

GUYS 'N' DOLLS

ONE PERSON'S VIEW

by
Jack Fisher

This particular show is not one with which I have fallen in love--apparently however, the director has and was able to demonstrate his affection to a full house on Friday, March 6 in the Drama Building.

As a whole the show lacked a certain theatricality--possibly because the stage area used does not allow for a certain dramatic distance between actors and audience. You feel part of the show in the *Bushel and a Peck* number at the silvery bistro--The Hot Box--but somehow this lessens rather than enhances the effect. Maybe if it were possible to call the waiter for a round of drinks before the floor show starts it might restore some of the lost magic.

For a multi-Toni award winning musical, this show seems to have lost some of its immediacy--Damon Runyon wrote with a Dickensian eye for detail but somehow this is no longer important. Stereo-typed mugs are no longer funny...we laugh at differently dressed foibles now.

This feeling of outdatedness contributes to a large degree to the show being overlong in many places. As a museum piece it has something to offer--being one of the first "modern" multi-scene change shows. But it distinctly lacks any communication other than the rather contrived relationships of Miss Adelaide and Nathan Detroit; Obediah "Sky" Masterson and Sergeant Sarah Brown. The former couple wages a constant battle of motives, and the latter maintains a saccharine "love-conquers-all" romance.

Although more personal direction was desperately needed in most segments--choreography was rife. Duncan Noble, who was responsible for both chores of direction and choreography, should be commended for attempting a major work within the numerous time and personnel limitations. He had assembled a hard working, disciplined cast, but not yet a group of toughened musical comedy kids--those performers seasoned by endless summers of stock productions and winters of bus and truck companies--spending their late summers and early falls making the rounds at auditions.

In short, a certain slickness in performing was lacking--*Guys and Dolls* is not a difficult show by any standards and should look more like a romp than a study in diction and double tours en l'aire.

Individual performances were competent but not outstanding enough to mention--though all the major characters were adequately played and will increase in facility with time. However, one young

ingenue whose uninspired characterization completely lacked form and energy, stands out as an exception to the whole.

Musically the show was an off and on thing for the minimum orchestra assembled under the conducting of Marc Gottlieb. They are not yet seasoned as pit players. For the most part many made up in volume what they lacked in wit and expertise.

It is possible that in the twenty years since its inception American thought has changed so radically that we can no longer identify with the post-Depression alliances of mobsters. The oversimplified relations give a Keystone Cops flavor to the crowd scenes. Maybe we have gotten too far removed from a naivete necessary for some theater excursions, or perhaps we don't feel that such qualities are necessary for an evening of theater any longer.

Perhaps in another ten years *Guys and Dolls* will either be a classic or high camp.

VERDY ARRIVES THURSDAY

Violette Verdy, a principal dancer of the New York City Ballet Company and Mme. Eugenie Ouroussoq, director of the School of American Ballet will be at the school Thursday, March 19 for the purpose of awarding the annual Ford Foundation scholarships to students for the regular school term.

They will also see students who are interested in attending summer session at school of American Ballet for the purpose of awarding scholarships.

Miss Verdy starred in the film *Ballerina* and later joined the Ballets de Paris to create the role of the Fiances in *Le Loup*. She has appeared with Festival Ballet, La Scala, Milan, Ballet Rambert, and the American Ballet Theatre. In 1958, she joined the American Ballet Theatre and had a notable success in the title role of *Miss Julie*. In November, she appeared as a soloist with the New York City Ballet, proving herself adept in both classical and dramatic roles. She was especially acclaimed for her delicate princess in Birgit Cullberg's *Media* and for her bright comedy in George Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*. Now as a principal dancer with the N.Y. City Ballet Company, many critics have acclaimed her as "one of the greatest ballerinas in today's dance world."

BELLA LEWITZKY TEACHING HERE

by Gwen Spear

The dance department is honored to have Miss Bella Lewitzky come and teach modern dance to the dancers. For many years Miss Lewitzky danced with the Lester Horton Dance Group. The following article is from *Dance Perspectives*, describing Horton's feeling towards Bella Lewitzky as a dancer.

"In 1934, Bella Lewitzky had enrolled in Lester Horton's classes. She came equipped with a fine body, tremendous enthusiasm, and a commitment to dance that would prove ideal for the association with Horton which was to last for fifteen years. Within less than a year of her first appearance as a member of the ensemble, she was dancing lead roles.

To understand just how valuable Bella Lewitzky was to him, it is necessary to understand some of Horton's limitations and strengths. Though an excellent performer, especially in demi-character roles, Horton was not well equipped for dancing. He was stockily built with a long, barrel-chested torso and short legs. He also suffered from what he called an "athletic heart." His endurance and personal range of movement were limited. Not so his imagination and vision. He soon saw in Miss Lewitzky the perfect instrument for the realization of his vision of dance.

Throughout his career as a choreographer, it was characteristic of him to indicate intentions to his dancers, usually by moving in front of them or calling out a movement. Once they understood what he was after, he built movements on their individual abilities and potential. Two of the dancers of this period were especially capable of responding to this type of demand - Brahm Van der Berg and Bella Lewitzky. When she was not able to satisfy Horton or herself, she is known to have gone off to a corner to work, sometimes for hours, on a single phrase or portion of a phrase. This determination and unwillingness to accept limitations led her to become a most extraordinary virtuoso dancer. (At this time Bella Lewitzky is still dancing with great power and beauty).

After a few years of association with Horton, she was able not only to move in the range that he required, but instinctively to know where a phrase was going once it had been initiated. She became, in fact, an extension of his choreographic intention. Later she was to be given credit as co-choreographer on several pieces.

(Cont. on page 4)