an extraordinary breakthrough in the world of entertainment. The critic of this article from the period described the following elements of the show:

Musical numbers

According to the article, most numbers in the show are tuneful. The music is credited to Raymond Hubbell, who is also the musical director, who wrote several numbers that became popular hits. For example, "Colorland" is a number that tells the audience about a colorful, carefree and pleasant place. The song has a joyful and catchy melody that hooks the audience in from the start. "Hello, Imagination" is another playful number in which the key changes for the climax from e flat major to d major to attract the audience and make the song catchier and more memorable.

Clowns

A spectacle like *Good Times* can't succeed without clowns. The article indicates that all types of well-known clowns performed in the show. Marceline reappeared at the Hippodrome for *Good Times* in 1920-21, who did pantomime routine and falling gags. Poodles Hanneford performed his trick riding with his family of equestrians, who entertained with their individual and collective stunts. Poodles Hanneford does flips and he jumps around on the horse who is galloping at full speed. He can fly by grabbing onto the tail and standing up with a foot on the horse and another on a person running at the same speed. Joe Jackson Jr, the clown with the bicycle, was also adored by the audiences for his bicycle tricks. He has a third paddle by the seat on his bicycle for riding while standing on the seat on one foot. However, most of the laughter came before he actually started riding. As this article shows, he was clearly loved for his clumsiness and foolishness. In addition to Jackson's comical performance, clown musician Ferry Corwey employed an instrument that looked like a picket fence to make new sounds and tone colors.

Special acts

The show also included celebrities and various artists to boost its level of spectacle suggested by the article. Belle Storey, the prima donna of the show, performed as Truth and put in her best performance. Arthur Geary sang "You Can't Bent the Luck of the Irish" and made the song more popular. Sascha Piatov and Mlle. Natalie were the principal dancers in the show, performing two duets dressed as Morning and Night and Harlequin and Columbine. Dorothy Gates dived from

the top of the building into the tank. The Berlo Sisters performed their aquatic diving tricks. The show also utilized technology to advance its splendor. In the number “The Land I Love”, which was the finale of the first act, there was a huge electrically lighted map of the United States that became the most effective scene of the show.

Costumes

Costumes of the musicals in the 1920s represent extremes ranging from the bizarre and extravagant. The costumes of the show are designed by Burnside himself, along with Gladys Monkhouse. There are records of the costume sketches for performer Belle Story, the specialty act “The Four Roses”, and the scenes “The Valley of Dreams” and “On the Road to Colorland”. The color sequence was used throughout most of the show.

The costuming of the scene “On the Road to Colorland”, as one can suspect from the title, are very colorful. There are three types of costume in the scene that are recorded and two linings. One kind is the dress as shown below, performers wear this same kind of dress in various colors as green, mauve, red, blue and yellow. (*Figure 1.1 and 1.2*) Another type of costume is in a triangle shape in three colors. (*Figure 1.3*)

<https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/f3d7c9b0-11c3-0131-49e1-58d385a7bbd0>

The white one is a standard triangle, whereas the red and blue ones are reversed triangles. This costume is bizarre and creative, which echoes the unconventional and extraordinary characteristics of the show. There is a record of the costume for the pink roses from the specialty act “The Four Roses”. (*Figure 1.4*) The dress is silky and flowy and partly covered by a transparent layer. There the performer wears a headband with flowers and holds a floral string around her arms. Belle Storey, the prima of the show, plays the role ‘Truth’ and has the most extravagant costume. The dress she wears in the show is made of silk and the fringes are made of jewelries. (*Figure 1.5*) Her head and arms are also decorated with jewellery. She is covered in long strands of pearl beads as in one of the fashion trends in the 1920s. The costume for her as Truth in the scene “Valley of Dreams” is luxurious yet delicate. (*Figure 1.6*) The transparent sparkling robe and the tiara make her look divine. It’s worth noting that the costumes of the show are not only able to convey the concept the performers are portraying, such as truth, romance and imagination), but there are also costumes that represent the hour of the day. The yellow dress is the costume for the hour 6am. (*Figure 1.7*) The colors of the dress remind the audience of a bright sunny morning. They also mimic the colors in nature. The circular patterns on the dress and the arrayed straps are references of the sun. The costume for hour twelve is mysterious and hard to describe. (*Figure 1.8*) The material and color are obscure and ambiguous, which well represents the hour that divides day and night.

Musical numbers and casts

The characters in the show are either an object, a country or a representation of a concept. There isn’t much record of the show, but scholars can get a sense of the process of the show through the numbers and characters from the show. The article recorded the casting list of different scenes and the musical numbers of each act. This is detailed below:

Act 1

(Down in the) Valley of Dreams – Joseph Parsons

Sunbeams – Alice and Edna Nash <Popular Hit>

Morning and Night – Sascha Piatov and Mlle. Natalie

Youth and Truth – Belle Storey and Nannette Flack

Wake Up Father Time – William Williams

The Land I Love – Storey and Arthur Geary with Chorus <Popular Hit>

Act 2

The Wedding of the Dancing Doll – Storey with Chorus

You Can't Beat the Luck of the Irish – Arthur Geary and Chorus <Popular Hit>

Dance: Harlequin and Columbine – Sascha Piatov and Mlle. Natalie

Hands Up – "Happy" Lambert

(You're) Just Like a Rose – Flack and Parsons <Popular Hit>

Hello Imagination – Lambert and Chorus <Popular Hit>

I Want to Show You Colorland – Storey, Geary and Chorus

Act 3

Sing a Serenade – Flack

Welcome Truth – Parsons

Truth Reigns Supreme – Storey and Chorus

FIRST SCENE—ACT ONE

Shadowland

(Invented and arranged by Max Teuber)

Music by Max Steiner

CHARACTERS

Episode 1—The Statue of Light..... Elizabeth Coyle

Episode 2—Her Shadow..... Daisy Smythe

Episode 3—Iridescent Shadows by Miriam Miller. Olive Clarke, Winifred Wood. Mollie Wood,
Bobbie Kern, Iase Nelson, Florence Phelps, Minnie Clifton, Nellie Melville.

Episode 4—Shadows of Long Ago.

Episode 5—Bubbles.

SECOND SCENE:

The Valley of Dreams

(Painted by Tarazona Bros.)

CHARACTERS

Imagination..... Happy Lambert

Time..... William Williama

Adventure..... Albert Froom

Ambition..... Al Harrison

Hope..... Robert MacClellan

Courage..... Joseph Parsons

Happiness..... Gladys Comerford

Justice.....Ethel Whitney

Romance..... Alice Poole

Love.....Hattie Towne

Sunbeam..... Daisy Smythe

Moonbeam..... Elizabeth Coyle

Dawn..... Louise Rose

Wisdom..... Joseph Frohoil

Spring.....Florence Cast

Summer..... Helda Strauss

Autumn..... Olive Clarke

Winter..... Miriam Miller
 Truth..... Belle Storey
 Youth..... Nanette Flack
 Night..... Sascha Piatov
 Morning..... Mlle. Natalie
 1st Rainbow..... Alice Nash
 2nd Rainbow..... Edna Nash
 —and Rainbows, Sunbeams, Nymphs, Fairies, Butterflies, Bees., etc.
 Solo— Valley of Dreams..... Joseph Parsons
 Song *— Sunbeams Alice and Edna Nash
 Adagio— Morning and Night Sascha Piatov and Mlle. Natalie Entrance of the Flowers.
 Duet— Youth and Truth Belle Storey and Nanette Flack

THIRD SCENE

Music and Fun
 By Perry Convey

FOURTH SCENE

The Hall of Commerce
 (Painted by Mark Lawson)

CHARACTERS

Japan and China Olive Clarke and Hattie Towne

Holland..... Elizabeth Coyle
 Russia..... Helda Strauss
 Poland..... Florence Pray
 India..... Daisy Smythe
 Greece..... Alice Poole
 Egypt..... Maude Mallia
 Spain..... Vera Bailey
 Belgium..... Violette Beasey
 Italy..... Lillian Catena
 France..... Mile. Natalie
 England..... Gladys Comerford
 Scotland..... Enda Nash
 Wales..... Alice Nash
 Ireland..... Florence Gast
 Hawaii..... Miriam Miller
 Philippines..... Emma Rose
 Panama..... Louise Rose
 Porto Rico..... Bertha Rose
 Samoa..... Elsie Rose
 America..... Madge Loomis
 An American..... Arthur Geary
 Truth..... Belle Storey
 Liberty..... Nanette Flack
 Columbia..... Virginia Futrelle

March of International Produce.
Entrance of the United States.
Entrance of Truth, with Liberty, Peace and Columbia.
Finale— The Land I Love —Belle Storey and Arthur Geary, with Hippodrome Chorus.
Intermission.

FIFTH SCENE—ACT TWO

A Toy Store

(Painted by Mark Lawson)

CHARACTERS

The Musical Dolly..... Belle Storey
The Tin Soldier..... Robert MacClellan
The Dancing Doll..... Gladys Comerford
The Minister..... Charles Strong
Harlequin..... Sascha Piatov
Columbine..... Mile. Natalie
Italian Doll..... William Weston
Mogia Doll..... Al Harrison
Tramp Doll..... Lee Gross
Jack in the Box..... Bobby Rosaire
Pierrot..... Miriam Miller
Pierrette..... Helda Strauss
Spanish Doll..... Olive Clarke
Egyptian Doll..... Elizabeth Coyle
Irish Dolls..... Nash Sisters
Clowns—Chas. Revell, Eddie Russell , Joseph Russell , Albert Alberto , Mike Morris , Bobby
Riano, George Bleasdale , Four Nelsons , Billy Pandor, William Stanley .
Fat Doll..... Joseph Frohoft
Rag Doll..... George Davis
Dog..... Tommy Colton
Monkey..... Harry Waro
Lion..... Arthur Hill

Song— The Wedding of the Dancing Doll, Belle Storey and Hippodrome Chorus. Specialty:
Four Roses. Specialty: Four Nelsons. Solo— You Can't Beat the Luck of the Irish. Arthur Geary
and Hippodrome Chorus.

Dance — Harlequin and Columbine: Sascha Piatov and Mile. Natalie. Specialty by The Pender
Troupe. Song— Hands Up, Happy Lambert. Abdallahs Arabs.

SIXTH SCENE

The Tiny Theatre

Specialty by Kara and Sek.

SEVENTH SCENE

Inside the Hippodrome

(Painted by Robert Law)

Return of Marceline.

EIGHTH SCENE

The Hanneford Family

Introducing Edwin Hanneford— Poodles, the world's leading comedian-equestrian

NINTH SCENE

Outside the Hippodrome

Power's Performing Elephants.

Works Cited:

“Biography of Poodles Hanneford, Circus Clown and Trick Rider.” Famous Clowns, 16 Oct. 2018, famousclowns.org/famous-clowns/poodles-hanneford-biography-circus-clown-and-trick-rider/.

This source provides a biography of Poodles Hanneford.

Hubbell, Raymond and Burnside, R. H, "Colorland" (1920). Vocal Popular Sheet Music Collection. Score 2858. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mmb-vp/2858>

This source provides the sheet music of the number “Colorland”. I use this source to understand the musical style of the song.

Hubbell, Raymond and Burnside, R. H, "Hello Imagination" (1920). Vocal Popular Sheet Music Collection. Score 2882. <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mmb-vp/2882>

This source provides the sheet music of the number “Hello Imagination”. I use this source to understand the musical style of the song.

“Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections.” New York Clipper 18 August 1920 - Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections, idnc.library.illinois.edu/cgi-bin/illinois?a=d&d=NYC19200818.2.189&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN-----.

The news article briefly describes the highlights of the entire show. It also includes the casting list for eight scenes. It helps me to get an idea of what the show is about.

League, The Broadway. “IBDB.com.” IBDB, www.ibdb.com/broadway-production/good-times-8901.

This website contains information of shows from Broadway. I use this source to see who the producers and directors are for different aspects of the show.

Marcelino Orbés, El Mejor Payaso Del Mundo, www.pirineodigital.com/2008/reportajes/payaso-marcelino/payaso-marcelino.htm.

This is a Spanish website on information about Marceline Orbes.

Revolvy, LLC. ““Good Times (Musical)” on Revolvy.com.” Revolvy, [www.revolvy.com/page/Good-Times-\(musical\)?cr=1](http://www.revolvy.com/page/Good-Times-(musical)?cr=1).

This website provides a general information about *Good Times*. It includes the list of musical numbers in each act and describes some of the special acts in the show.

R. H. Burnside Collection - NYPL Digital Collections, digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/r-h-burnside-collection-2#/?tab=navigation&roots=75bb5ab0-79b7-0137-3545-29e6f5ea9735/81f0f400-79b7-0137-d0b0-023161837896/5:ac0cdb00-7a6a-0137-151c-08dd948cf32b.

The digital collection has costume sketches of some acts of the show. I use this source to analyze the costume style of the show.

