

1-1-1926

The Miracle

Oliver M. Saylor

Rudolf Kommer

Karl Voellmoeller

Norman Bel Geddes

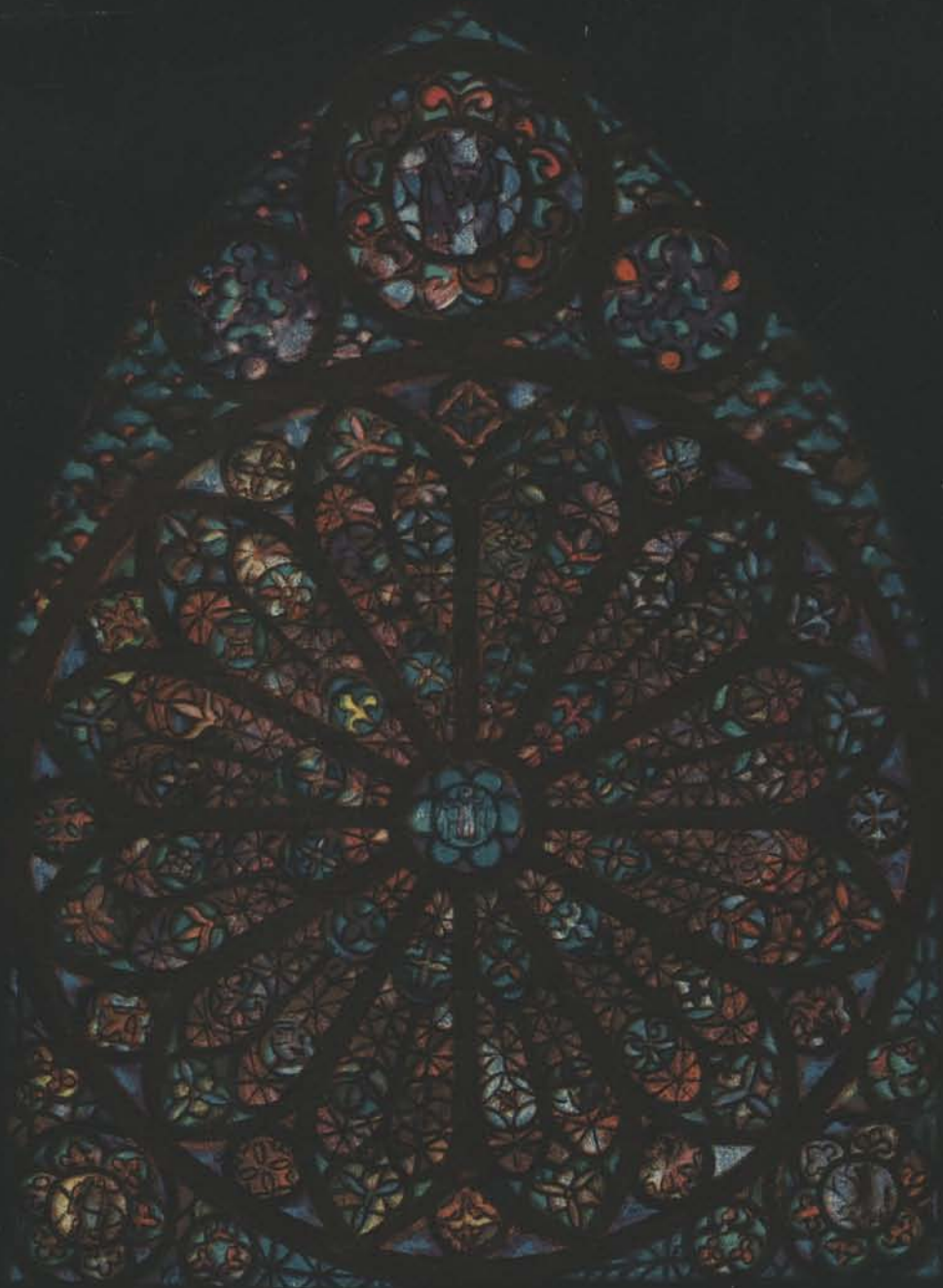
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of Vladimir Nemirovitch-Dantchenko
14 weeks in New York, 8 weeks
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F. Ray Comstock and Morris Gest
Present for the first time in America
The Stupendous, Spectacular
Pantomime

The MIRACLE

Staged by Max Reinhardt

Book by Karl Vollmoeller
Score by Engelbert Humperdinck

Revised and Extended by
Friedrich Schirmer

Production Designed by
Norman Bel Geddes
Built by F. J. Carey & Co.

Entire Production under
the Personal Supervision
of
Morris Gest,

Souvenir Under Editorial Supervision of
Oliver M. Bayler
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THE GENESIS of "THE MIRACLE"

By RUDOLF KOMMER

LIKE most good things of the theatre, "The Miracle" owes its origin to certain definite demands that arose out of a certain constellation of personalities and circumstances. In 1911, Max Reinhardt felt the desire to produce a pantomime. He had never produced a wordless play before and he wished to revive a type of drama that, at the time, had been almost forgotten on the Continental stage. He spoke of this intention to some of the poets and playwrights of the younger generation, who belonged to his circle; and one of them, Karl Vollmoeller, a leading protagonist of the neo-romantic movement, was stirred by the suggestion. They discussed the idea at length and Max Reinhardt mentioned Maurice Maeterlinck's play "Sister Beatrice," which he had just produced at one of his theatres.

He loved the old legend on which the play was based and he asked whether a pantomime could not be evolved out of the theme of the Virgin and the Nun. Apart from Maeterlinck, the legend had been used by scores of poets, dramatists and story-tellers. Among the most famous literary versions of the old legend are: Gottfried Keller's story, "The Virgin and the Nun"; Maeterlinck's play, "Soeur Béatrice"; and John Davidson's poem, "A Ballad of a Nun."

A few weeks after the preliminary conversations between Max Reinhardt and Karl Vollmoeller, the latter met Charles B. Cochran, who inquired whether it were



MAX REINHARDT

Setzer, Vienna



MORRIS GEST

Brugulere, N. Y.

not possible to produce "Oedipus Rex" at Olympia in London. He had just seen Reinhardt's production of the Greek tragedy at a circus in Berlin and he was so enthusiastic that he overlooked the fact that a spoken play could not possibly be heard in a vast space like Olympia. But when Karl Vollmoeller mentioned the mere possibility of a pantomime, Mr. Cochran was not to be put off any longer. Within a few days the whole thing was settled.

The artistic success of a complex venture like "The Miracle" does not depend on any one personality. It is not possible to ascertain whose idea it was, but it certainly was the luckiest choice that could be made when Engelbert Humperdinck was invited to write the music for "The Miracle." The composer of "Hänsel and Gretel" and of the "Königskinder" seemed predestined to set the old legend to music. His "Miracle" charmed England and the Continent and has lost nothing of its enchanting qualities in the decade and a half that has passed since the original production.

The first performance of "The Miracle" took place December 23, 1911, at Olympia in London. Easy-going, conservative London has never been stirred before or after to such an extent by any theatrical production. No less than 30,000 people descended each day into the Hammersmith tube to reach Olympia half an hour later. "The Miracle" was hailed as the big outstanding event of the theatrical season of 1911-12.

Apart from its unparalleled success with the public, it enabled Continental ideas on the arts of the theatre to exercise a dominating influence upon the corresponding tendencies in England.



Brugulere, N. Y.

NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

Soon after the original production in London, Max Reinhardt started "The Miracle" on its career all over Central Europe. In 1912 it was produced in Vienna; in 1913 in Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, Elberfeld, Breslau, Cologne, Prague, Frankfort on Main; in 1914 in Karlsruhe, Hamburg; in 1917 in Stockholm, Goteborg, Malmö, Helsingburg and Bucharest. These seventeen productions do not represent the activities of a touring company; they were seventeen entirely different, extremely individualized presentations. A pantomime can not be reproduced like a play on any stage, independent of its size and shape and without consideration of the size and shape of the auditorium. Space, music and acting must be thoroughly correlated, must become an indivisible unit, a living organism with its own laws and necessities. The play, the music and the acting in any pantomime are, algebraically speaking, functions of the space. The slightest variation of any distance necessitates a corresponding change in the music, in the movements of the actors, in the arrangements of the producer.

Max Reinhardt's seventeen productions of "The Miracle" in Europe took place in almost seventeen different types of buildings: in London it was done in the biggest covered arena in the world; in Berlin, in a circus; in Stockholm, in the Royal Opera House; in Vienna, in the "Rotunde"; in other towns, in theatres, halls, churches, in the open air and so on. Its phenom-

enal success never failed "The Miracle"; it belongs to the most interesting and exciting chapters in the history of the theatre in Europe.

A most instructive aspect of all "Miracle" productions was the difference in the attitude of the theatrical wiseacres and the public toward the theme of the pantomime. "The Miracle" is based on an early Christian legend. Its dramatic presentation requires the performing of Roman Catholic rites and ceremonies. To attempt such a thing in Protestant London, was considered stark madness by the London theatrical experts; to repeat the venture in Roman Catholic Vienna was considered sheer lunacy by the wise men of the theatre in the Austrian capital. But Reinhardt was not to be intimidated. He could not understand why, of the three great forces moving the human soul (religion, hunger and love), the noblest and most important one should be tabooed in the theatre. And why should he be permitted to present Indian, Chinese or Polynesian rites, which mean nothing to our civilization, and not Christian rites which mean so much to every member of the white race, no matter of what creed or religion? If the theatre is anything, it is a reflex of the human soul, it is a mirror of human life, and as such it should not be crippled. With the irrepressible optimism of all great creators, he refused to consider the lower instincts of his public, its jealousies and fears, its prejudices and conventions. He preferred to rely on its nobler sentiments, on its higher desires, and he was fully vindicated. Protestant London, Protestant Germany and Protestant Scandinavia hailed "The Miracle" just as enthusiastically as Roman Catholic Austria



White, N. Y.

F. RAY COMSTOCK

or Bavaria, or as Greek Oriental Roumania. And the Jews, who everywhere belong to the keenest theatre-goers, enjoyed the purity and the beauty of "The Miracle" legend without any misgivings about its Roman Catholic atmosphere, and would certainly have enjoyed it less if its frame had been exotic. What is true of "The Miracle" is equally true of the Protestant morality of "Everyman," which has nowhere been so popular as in Roman Catholic Vienna.

In London and Scandinavia many Protestant Bishops and ministers visited "The Miracle" performances dozens of times. The same happened in Vienna, where Cardinal Archbishop Dr. Nagel attended the dress rehearsal. And in the early spring of 1914 Pope Pius X gave an audience to the Florentine actress, Maria Carmi, who originated the part of the Madonna in London, and to Karl Vollmoeller, the author of "The Miracle." Pope Pius X was greatly interested in the history of "The Miracle." He appreciated the artistic spirit of the production, and he ended the audience by blessing Maria Carmi.

* * *

A New York production of "The Miracle" was already scheduled for December 9, 1914. The preparations were in full swing when the war broke out. The production had to be abandoned.

In February, 1923, Morris Gest invited Max Reinhardt to come to New York for the discussion of eventual productions of plays from the Reinhardt repertory. In April Reinhardt arrived in New York and proposed any number of plays but "The Miracle," which he considered technically and financially too complicated and too difficult to be done in America. Morris Gest's attitude was very simple. It has become an obsession with him to bring the best artists of the world to New York and to let them show their best. "The Miracle" is Max Reinhardt at his best and Morris Gest would not hear of anything else. Threatening figures did not frighten him and technical objections he waved away with a characteristic gesture of impatience. What had been possible in Europe would be easily possible in America. In a few days he and Reinhardt came to the conclusion that the Century Theatre was the best suited theatre for the presentation of "The Miracle," and the preparations were started.

From the beginning of May, 1923 until the 15th of January, 1924, the day of the opening performance in New York, all concerned in the production were incessantly at work. Morris Gest visited Max Reinhardt at Salzburg in July for final conferences. Norman-Bel Geddes, who was entrusted with all scenic and costume designs, spent four weeks at Schloss Leopoldskron, working day and night with Max Reinhardt; with the late Friedrich Schirmer, the composer of the additional music; Einar Nilson, the conductor who reorchestrated the score for the American production; Ernest de Weerth, Reinhardt's artistic assistant; and with dozens of others.

Early in November Max Reinhardt returned to New York, accompanied by his artistic staff. Rehearsals

set in at once. They had to take place in a smoking room of a theatre, in a church, in an armory, in several hotel ball rooms and in the studio of the Metro Film Corporation, until the remodelled Century Theatre was ready to receive Max Reinhardt's surging crowds. On the day of the dress rehearsal, it seemed as if all the performers, all the directors and all the stage hands had spent the last ounce of their vitality. The



WIDOW IN MOURNING
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

fate of the stupendous production still hung in the balance, but Max Reinhardt had already found compensation for his work in meeting collaborators like Morris Gest and Norman-Bel Geddes.

How Geddes had solved the perplexing problem of transforming the rich roundness of the Century theatre into the vertical aspect of the early Gothic style, has been fully appreciated since. But the artistic relationship

between the "Magician" of the Continental stage and this young American may be of even greater human interest. When Norman-Bel Geddes left Salzburg, Reinhardt wrote to him these farewell lines:

"Working with you was pure joy. Among the many artists with whom I have collaborated in more than twenty-five years, I have never met any one of such rapid conception, of such flawless understanding. I am



A CHOIR BOY
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

deeply convinced that the execution of your plans will outdistance everything that has ever been done scenically in the theatre. It seems to me like a mysteriously destined miracle that a man from whom I was separated until now by an ocean, a man whom I met so late in life, with whom I was hardly able to discourse, that just this man has made me feel the most intense mutual understanding and harmonious agreement, although he always remained free, unfettered, original and creative.

Now the grace of Gest be upon us, so that not too much water be poured into the precious lotion which we two have brewed. I am an incorrigible optimist and so I not only hope but I do believe that Morris Gest, whose traits of genius, whose deep desire for the higher things, for the irrational, whose sharp instinctive flare for the unusual no one can deny, and whose fertile exaggerations have always proved to be creative in his own sphere—I do believe that this Morris Gest will receive with loving readiness what may seem at first exaggeration and excess. . . ."

When Reinhardt arrived in New York to start rehearsals, he discovered that Gest, the indomitable, had not poured any water at all into the wine of "The Miracle," and that Geddes had more than fulfilled all expectations. His feelings are best shown in the preface which he wrote for the "Dante" book of his young collaborator:

"Norman-Bel Geddes has those qualities which I most cherish in Americans: the inborn power, the natural pride, the child-like delight, essential to begin everything at the beginning, to discover the world anew, and with clear comprehension to establish himself practically in it. He builds castles in the air but he lays their foundations solidly in the ground. He drafts the plan, he places the bricks, and himself mixes the mortar. He is at once a visionary and an organizer. His love for the theatre is fortunate, it is sensuous and fruitful. In the middle ages he would have built cathedrals and made of them the cradle of our theatre.

"The multi-formed, many-headed, enigmatical entity of the theatre is at bottom incalculable. Begotten by the immortal playfulness of the children of men, it may be conquered only in the spirit of play. It eludes the academic wisdom of yesterday, all the fashionable rules of today, winged with the primitive passion to reveal itself to the utmost and to transform its inmost being, in magical haste to live a thousand lives, to suffer a thousand deaths, and gather timeless destinies into hours. It can be degraded into a house of joy, exalted into a house of God. It is a world that man has created with divine energy in his own image. It revolves about our earth, receiving from it light and life, but turning at the same time on its own axis and describing its own path in the will of its maker like a constellation. The natural dweller in the world of the theatre is and always will be the player, no matter if he also is poet, musician, director, painter or architect.

"Geddes is a native of this world. He knows that three things are necessary to the living theatre; actors, collaborators, onlookers. With voluntary humility he bows before this trinity. Without losing himself he has the most perfect understanding, the most ardent devotion, the most sensitive adaptability for the work of others. He transforms and reveals himself simultaneously. He loves his neighbor in art as himself.

"Blessed by sun and rain he will mature as the strongest man in the theatre of this time."

* * *

It would be a vain attempt to try to describe the wild enthusiasm that followed the first night of "The

"Miracle" in New York. It was one of the rare red letter days in the history of the theatre. Critics, essayists and editorial writers actually ransacked the language for descriptive adjectives. Elsewhere in this book a very short selection of comments will be found, a selection that hardly represents one thousandth of "The Miracle" literature. Within one week this Morris Gest production ceased to be a New York event; it became a continent-wide sensation, a world-wide topic.

When the fleeting miracles of the theatre have taken their departure, melancholic memories and soulless statistics set in. It may be mentioned, therefore, that after 298 performances, "The Miracle" came to the end of its New York run on the 8th of November, 1924. At the last performances the Police Reserves had to be summoned to take care of the thousands of people who had to be turned away without seats. These three hundred performances of "The Miracle" exceeded all those given in seventeen European capitals and were four times greater than its longest single run in London. The original cost of production was \$600,000. The box office receipts were nearly \$2,000,000; upon which a government tax of approximately \$200,000 was paid.

On the day after the last performance of "The Miracle," editorial epitaphs appeared in all the papers. A few words from the New York Times may fittingly represent the attitude of the press on this occasion:

"'The Miracle' introduced the unique and spectacular genius of Max Reinhardt to the American public, and it enabled one of the foremost of American scenic artists, Norman-Bel Geddes, to give free rein to his talent. . . . Outside of New York it will also



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ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK



Becker and Maass, Berlin

KARL VOLLMOELLER

succeed, for its reputation as a noble achievement of scenic imagination has preceded it in mighty waves. . . . It will remain as a landmark in the history of the American theatre. . . . In the realm of art, 'The Miracle' has supplied for one thing an example of immense cooperation, of Max Reinhardt, Norman-Bel Geddes, the assisting directors, the actors and the musicians involved. It illustrated the nature and problems of pantomime and of the manipulation of crowds and ensembles and the multiform uses of light. And for the cause of acting it did one thing for which we must forever be grateful, it provided a steady succession of substitutes in the diverse roles, by which we saw the same part played by various artists, and so helped our theatre toward something it sorely lacks, the habit of disconnecting acting from the actors' selves and seeing better the character of it as an art.

"As theatrical enterprise, 'The Miracle' represents a show of energy, courage, enthusiasm and promoting ability and a feat of elaborate engineering that has never been equaled in the course of our more serious stage history. That such a colossal venture could be chanced and made to prosper is a significant comment on the resources and possibilities of our theatre public."

* * *

The resources and possibilities of that theatre public have been even more startlingly and emphatically proved by the succeeding engagements of "The Miracle" in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Boston, St. Louis and Chicago.

To Cleveland went the honor of the second production on the American continent. Public-spirited citizens underwrote the project in the sum of \$315,000.



MAYOR JAMES A. CURLEY PRESENTS THE GOLDEN KEY
OF THE CITY OF BOSTON TO MORRIS GEST

During three weeks beginning Monday prior to Christmas, 1924, the Lake City's Public Auditorium accommodated upward of 150,000 spectators, gathered from a radius of hundreds of miles by a campaign in which the Municipality whole-heartedly cooperated. Total receipts of \$401,000 gave the United States Government over \$36,000 in war tax and the local committee a net profit of over \$60,000 to devote to civic art funds.

The Cleveland success proved the value of a well-organized campaign for developing the atmosphere of festival in which "The Miracle" thrives, an atmosphere

which drew thousands of people from all over the world in August, 1925, to see it in Reinhardt's home town in the Austrian Alps, Salzburg. Lady Diana Manners and Rosamond Pinchot played their original roles of Madonna and Nun. Morris Gest attended the festival and among other world-celebrated figures who came to Salzburg for the occasion were Franz Molnar, Arnold Bennett, Lady Cunard, Richard Strauss and many more. Dr. Peter Klotz, Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Peter in Salzburg, the oldest Christian Monastery in Central Europe, and Senior Abbot of Austria,



MORRIS GEST
AT "THE MIRACLE" IN SALZBURG, AUGUST, 1925

FRANZ MOLNAR, MORRIS GEST AND MAX REINHARDT AT
REINHARDT'S HOME, SCHLOSS LEOPOLDSKRON

DR. PETER KLOTZ, ABBOT OF THE BENEDICTINE MONASTERY OF
ST. PETER IN SALZBURG, GREET'S MORRIS GEST

attended the premiere and congratulated Morris Gest for giving world-wide fame to "The Miracle."

After many months of negotiations and preparations, therefore, Morris Gest brought the original company together once more in September, 1925, for a season underwritten by the various municipalities for over \$1,000,000. Cincinnati opened that season with three stupendous weeks in Music Hall, beginning September 28.

The Boston engagement, which followed after a ten day interval to transport the vast production, was the most amazing, the most unusual and the most romantic experience in the long and exciting career of "The Miracle." Since the metropolis of New England was the first American home of the penniless little Russian immigrant who sold newspapers and blacked boots on its streets and later turned out to be the most dynamic and most picturesque figure in the American theatre, this man of theatrical destiny, this Morris Gest, determined to forego guarantee funds and to present "The Miracle" in Boston on his own responsibility. Fired by this spirit, every factor in the city's life—municipal, state, commercial, literary, artistic and social—vied with one another to aid not only in making the production an unprecedented success during its five and a half weeks at the Boston Opera House with a matinee every day in the final week, but in transforming the occasion into the mightiest and most ardent homecoming with which anyone in the realm of art has ever been honored. Through Mayor James A. Curley, the golden key of the city was conferred on Morris Gest.

A superbly organized civic campaign, backed by a fund of \$325,000 and dating from the previous May, resulted in still another commanding landmark in the history of "The Miracle," during its four weeks engagement at the New Coliseum in St. Louis, beginning Christmas Eve, 1925. "The Miracle" was acclaimed by an equally enthusiastic public and press as the most important event in the artistic history of St. Louis and the gigantic audiences that gathered night after night in the transformed Coliseum proved that the professed interest was deep and real and not mere lip-service to the ideal of art.

On the second of February, 1926, "The Miracle" opened at the Auditorium in Chicago. Its reception was, if possible, even more enthusiastic than in any other city in the States. The great spectacle attracted immense crowds there, and broke all previous records. The original engagement of six weeks was extended to ten and the last performance of the third season was given on April 10, in the Auditorium.

In March, 1926, Morris Gest left on one of the most extraordinary journeys in the history of the theatre. He had not been to the Pacific Coast in ten years or since he superintended the entry of Geraldine Farrar

into motion pictures after a triumphal trans-continental tour in 1916. On invitation from the presidents of the Chambers of Commerce and other prominent citizens, he visited Kansas City, San Francisco and Los Angeles. In a fortnight, Mr. Gest covered over ten thousand miles and signed contracts and was assured of guarantee funds aggregating over one million dollars for three vast reproductions of "The Miracle" this season in the three cities which he visited. On his return, he closed the contract for the engagement, opening the season in Philadelphia.

The fourth season of "The Miracle" in America, therefore, begins with the great spectacle as adjunct to the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia's Metropolitan Opera House. Thereafter, in Kansas City's celebrated Convention Hall, it will be presented under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce. On its fifteenth anniversary, Christmas Eve, 1926, it will have its premiere in the Civic Auditorium in San Francisco. And the season will be brought to a close in the new Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

These continuing achievements of "The Miracle" have elicited from the modest and reticent man in its shadow, Otto H. Kahn, whose support made the American production possible, the following letter of tribute to the genius of Morris Gest:

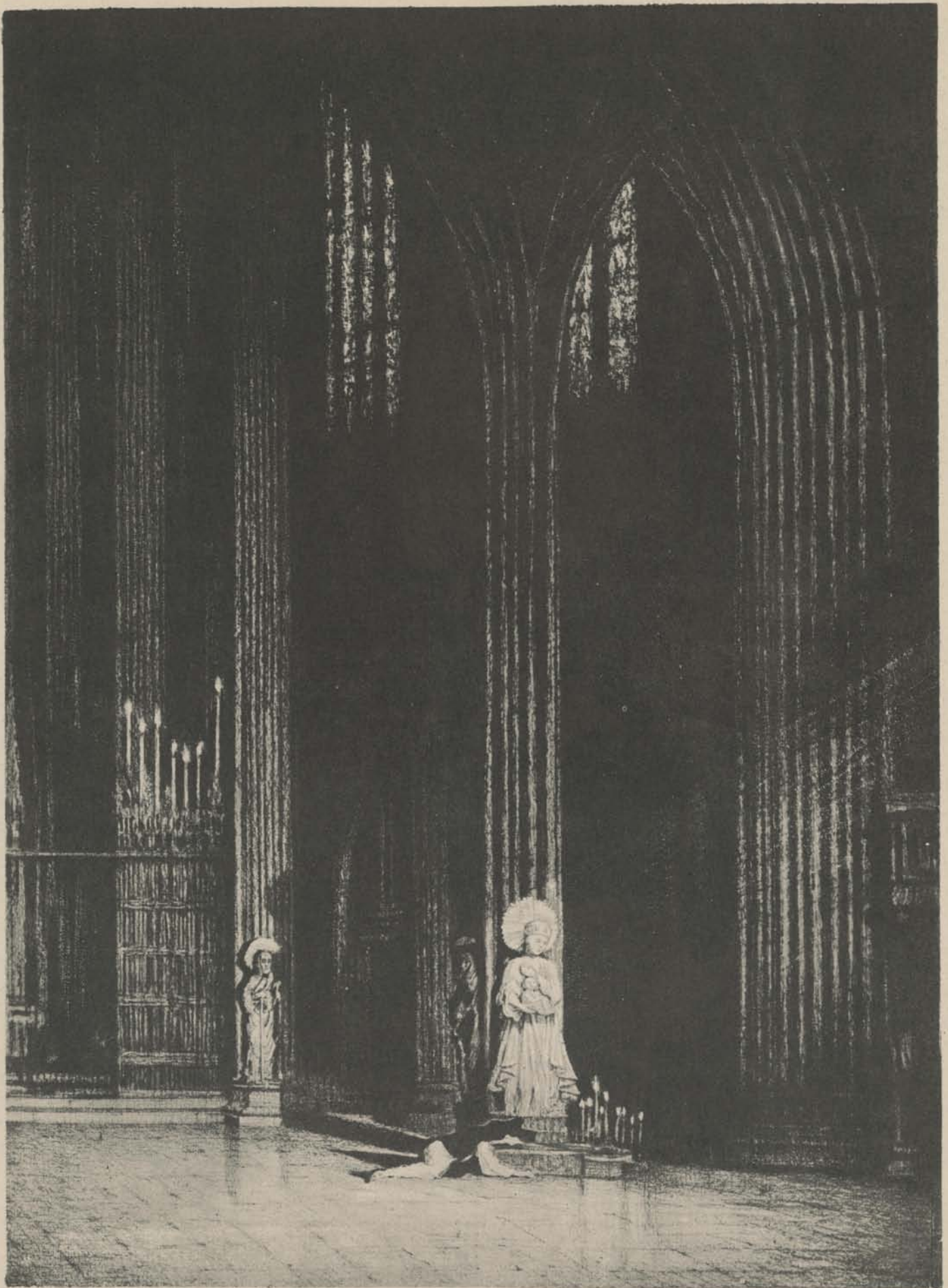
"'The Miracle' was about as hard a test of a man's fibre and real quality as one can be put to. You have met it in a way to win respect and admiration from me and many thousands of others. You have proved yourself not only a truly great 'showman' in the best sense of the term, a splendid executive, undaunted and resourceful in the face of appalling difficulties, a genuine devotee of art, indefatigable in your self-imposed and selfless task to spread the appeal of beauty throughout the country among the masses of the people, but you have demonstrated at the same time qualities of loyalty, of conscience, and of honor, which are worthy of high commendation.

"The work to which you have given yourself with such fine zeal and remarkable ability has brought you little in the way of monetary reward, but it did bring you what is of higher value: an honored name and a unique position in the confidence, esteem and following of the people. You have kept faith with them, you have given them precious things, and they are giving you in return the best they have to bestow: their trust, their gratitude, and their cordial recognition."

Thus, once again, Morris Gest has made the impossible possible. More than ever he is being considered by his theatrical confreres as a madman who is cursed with an idiosyncrasy against the easy thing, the conventional thing, the safe thing. For "The Miracle" goes on. . . .



A BRIDE'S MAID
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES



Drawing by Carl Link from the setting by Norman-Bel Geddes

A CORNER OF THE CATHEDRAL IN WHICH THE ACTION OF
"THE MIRACLE" TAKES PLACE

"THE MIRACLE"

The Legend as Told by the Author

GREAT is the kindness and charity of our heavenly Queen, our sweet Lady; unfaltering, Her loving forgiveness; inexhaustible, Her yielding grace; innumerable, as Her images and churches in all lands and dominions, are the divine miracles She performs. Now listen, ye who are willing to listen, how She assists all those who fervently call on Her. He who abideth in Her has a sure refuge.

But thou, Mary, crown of all virgins, and Queen of the realms of Heaven, grant to me a sweet voice, and words, to describe truly an erring sister's life, and to proclaim the greatness of Thy wonders!

A nunnery of the Grey Order was so rich and great that nowhere along the Rhine could its like be found. The ancient, sombre convent-church also held more sacred treasures and relics than the tongue could describe or the pen commit to paper. The most ineffable and sacred of all these treasures, however, was the ancient, life-sized, wonder-working image of the Virgin upon the altar in the middle of the minster, which once upon a time had been carried away from the town of Constantinople by pilgrims from the Rhine, and for whose sake believers flocked from far and near, in order to receive answers to their petitions, and healing for their infirmities. Never, however, did the Divine power of this image prove itself more wonderful than at the time of the great festivals in the Mary-month of May.

Megildis was the name of a youthful and lovely nun in this convent, who from her very infancy had been filled with rare love and veneration for the Divine Virgin, and who, because of her piety, had been entrusted with the duties of a sacristan to the convent-church. In particular, the inestimable miraculous image of the Mother of God was confided to her care.

One day the weakness of the flesh and the power of evil became manifest even in her. For one evening of a high festival day in May, when she had remained behind alone in the church to extinguish the candles, to renew the holy water, to pour fresh oil into the lamps, to toll the Vesper bells, to attend to the holy altars, and to bolt the great portal, it befell that an unknown strange Piper outside blew so luring a melody that, from that hour forth, a hitherto-unknown longing and new desires awoke in the young nun, and she could hardly control herself sufficiently to close the church door.

This Piper, as if speedily to give a decided form to these desires, brought along a handsome young Knight, who thought the youthful sister sacristan no less lovely and desirable than she considered him, and the end was that Megildis resolved in her heart to flee with the Knight on that self-same evening. So, while all the sisters slept, she came to the miraculous image of the Mother of God, and spake: "Long and constantly, sweet Queen, have I served Thee. Now I render to

Thee Thy keys and this veil. For I can no longer resist my desires." Herewith she placed the keys, veil, and vestments at the feet of the image and set forth to unbar the portal, behind which the Knight was awaiting her. There, oh wonder! the door, at other times easy to open, withstood all her endeavors, and she speedily became aware that this was the working of the heavenly Queen.

She therefore again advanced to the miraculous image and implored the Mother of God, for the sake of Her Heavenly kindness and charity, and by Her body's blessed fruit, which She held in her arms, to grant her the way to freedom. The miraculous image remained immovable and the portal fast. Then, overwhelmed by sinful despair, and in the moment when the Knight outside rapped impatiently at the door, she threatened, in utter abandonment, to wrest the Infant Savior from the Virgin's arms if her desire were not fulfilled. Scarcely had she touched the Divine Infant when It vanished in a flood of light before her eyes, the door opened by itself with a hollow crash, and the lovely nun, Megildis, dazzled and stunned, fled thus with the unknown Knight out into the darkness of the world and sin.

But thereupon the unspeakable kindness and indulgence of our sweet Lady was again shown. Instead of being angry with the sinner, She had in mind only to save the honor of the erring daughter and of the entire convent, so dear to Her. She herself, the divine Queen, with a deep sigh, descended from Her altar, arrayed Herself in the vestments and veil of the unfaithful sacristan and now humbly, and as a matter of course, performed for many years the duties of the fugitive, so that even among the sisters of the convent no one had an idea of the true state of things, and the praise of the pious and faithful sacristan Sister Megildis was on all lips.

But great sadness prevailed among the pious sisters and among the inhabitants of the town on account of the disappearance of the precious miraculous image that had brought so much glory and revenue to the convent.

The fugitive nun lived full seven years outside in the great unknown world, not one of whose bitternesses was spared her to drink to the very dregs. Yea, what she herself related to her confessors in later years about her life without, appeared of so marvelous and incredible a nature that many were of opinion that there was rather question of a sinful, pagan dream with which the Evil One tempted her immortal soul, than of true experiences of her mortal body. And one could be tempted to believe this version were it not for the evidence to the contrary of pious and truthful men. Among them was St. Thomas of Canterbury, who was deacon to the Bishop of Cleves, and himself received the confession of Sister Megildis.

He probably realized that the growing mind of an early-developed, excitable child, such as that of the nun Megildis, would have easily fallen prey to the demon of fantasy and the illusion of a dream. Probably he felt clearly, in her portrayal of the adventures of the world, how the figures and apparitions of her cloistered youth crowded in: The grotesque stone structure of the pillars and portals, the hollow deadly appearance of the priest, the infinity of the high arches and the small lights almost lost in the vastness, the stained glass windows of the saints, the fervor of the martyrs and the coarseness of the executioner and of the judges.

Yes, he believed that he recognized in Megildis' description even certain definite figures: In her first lover, the Knight, the wild boy who was bound to a tree and killed, the beautiful panel of St. Sebastian, in the well known side chapel; in the golden splendor of her imperial dignity, the lights and shrines of the treasure room of the cloister; in the cruelty of her judges and the rage of the mob, the big picture of the Passion, the reviling and the scourging; and in her condition now of poverty and misery, the picture of the Manger.

Another would perhaps have doubted whether he

ought to recognize in these worldly experiences of the nun Megildis a horrible lifelike dream or a fantastic dreamlike reality. But St. Thomas, in his wisdom, recognized that nothing so substantiates the truth of these experiences as the miraculous disappearance for seven years of the gracious image and the devout humility of our Virgin, his trusted friend.

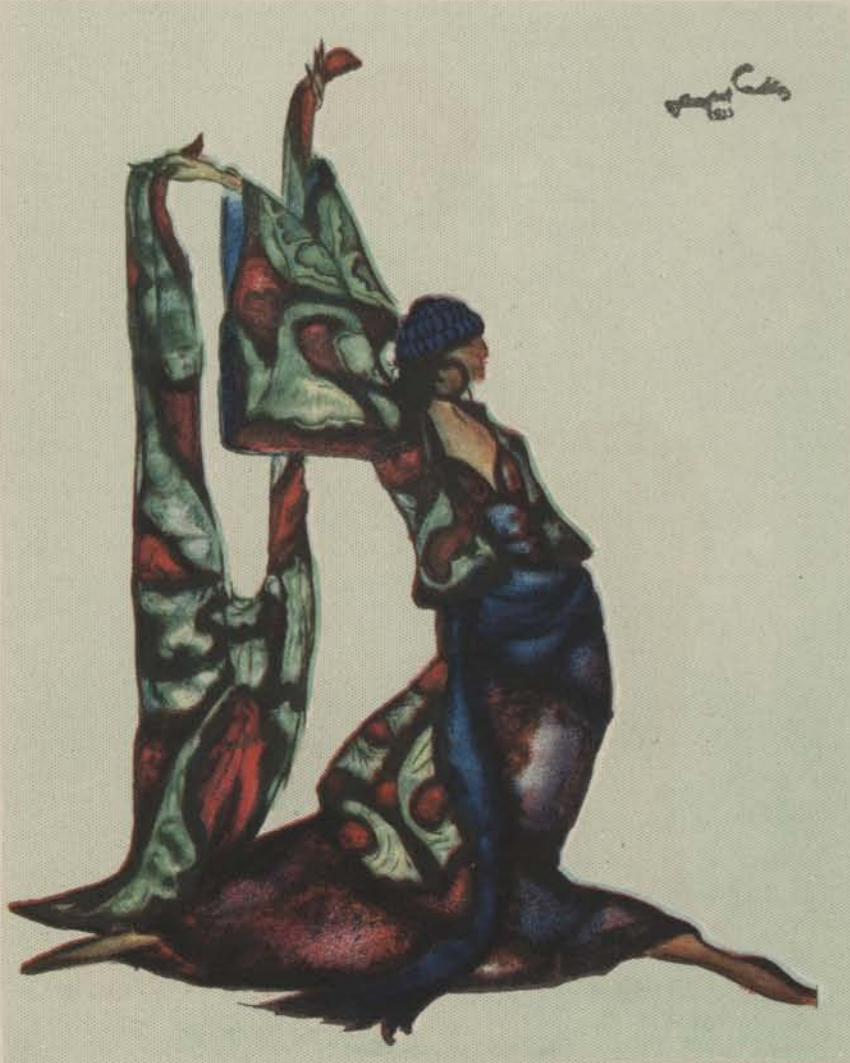
Each one of these seven worldly years (so was Megildis wont to relate) seemed to her like one of the seven stations of the Cross upon a rugged way, which first led up to the steep mount of Calvary, and again down a still steeper declivity. But her most acute agony lay in this: that upon the entire length of this terrible road of suffering all that she experienced immediately fell away from her, and finally nothing remained with her, neither happiness nor misery, neither good nor evil, except the luring pipe and the repulsive deformity of the strange Piper, who appeared to her now as a faithful, obedient dog, now as a ferocious, pursuing demon, indeed, as the demon of life itself.

And, in fact, her first lover, the Knight, with whom she fled, was killed after a short time, and she herself became the prey of a wild Count who, in his drunkenness, gambled her away to the young son of the Em-

peror with his dogs, horses, and castle, and, in despair at his ruin, finally took his own life. But shortly thereafter she was torn from the Emperor's son, this time by his own father, the old Emperor who, in the struggle for her possession, became the murderer of his son, and going insane lifted her to the position of Empress against the will of his people and his court.

To have been raised to the highest and yet stifling pinnacle of her destiny on which life itself seems to die and become numb, was for her the summit of Calvary which she said she reached without having experienced during the whole of her wanderings, anything but perplexity, pain and degradation. For henceforth she slipped ever downward from the steepest heights to the profoundest depths, and became for the old King, whom she had already caused to be the murderer of his son, a further instrument of Fate. For the people, furious at the doom brought upon them by her, dethroned the old Emperor and accused her of witchcraft. She was given up to be judged by the holy inquisition and just escaped death by execution, only to be still further shamed and degraded.

And in this night the terrifying Piper came to her for the last time. Rigid and with hollow eyes—so she said later—



A GYPSY WOMAN
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

he blew upon his shrill flute. Passing by her, behind him, in a long procession she saw all those whom love of her had brought to doom—the Knight, the Count, the Prince, and the old Emperor, and farther on all the unnamed and nameless ones who had come into her life.

Finally the Piper tried to make her follow with him in the procession of the dead. But suddenly-nearing song and the heavy pealing of Christmas bells drove him away. She herself, as if led and supported by a divine hand and as if floating on clouds, felt herself carried through the self opening door of the Christmas bedecked church and there sank down with her child in front of the statue of the Madonna.

* * *

Now we return to the blessed Madonna who, after seven years of earthly duties, this Christmas remained alone in the dark, after midnight mass, in Her beloved church. She listened to distant voices, smiled with happy forebodings and for the last time meekly carried out Her worldly services. She went gently from lamp to lamp with Her oil jug, extinguished burnt candles, greeted once again each precious niche, each holy light, while the sadness of this great, dark, Christmas bedecked cathedral overwhelmed Her. She walked transfigured in front of the altar and slowly lay aside Her human garments.

Once more carried away by a last realization of all the sorrow of the world, like an endless cross overshadowing the universe, She put on Her mantle, suffering patiently as if it were the bloody cloak of the great Passion; She placed the heavy crown on Her head, turning pale as if it were Her Son's crown of thorns; She turned her last human thought to the returning wanderer; opened with a last nod the obedient door and became rigid, the holy Image.

* * *

So it happened that the erring Sister Megildis, when she awakened as if from a deep swoon, in the dark church on that Christmas saw everything about her unchanged as she had left it. Slowly and unconsciously she donned her old garment which lay on the same spot and took her veil and keys. Now she noticed the empty outstretched hands of the Madonna. She remembered the wanton offense toward the Child Jesus. Driven by horrible forebodings, she threw herself upon her newborn child, which she had left lying on the floor, pressed it to her breast, realized that it was dead and broke down again, overcome before the image of the holy Mother.

And now (Oh, supreme wonder of love!) the miraculous image came to life once more, and in a flash of heavenly light the sublime, gracious image stood once more as before, gently smiling with the statue of the Child Jesus in Her arms.

A Miracle!

* * *

So it happened that the pious nuns found the Sister Sacristan Megildis, on the morning of Christ's Nativity, asleep in utmost exhaustion before the altar, without feeling any marked surprise. But great was their astonishment and joy at the unexpected return of the lost image, and they were long in believing the accounts of the awakening sacristan.

Greater than their astonishment and bewilderment was their happiness at the deliverance of this erring soul. They rejoiced proudly at this boundless grace of the holy Madonna that had fallen to the lot of their cloister.

The nun Megildis, however, lived thereafter in strict chastisement and self-denial and in fervent devotion toward the sublime Virgin, her mistress and her deliverer, who granted to her, in her old age, a holy and pious end. May She grant the same to us. Praised be Her glory and mercy. Amen.



A GENTLEMAN GUEST
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

F. RAY COMSTOCK and MORRIS GEST

Present for the First Time in America

“THE MIRACLE”

in Eight Scenes

Staged by MAX REINHARDT

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Characters of Scenes I and VIII

The Nun
The Abbess
The Old Sacristan
The Zealous Priest
The Lame One
The Piper
The Knight
The Madonna

Nuns and Novices, Peasants, Townsfolk and Children. Bishops, Priests, Monks and Pilgrims. Cripples, Blind, Lame and Lepers. Patricians of the Town, Knights and Troops of Soldiers.

Characters of Scene II

The Nun
The Knight
The Piper
The Robber Count
The Shadow of Death

Huntsmen and other Followers of the Count.

Characters of Scene III

The Nun
The Piper
The Count
The Prince
The Shadow

Friends and Guests of the Count, Followers of the Prince, Dancers, Musicians and Servants.

Characters of Scene IV

The Nun
The Emperor's Son
The Emperor
The Companions of the Prince
The Piper
The Shadow

Characters of Scene V

The Nun
The Emperor
The Piper

The Grandees of the Emperor's Court
The Spirit of the Revolution
The Revolutionary Masses
The Shadow

Characters of Scene VI

The Nun
The Emperor
The Piper
The Twelve Inquisitors
The Executioner
The Crowd

Characters of Scene VII

The Nun
The Soldiers
The Piper
The Dead Lovers
The Shadow of Death

SYNOPSIS BY THE AUTHOR

The vast Cathedral of an old Nunnery on the Rhine holds a wonder-working image of the Virgin, to which believers flock from far and near.

Scene I—THE CATHEDRAL

The old *Sister Sacristan* has no longer the strength to perform her duties.

The *Abbess*, therefore, hands over the keys to the young *Sister Megildis*.

The lovely young *Sister* humbly receives the emblems of her new dignity.

* * *

Bells begin to peal. A distant music grows nearer. At a sign from the *Abbess* the young *Sister Sacristan* opens all the doors with her keys.

A great procession is seen pouring into the Cathedral: *Peasants* with banners and crosses, *Tradesmen* of the town with various emblems of their trade, a great crowd of *Children* with a may-pole, the *Archbishop* surrounded with his staff, *Priests*, *Acolytes*, *Choir-boys*, *Pilgrims* with broad-brimmed hats, *Knights*, *Heralds*, and *Men-at-Arms*.

In the middle of the procession walk the poor and the sick: *Cripples*, on crude crutches; *Blind People*, who are led by others; *Mothers*, carrying *Sick Children* in their arms; *Lepers* with clappers.

They all crowd up to the statue of the Madonna and pray fervently and unceasingly.

A *Lame One* is carried in on a stretcher.

The voice of the zealous *Priest* leads the prayers.

A white vapor begins to rise from the incense vessels.

The whole crowd falls on its knees. The tension grows. Breathless silence.

The *Lame One* lying on the stretcher begins to move. With a desperate effort he gets to his feet, and staggers ecstatically with convulsive twitchings to the miraculous image of the Virgin.

The pious crowd breaks into a cry of triumph. The mighty sound of the organ breaks forth. A Miracle has come to pass.

* * *

The *Procession* leaves the cathedral inspired and jubilant. The *Nuns* also pass out slowly.

The young *Sacristan* goes about her duties. She extinguishes the candles and locks the doors.

In the last doorway she meets a *Piper* who assembles around him a *Group of Children*.

Sister Megildis stands still as if under a spell and listens to his tunes.

The *Children* fall into the rhythm. They approach the young *Sister*, singing and dancing, and force her into their ranks.

Megildis herself can no longer resist the luring melodies. Her entire body unconsciously begins to sway to the music, her feet begin to move, and the young *Sacristan* forgets her duties in a light graceful dance of spring.

* * *

In the meantime, the *Piper* has brought a handsome

young *Knight*, who enters quietly and stands fascinated by the graceful dancing of the *Nun*.

Some time elapses before *Megildis* becomes aware of the new spectator. Then, on seeing him, she suddenly becomes frightened and rooted to the spot.

* * *

The *Abbess* returning, at the head of a group of the *Nuns*, gazes in astonishment at this strange scene. She rebukes the young *Sacristan*.

The *Children* and the *Piper* have slyly escaped.

At a nod from the angry *Abbess* the keys are taken away from *Megildis* and the heavy bolts locked behind the *Knight* after he has slowly retired.

The *Young Nun*, who seems scarcely to know what is happening to her, is sentenced to spend the night in prayer before the image of the Holy Virgin.

She penitently obeys the orders of the *Abbess* and is left alone in the dark Cathedral.

* * *

Night has approached. The alluring song of the nightingale is heard. The *Young Nun* is lying in fervent prayer, motionless, before the Virgin's image.

There is a light knocking at the gate.

Is it her own heart-beat?

She strives in vain to persist in prayer.

The knocking is repeated and continues louder and louder. She springs up, takes several steps toward the door, stands still in fright. The knocking grows wilder. She wrings her hands and flutters finally like a frightened bird to and fro, beating her head against the cold walls.

Then she throws herself down before the miraculous image and implores the charitable Mother of God to grant her the way to freedom. But the image remains immovable and the portals fast.

Overwhelmed by sinful despair she rushes toward the Holy Virgin and points fiercely at the Child in Her arms. She is yearning for everything out there in the unknown world.

With vehement gestures she again demands release. Finally, completely out of her mind, she wrests the Infant Saviour out of the Madonna's arms.

One low peal of thunder is heard. Then all grows dark and the Child vanishes.

* * *

The *Young Nun* at first has covered her face with her hands. Now she becomes aware that the Madonna has heard her passionate pleadings: The walls of the Cathedral have opened and, visible through the high candles on the altar table, appears the *Knight* in silver armor. At his side is the strange *Piper*.

The *Knight* slowly approaches her. With impressive gesture he speaks to her of her own beauty and of the wonders of the distant world, which lies hidden behind the mountains and the streams.

He offers her his hand to lead her forth.

Shuddering, she points to the holy vesture, which she still wears. Slowly she loosens her veil, her mantle, and her bunch of keys and places everything tenderly at the foot of the miraculous image.

The *Knight* folds his blue mantle round her shoulders and both together now kneel devoutly before the Virgin, like two children sallying forth, who implore a blessing from their mother.

The *Knight* is the first to rise. He enfolds her quickly in his arms and bears her away.

The *Piper* returns and, in awe of the image, snatches the cloak which has fallen and follows them.

* * *

A sound like a deep gentle sigh echoes throughout the dark, deserted Cathedral.

The image of the *Virgin* begins to glow with an unearthly light. It seems as if She were opening Her lips and smiling.

The *Madonna*, come to life, slowly descends.

She removes Her mantle and Her crown and in sweet humility puts on the garment, the veil and the keys of the fugitive *Sister Megildis*, humbly carrying out the duties of the unfaithful *Sacristan*. She goes to the tower and rings the morning bell. Then She kneels down in prayer before the pedestal, where She herself was wont to stand.

* * *

The *Nuns* enter for the morning mass.

The *Abbess* glances at the supposed *Sister Sacristan* sunk in prayer, rejoicing in her evident repentance.

By accident she discovers the empty pedestal, where the image had stood. She does not trust her eyes and consults the other *Sisters*. Blind fear seizes all of them. They scream, running around with wild gestures. Some of them fetch the priest and ring the alarm bells.

With swinging cords, they rush at the supposed *Sister Sacristan*, through whose fault the Holy image obviously has disappeared.

But at the moment when the excited crowd lay violent hands on her, the *divine Sister Sacristan* appears of a sudden to be lifted above the ground by invisible hands.

In silent awe they all draw back from Her. Some fall praying upon their knees. All faces are bowed before this new Miracle.

The *divine Sister* already has returned to the ground, and now with a mild smile as if nothing had happened, She passes along the rows of the *Nuns*, carrying in Her hands the jar of holy oil for the eternal lamp.

All the sisters follow Her, spreading their arms and chanting in exaltation.

Intermission, ten minutes.

Scene II—THE KNIGHT

The *Knight* and the *Nun*, preceded by the *Piper*, playing on his shawm, appear in the forest.

The lovers rest beside the Fairy Mount.

The fugitive *Nun* throws aside her cloak and dances in overwhelming happiness. The *Knight* tries to kiss her. She escapes and plays among the trees, laughing. He finally catches her and they embrace passionately.

The green bushes of the wood gather around them.

Attracted by the *Piper's* call, a troop of wild *Huntsmen*, who are subordinate to the Lord of the Wood, a daring Robber-Count, surprises them. The *Knight*, after a short vain resistance, is bound and tied to a tree. The unhappy *Megildis* is forced to dance for her *Knight's* life before the rude band of Huntsmen.

The *Piper* secretly cuts the *Knight's* fetters.

The *Knight*, beside himself, rushes suddenly at the *Count* but is thrown back by his followers and receives a deadly wound.

The *Shadow of Death* appears behind the unfortunate lover.

The ill-fated *Megildis* is dragged away in triumph by the *Robber-Count* and his Huntsmen.

In the darkness, the *Piper* alone appears, standing erect beside the *Knight's* corpse, and playing now upon his shawm instead of the luring melody of passion the sad melody of death.

Then suddenly he sinks back into his good natured half-animal demeanor and leaps into the blackness of the night.

Scene III—THE COUNT

The captured *Nun* appears sitting at the great banquet table in the *Count's* castle. She is clad in gorgeous garments, but her face is pale and her eyes seem to watch things unseen by the loud and drunken company around her.

The *Piper* is leading in a band of strange-looking musicians. The banqueters begin to dance, at first



Norman-Bel Geddes

A GIFT CARRIER
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

stiffly, without leaving their places. Then, more and more excited by the *Piper's* fiddle, the dance grows quicker and wilder until the scene becomes an orgy.

The unfortunate *Nun* sits motionless at the right of the drunken *Count*. The *Piper* plays a tune into her ear and suddenly there appears before her eyes a brief vision. A long procession of *Nuns* seems to pass slowly through the banquet hall, accompanied by the low sound of distant bells. She begins to dance, then collapses and sinks back on her throne exhausted.

A new arrival is announced: it is the *Prince* who with his friends seeks shelter in the *Count's* castle.

The young *Prince* seems fascinated by the pale, statue-like apparition of the unhappy *Nun* and thereby excites the jealousy of the drunken *Count*. Daggers appear everywhere. A grim fight seems inevitable, until the *Piper* suggests a game of cards.

Prince and *Count* gamble for the possession of the beautiful woman.

The *Prince* wins by a stroke of luck and drags the terrified *Megildis* away.

The banquet breaks up amid consternation.

The *Count*, deserted by all, tries to follow the *Prince*, but falls back in a drunken stupor.

The *Piper* creeps from behind the table and presses a dagger into the hand of the *Count* who unconsciously grasps it and, realizing his terrible loss, plunges it into his own heart.

Suddenly the *Shadow of Death* appears behind him. He collapses.

All the lights vanish.

The *Piper* alone is seen standing erect at the side of his second victim, playing his tune of death.

Scene IV—THE PRINCE

In a mock bridal procession the unhappy *Nun Megildis* is led to the *Prince's* nuptial couch. Amid grotesque gestures and jokes of the boisterous company, she is dragged up the steps.

The *Piper* celebrates a mock ceremony over the young couple and consummates the wedding rites.

The wedding party withdraws. The *Prince* endeavors to embrace *Megildis* but she resists desperately.

The *Emperor* has entered unnoticed. The *Piper*, clad as a jester, follows him closely.

When the *Prince* has raised the unhappy *Megildis* in his arms, the old *Emperor* intervenes.

He reproves his son, first with affecting love, then with severity, until the latter withdraws with sneering allusions and concealed threats.

The *Emperor*, full of kindness, tries to quiet the perturbed *Megildis* and to lead her away.

Meanwhile, the *Piper* is busy arousing the *Prince* and his friends. The conspirators assemble in the semi-darkness.

At the moment when the *Emperor* leads the frightened girl toward the left, one of the masked men jumps at him from behind a column. The *Emperor* succeeds in throwing down his First Assailant.

The *Shadow of Death* appears suddenly among the conspirators and catches the falling masked figures.

A *Second Assailant* springs forward. *Megildis* cries out with foreboding.

The *Emperor* is about to succumb when the *Piper* presses a knife into his hand. The *Second Assailant* falls.

The *Piper* opens the cloak and lifts the mask of the man who has fallen. With a horrible insane laugh, the *Emperor* recognizes his own son. *Megildis* leads the crazed *Emperor* away.

The *Piper* remains behind alone and plays his death melody over the victim.

Scene V—THE EMPEROR

In a gloomy, solemn coronation ceremony, *Megildis*

is raised to the position of consort of the insane *Emperor*.

Surrounded by the gold-clad great of the realm, she sits stiffly, like a spectre among spectres, on this highest and at the same time stifling summit of power and of life. And around her continues the ghostly, bloodless ceremony of a world ripe for destruction.

The confused *Emperor* plays with a puppet which resembles his son; and his madness is the only human thing in this inexorable formal orgy.

The *Piper*, in the vestments of the Master of Ceremonies, severe, fanatic and pedantic, directs with his golden staff the performance of the soulless gold-masked figures.

While the incense rises, and crowns and sceptre circle about in this upper world, a dark mass collects slowly in a seething underworld.

During the stiff dance of these decorated scarecrows, a mutinous mob knocks at the doors.

The crowd storms the coronation room with axes and hammers and demolishes the golden spectre which suddenly crumbles into dust.

The old insane *Emperor* is led away in chains.

The young *Empress* is dragged to the street.

The *Piper* in his original form stands in the midst of the devastation and plays his death melody. Back of him amid the golden ruins the *Shadow* dances with his death's-head uncovered.

Intermission, six minutes.

Scene VI—THE TRIBUNAL

The loosened flood of the populace surges into the big square, demanding ever-new victims.

The scaffold is erected.

The insane *Emperor* and the remaining ones are led to the dock. The revolutionary tribunal works with feverish haste.

Only the *Emperor* is spared at first. The bell of one condemned rings.

The young *Empress* appears, led by the *Executioner* and his assistants. They have bound on her back the life-size puppet of the Emperor, which resembles his son. Clothed in the garment of a condemned criminal, she staggers beneath this load as if it were a Cross. The *Piper* disguised as the one-eyed hangman, leads her by a rope.

The mob howls. Stones fly. The unhappy *Empress* breaks down; she is pulled up again and dragged further.

The insane *Emperor* suddenly recognizes his puppet. He draws it to him and cradles it in his arms. The *One-Eyed Man* tries to take it from him.

The *Emperor*, on the verge of death, raises himself once again, pulls the mask off the *Shadow*. The death's-head becomes visible. Then the apparition vanishes.

The *One-eyed Man* has overpowered the young *Empress* and bound her to the pillory. The attitude of the multitude, however, seems to change.

As *Tribune of the People*, the *Piper* appears once more in a new disguise and launches the accusation. But the *Judges* refuse to pass sentence; each one in turn bends his knee before the beauty of the accused.

The *Tribune of the People* gives the signal for the death warrant to the *Executioner*.

But at the moment when the *Empress's* head lies on the block, the people suddenly change their attitude, break loose and tear her away from the *Executioner*.

An indescribable tumult ensues. The *Nun* is carried off. There is a desperate struggle, with every man pitted against his brother.

The huge square is covered with dead.

The *Piper* stands alone, erect, blowing his death melody.

Scene VII—THE DANCE OF DEATH

A winter night.

Carrying her child in her arms, *Megildis* painfully drags herself after the *Piper*. She attempts in vain to cling to him. He mockingly pushes her away. She sinks by the wayside in the deep snow and lies there exhausted.

Led by the *Shadow of the Dead*, the ghostly procession of her dead victims approaches. With a shudder she recognizes the *Knight*, the *Count*, the *Prince*, the *Emperor* and all the others whom she had known and had led to their doom.

They march past her with sad, ghostly greetings, accompanied by the shrill noise of the drum which the *Black One* beats with his bones.

The *Shadows* motion to her to follow in the procession. She rises, sad and weary, prepared to follow, but the *Piper* intervenes: He will not yet yield her to death; she must suffer more.

Once again he tries the alluring melody.

She fights against his power. She attempts for the first time to fold her hands again and to stammer the old, old child's prayer.

Pious song and distant pealing of Christmas bells resound from on High.

A warm bright ray of light, as if coming from the open portal of a Christmas-lit church, falls on the snow.

The *Piper* has disappeared.

She pulls herself together with difficulty and drags herself toward the welcome sounds and the saving Light.

Scene VIII—THE CATHEDRAL

The divine *Sister Sacristan* has now carried out during seven years the duties of the fugitive *Sister Megildis*.

Outside, a heavy snowstorm is heard wailing.

The divine *Sister* looks at the portal with a mild and mournful smile. Then She advances to the place where Her image used to stand.

She takes off the *Nun's* garment, veil and keys and lays them down on the steps.

She then puts on the crown and the robe of the Mother of God and, slowly and as in pain, mounts the steps up to Her old place. Her smile grows unearthly and fixed, Her body rigid and lifeless, Her arms are stretched and empty. She becomes image again.

A violent gust of wind forces the door open and the *Nun Megildis* comes in, clutching her child. She sinks to the floor and remains motionless.

She raises herself. The child has fallen from her arms. She does not notice it. She has recognized the Cathedral and the Madonna and she moves now on her knees toward the gracious image.

She finds her vestments, her veil and the keys lying on the ground before the image. She hastily puts them on and again stands there as *Sister Sacristan*.

She looks round in astonishment.

Everything seems to be the same as on the night seven years ago, when she left this holy place.

Nothing seems to be changed.

Suddenly she discovers her child lying on the pavement, where she has left it. She hurries toward it, holds

it up to the Madonna, smothers it with kisses, then suddenly discovers that it is dead.

She sinks down before the image of the *Virgin*, and lies as if lifeless. The child again has sunk from her arms.

* * *

Some time passes thus. Then the light of life shines down over the statue again. The *Madonna* lives once more.

The great bells of the convent begin to ring loudly and jubilantly.

* * *

The *Abbess* enters, followed by the long rows of the *Nuns*.

She sees the *Sister Sacristan* stretched motionless on the ground but thinks at first that she is only praying.

She is about to continue with the other *Nuns*, when she suddenly realizes that the miraculous image of the *Virgin* has returned to its old place.

In the first moment they all seem seized by a terrific fright. Then the *Nuns* run about with shouts of joy. Some of them kneel down, sobbing with emotion.

Sister Megildis wakes from her faint. She is lifted by some of the *Nuns* to look at the Miracle.

She hides her face in deep shame and wishes to run away.

* * *

Startled by the ringing of the bells at night, the people of the town pour in.

The *Bishop* himself appears.

All lift their arms in adoration to the astonished *Sister Megildis*.

She is unable to understand all this but keeps her gaze rigidly fixed upon the image of the *Madonna* with the Child in Her arms.

Upon her wearied face appears a blissful, believing smile. She listens to the deep, mighty voices of salvation. The voices of heavenly help rise higher and higher, until at length one single and predominating voice proclaims her pardon and redemption.

The *Nuns* have lifted the miraculous statue of the *Madonna* up on high, to show it to all the believers.



Today and for all time, man must stand at the centre of all theatrical art, man as actor. Where the actor is also a dramatic writer, he has the power to create a world according to his own image, thus awakening the drama to its highest form of life, like Shakespeare and Molière. Whosoever has anything to do with the theatre should be an actor. Whether or not he practices the art of acting is of secondary importance. Many great playwrights, teachers of the dramatic art, theatre managers, were actors without ever having played on the stage. Only when the director, the stage manager, the poet, the dramatic teacher, the scenic artist, the musician, are all actors, when everyone on the stage and everyone in the audience is an actor, and joins in the play, then, and only then, the theatre fulfils its highest mission.

"The Importance of the Actor in the Theatre."

—MAX REINHARDT.

THE MEANING of "THE MIRACLE"

By MRS. JAMES O'DONNELL

GR^{EAT} truths are wont to crystallize into myths and parables. The mind of the mass man is unable to comprehend truth in its abstract form. The myth or parable makes a picture in the mind and this picture is like a seed which germinates and grows into the tree which bears the fruit of knowledge. Great teachers have always used the parable as a vehicle of truth. The great teacher of Christendom clothed his wisdom in parable form. The Greeks immortalized their gods and goddesses in myths which deify nature forces. The Nazarene personified the forces of good and evil in parables so wonderfully that twenty centuries have not exhausted their power.

"The Miracle" is a parable as old as time. In the simple story of the nun and the Virgin, there lies hidden the whole history of the human race. The setting of the story is the church of the middle ages. At the time, it was the only church of Christendom. The term Catholic is synonymous with the word universal. It was the universal church, the refuge for all humanity. Its splendid pageantry and ritual was not original, it was borrowed from earlier forms of religious worship. The clothes of the ancient faiths fitted the religion of the middle ages because the truth which man seeks in his religion is ever the same. Henry Adams in his "Mont St. Michel and Chartres" gives us the clue to the meaning of the Virgin. The old Hebraic concept of God was dominant even in the time of the building of the fortress cathedral of St. Michel. The God of the twelfth century was a god of vengeance and was ever militant; a God of battles to whom might was right. But the world grew weary of a God of vengeance and longed for a God of tenderness and mercy, so there was built the cathedral of Chartres, dedicated to the Virgin Mother. The Mother typifies maternal love, which at its best is selfless. The term Virgin is synonymous with purity. In pure love, there is only the thought of giving; only the thought for the beloved. It has nothing to do with sex. It is as near the divine concept of love as humanity has been able to attain. It was fitting that this new concept of God should be personified in the Virgin Mother because she represented love and mercy to her human children.

As the statue of the Virgin represents divinity, so is the nun humanity and the story becomes the story of humanity and God, told in the splendid pageantry of a time when all men were filled with an aspiration for spiritual life and expressed this aspiration in the great cathedrals of the Gothic age. The nun is blind humanity, ignorant, yet longing to find its way into the paradise which holds safety and peace.

The nun in the cathedral is humanity at its best turning toward divinity and seeking the path of truth. It is faithful until it hears the song of the piper which sings of the charm of worldly love. The piper is the poetical version of the spirit of evil or *denial of good*. He has the versatile power of adaptation so he plays many roles and fills many offices but always he is the spirit of Evil and his companion is Death who ever lurks in his shadow. The nun first listens and then forgets her service to the Virgin in her longing for worldly love and power. Knight, count, prince and emperor, one by one, lay their devotion at her feet as the piper leads her on. But Death follows closely after the piper and one by one they die; for the wage of sin is death. When material power has reached the summit of glory and the Midas touch has turned her surroundings into a

golden court, then the spirit of revolution breaks forth and the mad fury of the mob destroys the illusion of worldly pomp and power. It is the same spirit which followed the ill-starred Queen in the French revolution; the same spirit which in later times destroyed the throne of the Tsar of all the Russias. The nun escapes Death and in a lonely forest she sees the phantom victims of her wordly ambition. Her thoughts turn to the cathedral and its sweet safety and she longs to return to the service of the Virgin. The Christmas bells ring out and the repentant soul finds itself back in her old place in the cathedral, the dead babe in her arms.

The Virgin, the mercy of God, ever true to the love of humanity, descends from her pedestal when the nun leaves the cathedral and with loving care performs the daily tasks of the nun. She knew that the nun would come back when she had found the vanity of wordly pleasures. Her faith in the innate goodness of the nun never fails in the long seven years of the nun's absence. The number seven is sacred in Hebraic scriptures and is a symbol of universality. The service of seven years denotes the unfailing faith of God in his children and their ultimate return to his service. As the nun turns toward the cathedral, the Virgin mounts her pedestal and becomes the image with her starry crown and rich robe of blue. The nun enters the cathedral and offers the ancient sacrifice of "an humble and a contrite heart." She falls at the feet of the Virgin. On one side stands Death, on the other side stands the piper. The Virgin slowly comes to life and the piper doffs his cap and bows his head in submission to her power. The power of Death has been broken by the miraculous mercy of God and Death is banished from human life. The nuns of the convent enter and bear the image of their Virgin to the altar where they worship her mighty power as the Christmas bells peal forth their pæans of joy.

Much of the action of the play takes place in semi-darkness but humanity is still wandering in the darkness of ignorance and fear. It has not gained the wonderful faith of the Virgin. She is still only an image because there is no comprehension of her power to glow with life and make it a glorious adventure of victory. Some day, there will dawn on the mind of man the concept of unity which will give him life everlasting and make him the potential ruler of his world.

Music plays a wonderful part in the story of "The Miracle." The magnificent combination of a great organ, a symphony orchestra and a chorus is equal to depicting every shade of emotion in this pageant of the evolution of the human soul. Its aspiration, its exaltation, and its passion are reflected in the music with poignant intensity. In the revolution one hears the syncopation, the dissonance, and the disturbing shocks which characterize the modern madness of twentieth century jazz. Human nature has lost all hope and restraint and the spirit of evil has conquered body and soul. It is no longer music but the most discordant noise.

"The Miracle" will grow in power as we understand its meaning. It is the epic of human struggle to overcome the spirit of evil and restore happiness and peace to a long-suffering mankind.



THE MIRACLE AS DESIGNED BY
STAGED BY MAX REINHARDT FOR F. RAY



SIGNED BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES
T FOR F. RAY COMSTOCK AND MORRIS GEST



AN INTERVAL IN THE CONFERENCES ON "THE MIRACLE"

RUDOLF KOMMER, REPRESENTATIVE OF MAX REINHARDT, OTTO H. KAHN AND MORRIS GEST
IN FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. MARK'S, VENICE

Archbishop Firmian, Max Reinhardt and Morris Gest.

Five Summer Days in Salzburg

By RUDOLF KOMMER

WHEN, about the middle of the 18th century, a new archbishop had to be elected in Salzburg, there was much clerical and political animosity among the different parties of the chapter. At that time, the archbishop was still the secular head in the little Duchy of Salzburg and political considerations, therefore, played a very important part in this election. In the end, a mere outsider was chosen: Count Leopold Firmian, whom the quarrelling factions regarded as just an interim office-holder. It was nothing but his delicate health that had attracted their attention. They expected him to live not longer than one or two years more, and during this time they hoped to find a regent for church and country as well, who would be acceptable to everybody.

Archbishop Firmian, however, bitterly disappointed his electors. He survived the entire chapter. His new office seemed to give him new vitality, so that he grew healthier and healthier, until the few months his episcopal electors had granted him became many, many years.

His Eminence was a haughty, retiring gentleman, who thought to express his love for his Savior best by hating mercilessly all Protestants, Jews, actors and gypsies. His aim was to purge the entire duchy of all such infidels, and under his regime began in Salzburg a period of relentless persecution of the Protestants. Disregarding all the stipulations for religious toleration, embodied in the Treaty of Westphalia, and ignoring all objections by the Protestant rulers of the German states, Archbishop Firmian, within a few years, had transported all "non-believers" over the border. Thousands of old established families were driven out, and, still today, there are many places in Germany, Holland and Russia which were originally settled by exiled Salzburg Protestants.

When Firmian, in such manner, had made his country a hundred per cent Roman Catholic, for all time, as he believed (reducing thereby its population about one-third), this grand seigneur permitted his artistic desires to get the better of him and erected the castle of Leopoldskron, that jewel of the Austrian baroque style. This castle Firmian donated to his nephew, with a huge painting for its marble hall to commemorate the act of donation—and then he died.

His heart was buried under the stone slabs in the castle chapel. Even at the present day, the inscription can be read in the center of the stone floor, saying: "Here lies the heart of Archbishop Leopold Firmian, the erector of this castle, the protector of the faith, etc., etc."

* * *

The archbishop's animosity against actors was of lasting effect. Not until about thirty years ago was the first municipal theatre opened in Salzburg. Its first season also was the first theatrical year of a young boy from Vienna, who had just finished his studies at an evening school of acting and who, for the first time, had escaped from the bourgeois narrowness of his home. While still at school, he had been pointed out to Otto Brahm, the greatest German producer of that time, and Brahm had engaged him to come to Berlin for two



(From an old print.)

SCHLOSS LEOPOLDSKRON
MAX REINHARDT'S CASTLE HOME IN SALZBURG, BUILT BY THE
ARCHBISHOP FIRMIAN

years following the expiration of his one year's engagement in Salzburg. But the beautiful old town on the Salzach became the fulfillment of the boy's young ambition, of his young love and his young freedom. He loved it so much that he desired nothing better than to stay there for the remainder of his life; so much that, in the disarming foolishness of youth, he wrote a long and humble letter to the great Otto Brahm asking to be released from his contract. Fortunately enough for the young cub "specializing in elderly character roles," the "little giant" of the Berlin theatre remained adamant. With a broken heart, the young actor—his name was Max Reinhardt—was compelled to leave his beloved Salzburg and had to go to the strange cold North where an uncertain future awaited him. His friends arranged a sentimental farewell party at a little garden restaurant snugly squatted against the walls of Leopoldskron castle. Heartache, young wine and old songs, and who knows when we shall meet again. . . .

Twenty-two years elapsed before Max Reinhardt returned; not as an actor to the Municipal Theatre, nor as its manager or director. He returned as the new lord of Leopoldskron who had wished to bring the artistic course of his life back whence it had started. Open arms were waiting for him. He took possession of the castle which formerly had belonged to Firmian, that enemy of all theatres, and the now reigning archbishop of Salz-

burg opened holy churches and cathedrals to this prince of the theatre, so that he might stage therein his moralities and legend plays. Strange are the lines of fate. Would Max Reinhardt ever have returned to Salzburg if he had not left it?

* * *

On May 19, 1923, Max Reinhardt sailed from New York aboard the S. S. "Olympic." Morris Gest saw him off. When taking leave, the latter remarked quite casually: "Three weeks from now I shall start for London, Paris, Berlin and Vienna. I shall arrive in Salzburg on the 23rd of July, to continue our preparations for 'The Miracle.'"

Anyone who ever saw Morris Gest's gigantic black necktie, his fiery eyes, his flaring profile, will not be surprised that such a statement was not taken very seriously. Even if he were gifted with the tenacity of the pedant instead of the temperament of the bohemian, it would still have been sheer audacity to set so accurate a date, especially nowadays when traveling in Europe is beset with frontiers, passports, visés, etc. Therefore, nobody in Leopoldskron thought anything of it that by the 20th, the 21st, the 22nd of July no word had come from Morris Gest. Nor did the first mail of the 23rd bring any message from him. In the meantime a suite of rooms had been made ready for him, since he was expected to arrive some time during the summer.

Great, therefore, was the surprise when, on the 23rd in the forenoon, somebody telephoned from a hotel to say that during the night "an American" had arrived with some twenty other people, who would like to know at what time he might call at the castle. (This was the first and last time that people spoke of him as "an American"; from then on, all Salzburg called him "the American.")

Very soon, several autos, overloaded with people, rushed up through the Leopoldskron parkway, "the American" stepped out of the first one, in his plain black suit, his wide-brimmed, black velvet brigand's hat deep over his eyes, an enterprising knot in his huge black tie. His wild eyes were drooping as if all the passions had burned out, only to flame up in the next moment. Leisuredly he dragged himself along on legs that seemed too exhausted to carry him any further. Secretaries, actors, journalists, painters, photographers, etc., followed him.

Toward the middle of the night, they had arrived on a train which hardly ever dropped any passengers in Salzburg. "The American" had discovered that strange train so as to have an unbroken day before him. After a journey criss-cross all over little Austria, he had gone to the nearest hotel, since with his unique retinue, he did not wish to impose on Max Reinhardt's hospitality. But on the other hand, he hesitated to part from his companions.

With "the American's" arrival in Salzburg, that medieval town and the castle of Leopoldskron changed their character completely. In a whole year, there is not so much dictation, stenography, cabling, telegraphing, telephoning, interviewing, photographing, etc., going on in the whole of Salzburg as there was during those five days in one castle. Gest even requested the telegraph office to carry his wireless messages to various ships out on the high seas. The Salzburg offices had to make endless inquiries in Vienna, Berlin, and Paris so



A NOBLE GENTLEMAN
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

as to gratify his astonishing wishes. Continuously, automobiles rushed back and forth between the hotel where "the American" stopped and the castle where he spent the whole day and half the nights. Like a powerful magnet, he seemed to attract countless people from all regions of the world. From the very day of his arrival, not a single room could be had in the Salzburg hotels, and the hotel porters were asked by all this host of visitors, not, as was usual, for the house in which Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born, but for the hotel in which "the American" was staying. Especially, emigrant Russian artists seemed to be crowding to Salzburg from all their hiding places in middle and western Europe. Of a sudden the town was the holy shrine for all those who "longed for America." The dear old place had become Americanized over night; in the enchanted baroque castle Leopoldskron, things were moving as in a New York skyscraper.

Strange to say, the intensely American centre of all this ado, seemed to lead a life of unconcerned peaceful repose, enjoying a sublime summer vacation. While a dozen of musicians, painters, actors and journalists were rushing about in feverish expectation of important consultations and vital decisions, Gest spent the loveliest days and the longest evenings in relating with sentimental delight how he had met his parents after a separation of so many years, in talking about his father-



A CYMBAL BEARER
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

in-law, David Belasco, whom he idolizes, about his own childhood experiences as a newsboy and about the adventures of his theatrical career. Only now and then he suddenly interrupted the oriental complacency of his patriarchal conversation by throwing in a practical question which had been in the air for days, and by following it as quickly as lightning with a decision which had been expected to require weeks of discussion and deliberation. Before his entourage recovered from their surprise, he had once more plunged deep into reminiscences and ecstasies, which made one think of a leisurely gentleman who had turned his back to the world, living in dear memories of the past.

It is true, he had a gentleman in his party whose special duty it was to execute all the motive functions for which "the American" seemed to lack the vitality. That man's name was "Frazer." Simply "Frazer." And Frazer, always serene and self-composed, filled a thousand requests a day, with inimitable ease and in an unparalleled matter-of-fact way.

"Frazer, wire my heartiest congratulations to my father!"—"Frazer, bring me a coat."—"Frazer, get me a film photographer!"—"Frazer, the French visé."—"Frazer, a picture of the Madonna."—"Frazer, inform Mrs. Gest of our arrival in Salzburg!"—"Frazer, cable Mr. Belasco we are safe!"—"Frazer, have a look at Hellbrunn."

And the indefatigable Frazer jumped into an automobile, drove to the park of Hellbrunn, came back, and reported that the fountains there were really worth seeing.

But when "the American" remarked casually, "Frazer, have a ham sandwich," one was not sure whether Frazer was to eat a ham sandwich because Gest thought Frazer was hungry, or because Gest was hungry himself. Anyhow, Frazer ate it.

* * *

Months before these days in Salzburg, Max Reinhardt had pledged himself to produce "The Miracle" in New York, under Morris Gest's management. But from the moment of their first meeting he had tried again and again to turn that agreement the other way around. He always insisted, and still insists, that in this impresario, one of the greatest actors of our time had missed his vocation. Every objective discussion between the two was endangered by Reinhardt's forgetting the trend of the conversation over the passionate expressiveness of the producer's mimicry and gestures. Instead of producing in New York under the management of Morris Gest, Max Reinhardt would like to persuade Gest to come to the Theater in der Josefstadt in Vienna, and act under Reinhardt's direction.

One sultry afternoon, torrents of rain suddenly came pouring down. A dozen or two of the various staff workers were sitting on the terrace, wearily watching the lake, while Max Reinhardt and his guest paced up and down, slowly, and in deep thought, on the graveled footpath among the Italian flowerbeds. Whenever Morris Gest has something to say—and he very often has—he stops walking. A walk with him, therefore, means rather to stand here or there with a few occasional steps in between. While the rain was pouring the two were at one of their halts, and Max Reinhardt was talking in his low persuasive voice. Gest, on the

other hand, seemed to ward off some particularly insistent proposition, indulging freely in his singularly plastic gesticulations. The sight of these two men who had forgotten the world about them, and on whose bare heads the rain was coming down without their even knowing it, was so strange, and the spiritual zest of their conversation so impressive, that no one even would have thought of disturbing their grand isolation out there in the rain by calling to them.

When, a quarter of an hour later, they returned to the terrace soaked to the skin, it became known that Max Reinhardt had again made an attempt at persuading Gest to play Othello under his direction.

* * *

The highest functionary in Schloss Leopoldskron was Reinhardt's valet, Franz. He was an extremely haughty and self-reliant man, with great pride in his standing and worldly experience, who, at all times and on all occasions, insisted on the strictest observance of forms and ceremonies. In former years, he had been reader and valet to an archduke of the house of Hapsburg, and now the overthrow of all things had made him the valet of a "gentleman of the theatre." Though he was severe with his master, he showed a certain benevolent leniency toward him. Of course, he often shrugged his shoulders, for truly there was much in this new life

which rubbed him the wrong way. This betrayed itself in his correct and uncompromising attitude as well as in his impenetrable, knowing countenance. And yet he was not entirely without sympathy for the "new-comers." He tolerated many a breach of etiquette for he knew that they did their best and he only regretted that they didn't know better. But any closer approach, any familiarity, any attempt at human contact on the part of the inhabitants or guests of the castle was unthinkable. He was the valet par excellence, and did not care to be anything else.

Last spring, Franz had accompanied his master to New York. From that trip, he brought back one English phrase, perfect in pronunciation as well as in construction: "If you please." Before each meal, Franz would appear in the doorway of every guest chamber, make a very slight and very distinguished bow, and say, not without a certain warmth: "If you please." An English grammar, which was often seen in his hands, proved that he did not intend to stop his studies at this one phrase. It was rumored that he even expressed dissatisfaction with his master when the latter did not take interest enough in his own English studies, which, after all, seemed so advisable before a second trip to America.

What no one else had succeeded in so far, "the American" accomplished in a manner unexplained as yet. He did win Franz's confidence, even though it was mingled with a certain condescension. There are witnesses to prove beyond any doubt that Franz winked four times at the visitor. Furthermore, it became known that Franz had granted an interview to "the American."

Among other things which Gest wished to find out was how Franz viewed the new order of things in Europe. Franz shrugged his shoulders. He also smiled dolefully, while his gestures indicated scepticism. When his questioner insisted on a more articulate form of expression, Franz made these convincing statements:

"There is nothing new under the sun. Archbishop Firmian, the builder of this castle, had a valet. His heir and nephew also had a valet. The late owners, of the families Wittelsbach and Hapsburg, also had their valets. Even the last one, Herr Schmidt, a queer recluse, had a valet. And now the castle of Leopoldskron belongs to a man of the theatrical guild"—it is impossible to say whether this definition was merely a statement of fact or an expression of disapproval—"and he too can not manage without a valet."

With that, Franz pointed to himself and made a slight bow to his own importance, as it were.

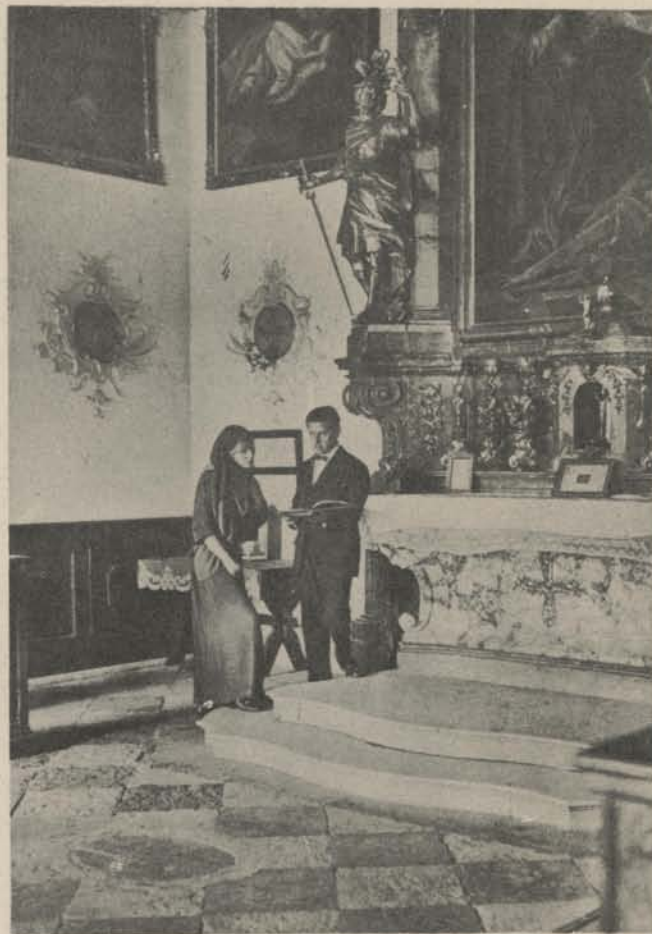
"Thus you see, Mr. Gest, nothing changes. Revolutions come and revolutions go, but there is nothing new under the sun."

This conversation had been carried on in a peculiar German which "the American" had gradually picked up during his travels through middle and eastern Europe. The sun was setting. Valet Franz gave the upper part of his body and, with it, his coat a sudden jerk that was almost audible, stepped to the door, opened it, made

one of his inimitable bows and said in his perfect though limited English: "If you please."

* * *

One day, Morris Gest and Max Reinhardt stood in the castle chapel before the heart of Archbishop Firmian. Gest had read the Latin inscription on the stone



Paap, Salzburg

MAX REINHARDT REHEARSING LADY DIANA MANNERS IN THE ROLE OF THE MADONNA IN "THE MIRACLE" IN THE PRIVATE CHAPEL OF SCHLOSS LEOPOLDSKRON

slab at his feet, and stood there silent in deep thought for several minutes. Did he think of Firmian's "decree of Intolerance"? It is not at all impossible that among those driven out of the Duchy of Salzburg was also one of his ancestors. When he turned to Reinhardt, however, it seemed that he harbored neither reminiscences nor resentment.

He began to speak of the unrivaled taste for the fine arts which the Roman Catholic Church had always possessed. Its archbishops have been the greatest artists of all time. Wherever on earth one finds an exceptionally beautiful spot, there stands a Roman Catholic cloister, a church, a cathedral, an episcopal residence. To Gest, the charming town of Salzburg seemed nothing but a fascinating wing on the stage of the Roman Faith. A magic theatre. He began to see why Reinhardt loved that town so dearly. Then he became enthusiastic over the deep psychology of the Roman Catholic rites, and, for the rest of the day, he had no other topic of conversation but Church and Theatre. Great was his excitement when he found his own vague

suspicious confirmed, by learning that the entire modern theatre in Europe had its roots in the early medieval legend and morality plays of the Roman Catholic Church.

There can be no doubt that Morris Gest, if he did not happen to be a great showman in New York, would certainly be content to take the place of his confrere in



Paap, Salzburg

MAX REINHARDT AND MORRIS GEST IN CONSULTATION OVER THE MANUSCRIPT OF "THE MIRACLE" IN THE LIBRARY OF SCHLOSS LEOPOLDSKRON

Salzburg. In other words: to become a successor to Archbishop Firmian.

* * *

Alas! Even the most beautiful summer days come to an end. And thus, the hour of parting struck also for "the American." Max Reinhardt was disconsolate that, in spite of all his official connections, he had not been able to secure sleeping accommodations on the train for his guests. The Paris-bound Orient express was booked to its full capacity for weeks to come. Gest smiled. He did not worry. For him and Frazer two beds would always be available at any time, on any train.

Two hours before his departure, Gest was seen rushing about Salzburg, shopping. He had been told about the Salzburg wood carvings, and other objects of local artcraft, and he wished to take something along to remind him of the atmosphere of the town. When he finally arrived at the station, his car was packed with

thousands of things, and he himself was holding two large, beautiful wood carved Madonnas in his arms.

By the time he stepped out on the platform, the Orient express came thundering in. Gest approached the conductor of the sleeping cars and winked mysteriously at him. Without a word, the official assigned a compartment to him.

On his way to the car, someone thrust a box of cigarettes into his hand. And Gest, without even stopping, called back: "Frazer, give him a kiss!"

Then he climbed into the car and disappeared. When the train pulled out of the station, a railroad official in a red cap exclaimed: "American efficiency! Fabulous! Even the execution of their caresses they delegate to their secretaries."

* * *

Two months passed. The Americanization which Salzburg had experienced during Gest's sojourn had faded to a reminiscence. The town had sunk back into its dreamy contemplations. Only a few wild flowing black neckties among the ambitious youths of Salzburg were reminders of the fact that the townspeople had sensed "the American" in the strange and unique personality of Morris Gest. Hundreds of Americans visit Salzburg in the course of a summer and pass unnoticed. They are just foreigners. Morris Gest, however, born in Russia, always exotic wherever he appears, be it on this or on the other side of the Atlantic, has absorbed and seems to radiate so much of America that he became a symbol: "the American."

One night shrieks of terror alarmed the inhabitants of Schloss Leopoldskron. In the hall they found the old castellan of Leopoldskron, a candle in his hand, almost beside himself with fear and consternation. He had been roused from his sleep by the click of a typewriter, which had been left behind from the days of "the American." In the library, whence the noise had come, Archbishop Firmian—the castellan crossed himself three times—had been sitting at the typewriter while the valet Franz was holding a wax candle for him. The Archbishop had been in full canonicals as in the picture in the marble hall, Franz in black escarpins.

The old man was reassured and sent to bed. Franz was in Venice with his master. On the Lido. Everybody knew it. So they all retired to their sleeping rooms.

Strange, very strange, however, was the effect of a telegram from Venice that arrived next morning announcing the sudden death of the valet Franz. Heart failure during the night before.

His last thoughts had been given to the prospective trip to America. Beside him, in his bed, they found an English grammar, his faithful companion during the last months of his life. . . .

Vanitas vanitatum. . . .



THE INQUISITION MOB IN SCENE VI
A SKETCH BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

Chants and Choruses

Scene I

"THE ANGELUS."

Priest. Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae.

Chor. Et concepit de Spiritu sancto.

Priest. Ecce ancilla Domini.

Chor. Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Priest. Et verbum caro factum est.

Chor. Et habitavit in nobis.

Priest. Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum,
benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ven-
tris tui.

Chor. Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis pecca-
toribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

ARRIVAL OF THE PROCESSION

Chor. Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis pecca-
toribus, nunc et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

O Mary, glorious queen of May, thy praises do we sing
now.

So bless the May and bless us all, who offerings to thee
bring now.

And all the flowers here below we now commend to
Mary,

That in the future they may grow where flowers never
vary.

O let us like the nightingale sing May-songs in thy
praises,
Like as the bird o'er hill and vale its tuneful voice now
raises.

O let our hearts be turned to thee as to the sun the
flowers,
The angels' chorus finally to join in heavenly bowers.

Ave Maria, gratia plena, etc.

LAURENTIAN LITANY

Priest. Sancta Maria, sancta Dei genitrix, sancta virgo
virginum, *People* Ora pro nobis!

Mater Christi, mater divinae gratiae, mater salvatoris,
People Ora pro nobis!

Mater purissima, mater castissima, mater inviolata,
People Ora pro nobis!

Mater intemerata, mater amabilis, mater admirabilis,
People Ora pro nobis!

Virgo prudentissima, virgo veneranda, virgo pradi-
canda, *People* Ora pro nobis!

Virgo potens, virgo clemens, virgo fidelis,
People Ora pro nobis!

Speculum justitiae, sedes sapientiae, causa nostra lac-
titiae, *People* Ora pro nobis!

Vas spirituale, vos honorabile, vas insigne devotionis,
People Ora pro nobis!

Rosa mystica, turris Davidica, domus aurea,
People Ora pro nobis!

Foederis area, janua coeli, stella matutina,
People Ora pro nobis!

Salus infirmorum, refugium peccatorum, consolatrix
afflictorum, *People Ora pro nobis!*

Regina angelorum, regina Patriarcharum, regina Pro-
phetarum, *People Ora pro nobis!*

Regina Apostolorum, regina Martyrum, regina Con-
fessorum, *People Ora pro nobis!*

Regina virginum, regina sanctorum, regina pacis.
People Ora pro nobis!

Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei genitrix, ut digni efficiamur
permissioibus Christi! *People Ora pro nobis!*

Gratiam tuam quesumus, Domine, mentibus nostris
infunde, ut qui angelo nuntiante Christi filii tui
incarnationem per passionem ejus et crucem ad
resurrectionis gloriam perducamur. Per eundem
Christum Dominum nostrum.

People Amen!

BREAKING-UP OF PROCESSION

To love thee, O Mary, is e'er my desire
In joy and in sorrow I never shall tire,
My heart I have given for ever to thee,
My love is thine only, O pray thou for me!
O mother of grace, holy, pure and divine,
Thy loving protection for ever be mine!

CHILDREN'S SONG

May with dew
Makes anew
Soul and body me and you.
Wood and vale,
Hill and dale,
And the sky so blue.
Sunshine bright o'er wood and field,
Verdure new the Spring does yield;
Flowers gay,
Bright array,
Bring us sweetest May.



THE INQUISITION—SCENE VI
A SKETCH OF THE ENTIRE STAGE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

SONG OF PRAYER TO THE
HOLY VIRGIN

Mary, holy mother mine,
And the sweetest baby thine,
O Mary.

Let us worship and adore,
Sing the glory evermore.
O Mary.

Mother thou of charity,
Look upon us lovingly,
Send thy solace's heavenly balm
Troubles of our heart to calm.
O Mary.

"LORD OF GLORY"

Lord of glory, power and might,
Heav'n and earth are Thy creation,
Source of darkness and of light,
Praise resounds from every nation.
As Thou hast been, wilt Thou be,
Now and in eternity.

Heav'n and earth and seas and land
All proclaim Thy might and glory.
By Thy side the angels stand,
Sing Thy praises and adore Thee.
Wonders countless come from Thee:
Holy, holy, holy in eternity!
Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!

Scene II

"O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL"

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O hasten, O hasten, to Bethlehem!

See in a manger,
The Monarch of angels.
O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!

God of God eternal,
Light from light proceeding,
He deigns in the Virgin's tomb to lie.
God very God,
Begotten not created,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord!

Scene IX

A VOICE FROM ABOVE

From heaven above to earth I come,
To bear good news to every home.
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing.
To you this night is born a Child
Of Mary, chosen mother mild.
This little Child of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

THE CHILDREN (invisible)

A spotless rose is blowing,
Sprung from a tender root,
Of ancient seers foreshowing
Jesse promised fruit.
It did unfold to light—
Amid the coldest winter
And in the dark midnight.

THE CHILDREN (entering)

The rose which I am singing,
Whereof Isaias said,

Is from its sweet root springing
In Mary, poorest maid.
For by God's love and might
The blessed Babe she bore us
In a cold winter's night.

CHORUS FROM ABOVE

Praise be to God in Heaven's throne,
Who gave to us His only Son!
Whereat the angels all rejoice
Welcome new year with loudest voice.

THE CHILDREN

Praise be to God the Father, the
Son and Holy Ghost! O Mary, holy
mother, to us thou ever dost thy
hand extend, O pray that Jesus thy
own dear Son grant us eternal joy!

FINAL CHORUS

Salve! Salve Regina, mater miseri
cordiae, salve!
Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve!
Vita et Salve Regina!

CHORUS

Now sing the praise of Mary,
Our mother ever nigh!
The virgin pure and holy,
Whom God has placed on high.
O Mary, holy mother, Queen
of Heaven e'er
Shalt thou in thy glory be
Now and in eternity!



Oertel, Berlin

EINAR NILSON



White, N. Y.

FRIEDRICH SCHIRMER

THE MUSIC of "THE MIRACLE"

By J. H. THUMAN

IN every modern pantomime, whether the subject be of today or ancient, the use of music is highly important. Being the universal language, music is best adapted to illustrate the universal emotions which must be expressed in every dramatic production in which the spoken word is omitted. And especially true is this of any production which is presented in a large auditorium, because then the imagination must be stimulated by means of the ear as well as the eye.

In "The Miracle" this wedding of music with the action of the drama is of greater moment and importance than in any other production heretofore ventured. It is not sufficient here merely to write a certain number of choruses and dance tunes for ballets, nor is it sufficient merely to stress, or underline, incidents in the dramatic action. In "The Miracle" every emotion of the story must be supported by its counterpart in the musical score, so that music may be said to be taking the place of poetry, or the spoken word, as well as assuming its own obligations toward the whole.

Reinhardt has always laid considerable stress on the use of music in all his big productions, whether they be Shakespeare tragedies or Molière comedies, or modern dramas. In "The Miracle" music has been called upon to a greater extent than in any of these spoken productions.

When "The Miracle" was originally projected, the late Engelbert Humperdinck, the well-known composer of "Hänsel and Gretel" and "Königskinder," the friend and disciple of Richard Wagner, was commissioned to write the music. As he himself stated at the time, a new problem presented itself. It was different from writing incidental music for a play, different from writing music for the conventional pantomime, different from writing the score of an opera. With this in view the composer approached his task. He steeped himself in the atmosphere of Vollmoeller's story which was the dramatic basis of the production, sought out the material best suited to reflect the emotions which were unfolded, and then proceeded to present them with all the modern means of orchestral and choral expression.

One of Humperdinck's favorite methods was to go back to folk lore for his material, and this method he pursued for "The Miracle." In view of the fact that the story of "The Miracle" was a medieval legend, that it was concerned in a great measure with the veneration of the Virgin Mary and that much of its action would have an ecclesiastical background, he naturally sought out the old hymns of the Virgin and those ecclesiastical modes which accompanied the liturgy of the ancient Church's services. These represented to him the heart-felt expressions of the aspirations, the moods and the emotions of the people, and these melodies he translated into a score of modern device and appeal. With full modern orchestra, with a large chorus and an organ he sought to interpret the action of the drama as it was unfolded on the stage. So completely did he succeed in his purpose that it is difficult to imagine a performance of this music without the action of the story, just as it is almost impossible to imagine a performance of the play without the Humperdinck score.

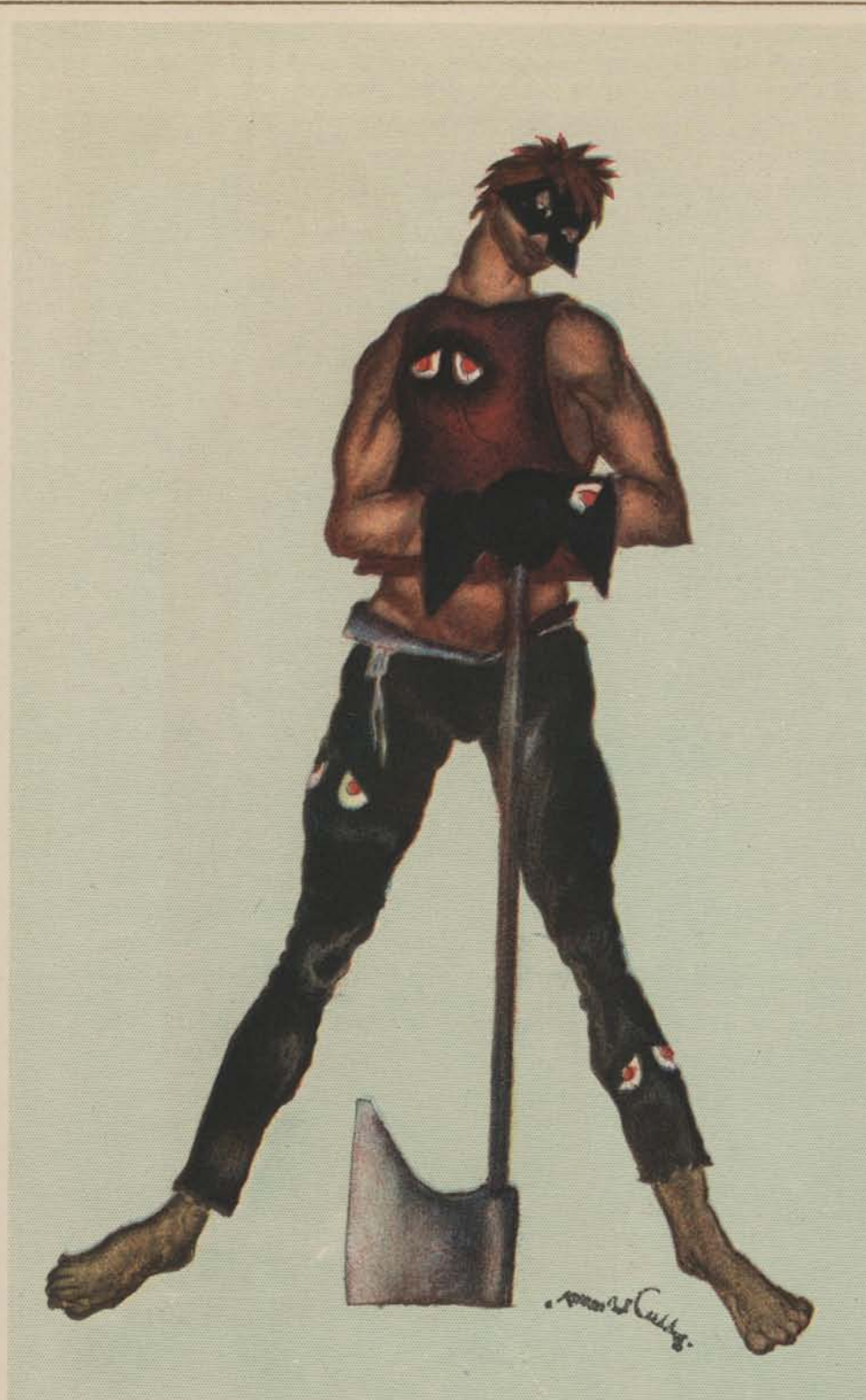
The performance begins with an organ prelude, while from distant cloisters are heard the faint chant of psalms on Gregorian tones. The ceremony of the investiture of the young novice calls for the use of Gregorian themes, taken principally from the Litany of the Saints, and the assembling of the populace into the cathedral brings forward the first choral number, a

well-known hymn to Mary, an old traditional hymn still frequently sung in churches, especially along the Rhine. Through the ceremony of the Benediction the organ plays in the nature of an improvisation and, after the prayer of the Archbishop and the miraculous cure of the paralytic, the organ again bursts forth in a stirring recessional, the melodic basis of which is another well-known Virgin hymn, rhythmically altered and extended.

After the young novice has been left alone, to close the edifice for the night, the orchestra enters for the first time—the introduction as it were of the worldly motives and agencies. From outside is heard the popular children's song, "Alles neu macht der Mai," a gay song of Maytime. The themes of this folk melody are characteristically developed in dance rhythms. The song of the young novice "Mary Holy Mother of Mine," and the "Ave Maria" are original compositions by Humperdinck. The "Ave Maria" is a motet for four female voices, sung without accompaniment, and is one of the musical gems of the score. The dramatic music which accompanies the temptation of the novice, her departure with the Knight, and the exquisite episode when the statue of the Virgin comes to life represent Humperdinck at his best. For the climax of the first act, which offers the most beautiful and impressive scene of the entire drama, he has made use of an old hymn of praise which is sung in churches of all denominations even to this day. Humperdinck has harmonized it impressively and has slightly altered its melodic line, especially in the second verse. He has also appended a stirring "Alleluia," bringing it to an effective and affecting climax.

The music of the second act, as used in the American production, is mainly the work of the late Friedrich Schirmer, whose death occurred last year in St. Louis at the end of the production's engagement in that city. Schirmer was a pupil of Humperdinck and had prepared the orchestra and chorus for the original production of "The Miracle" in London. He was thoroughly familiar with his master's aims and purposes and pursued the same plan of using traditional melodies in his composition. Among these is the "Pater de Coelis," which is used as a leit motif for the Czardas, and also serves as the Cantus Firmus for the Passacaglia accompanying the Coronation scene. He has also used parts of the Palestrina "Miserere" and parts of the Gregorian "Dies Irae," the latter distorted in the banquet scene. The finale of the second act is Humperdinck's work, a funeral march which is a masterpiece of counterpoint.

In the last act a "Gloria" for nine voices, written by Einar Nilson, the musical director of "The Miracle," is interpolated. As the action proceeds a single voice is heard in the song "From Heaven Above," generally attributed to Martin Luther, but actually of much more ancient origin. Muted strings take up the melody which, in the course of development, introduces still another folk song, a melody which Max Reger has made familiar to modern ears in his famous cradle song. The return of the Virgin to her pedestal as a statue is again accompanied by the same music which attends her descent in the first act, this time in anticipation of the return of the erring novice. Snatches of a Sicilian song to the Virgin mingle with the original melodies of Humperdinck in the scene when the awakening novice finds herself once more amid familiar scenes. The final chorus is based on the Gregorian "Salve Regina," to which is added a closing melody of pompous grandeur.



THE ASSISTANT EXECUTIONER
COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

A Ballad of a Nun

By JOHN DAVIDSON

From Eastertide to Eastertide
For ten long years her patient knees
Engraved the stones—the fittest bride
Of Christ in all the diocese.

She conquered every earthly lust;
The abbess loved her more and more;
And, as a mark of perfect trust,
Made her the keeper of the door.

High on a hill the convent hung,
Across a duchy looking down,
Where everlasting mountains flung
Their shadows over tower and town.

The jewels of their lofty snows
In constellations flashed at night;
Above their crests the moon arose;
The deep earth shuddered with delight.

Long ere she left her cloudy bed,
Still dreaming in the orient land,
On many a mountain's happy head
Dawn lightly laid her rosy hand.

The adventurous sun took Heaven by
storm;
Clouds scattered largesses of rain;
The sounding cities, rich and warm,
Smouldered and glittered in the plain.

Sometimes it was a wandering wind,
Sometimes the fragrance of the pine,
Sometimes the thought how others sinned,
That turned her sweet blood into wine.

Sometimes she heard a serenade
Complaining sweetly far away:
She said, "A young man woos a maid";
And dreamt of love till break of day.

Then would she ply her knotted scourge
Until she swooned; but evermore
She had the same red sin to purge,
Poor, passionate keeper of the door!

For still night's starry scroll unfurled,
And still the day came like a flood:
It was the greatness of the world
That made her long to use her blood.

In winter-time when Lent drew nigh,
And hill and plain were wrapped in snow,
She watched beneath the frosty sky
The nearest city nightly glow.

Like peals of airy bells outworn
Faint laughter died above her head
In gusts of broken music borne:
"They keep the Carnival," she said.

Her hungry heart devoured the town:
"Heaven save me by a miracle!
Unless God sends an angel down,
Thither I go though it were Hell."

She dug her nails deep in her breast,
Sobbed, shrieked, and straight with-
drew the bar:
A fledgling flying from the nest,
A pale moth rushing to a star.

Fillet and veil in strips she tore;
Her golden tresses floated wide;
The ring and bracelet that she wore
As Christ's betrothed, she cast aside.

"Life's dearest meaning I shall probe;
Lo! I shall taste of love at last!
Away!" She doffed her outer robe,
And sent it sailing down the blast.

Her body seemed to warm the wind;
With bleeding feet o'er ice she ran:
"I leave the righteous God behind;
I go to worship sinful man."

She reached the sounding city's gate;
No question did the warder ask:
He passed her in: "Welcome, wild mate!"
He thought her some fantastic mask.

Half-naked through the town she went;
Each footstep left a bloody mark;
Crowds followed her with looks intent;
Her bright eyes made the torches dark.

Alone and watching in the street
 There stood a grave youth nobly
 dressed;
 To him she knelt and kissed his feet;
 Her face her great desire confessed.

Straight to his house the nun he led:
 "Strange lady, what would you with
 me?"
 "Your love, your love, sweet lord," she
 said;
 "I bring you my virginity."

He healed her bosom with a kiss;
 She gave him all her passion's hoard;
 And sobbed and murmured ever, "This
 Is life's great meaning, dear, my lord."

"I care not for my broken vow;
 Though God should come in thunder
 soon,
 I am sister to the mountains now,
 And sister to the sun and moon."

Through all the towns of Belmarie
 She made a progress like a queen.
 "She is," they said, "whate'er she be,
 The strangest woman ever seen."

"From fairyland she must have come,
 Or else she is a mermaid."
 Some said she was a ghou, and some
 A heathen goddess born again.

But soon her fire to ashes burned;
 Her beauty changed to haggardness;
 Her golden hair to silver turned;
 The hour came of her last caress.

At midnight from her lonely bed
 She rose, and said, "I have had my will,"
 The old ragged robe she donned, and fled
 Back to the convent on the hill.

Half-naked as she went before,
 She hurried to the city wall,
 Unnoticed in the rush and roar
 And splendour of the carnival.

No question did the warder ask:
 Her ragged robe, her shrunken limb,
 Her dreadful eyes! "It is no mask;
 It is a she-wolf, gaunt and grim!"

She ran across the icy plain;
 Her worn blood curdled in the blast;
 Each footstep left a crimson stain;
 The white-faced moon looked on aghast.

She said between her chattering jaws,
 "Deep peace is mine, I cease to strive;
 Oh, comfortable convent laws,
 That bury foolish nuns alive!"

"A trowel for my passing-bell,
 A little bed within the wall,
 A coverlet of stones; how well
 I there shall keep the Carnival!"

Like tired bells chiming in their sleep,
 The wind faint peals of laughter bore;
 She stopped her ears and climbed the steep,
 And thundered at the convent door.

It opened straight: she entered in,
 And at the wardress' feet fell prone:
 "I come to purge away my sin;
 Bury me, close me up in stone."

The wardress raised her tenderly;
 She touched her wet and fast-shut eyes:
 "Look, sister; sister, look at me;
 Look; can you see through my disguise?"

She looked and saw her own sad face,
 And trembled, wondering, "Who art
 thou?"
 "God sent me down to fill your place:
 I am the Virgin Mary now."

And with the word, God's mother shone:
 The wanderer whispered, "Mary, hail!"
 The vision helped her to put on
 Bracelet and fillet, ring and veil.

"You are sister to the mountains now,
 And sister to the day and night;
 Sister to God." And on the brow
 She kissed her thrice, and left her sight.

While dreaming in her cloudy bed,
 Far in the crimson orient land,
 On many a mountain's happy head
 Dawn lightly laid her rosy hand.



A GUARDSMAN
 COSTUME PLATE BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

MORRIS GEST—MIRACLE MAN

By ASHTON STEVENS

I SAW Morris Gest yesterday. Same Morris Gest; same black suit, hat, tie. Poor as ever, the producer of the most costly spectacles in the history of the theatre. Plain as ever, the genius who isn't smart enough to be a snob, but, of course, happy as ever, the Russian-Jewish newsboy who "ate 'em alive" at fair grounds and grew up and moved the Moscow Art Theatre to America—from Bosco to Moscow in one romantic lifetime.

I don't think it is great exaggeration to call Morris Gest the Miracle Man of the Theatre. No other theatrical manager has done so much to make life worth living for the tired playgoer and the weary dramatic critic. Gest has done more than any other member of his profession to make the United States the center of the world's theatrical map. He is the man who brought us the singing-actors of the Moscow Art Theatre Musical Studio, and their parent Moscow Art Theatre, and Reinhardt's "Miracle," and our first Russian ballet, and Balieff and his so widely and imperfectly imitated Chauve-Souris, and all that was left of the sovereign acting of Duse, and productions of his own—"Chu Chin Chow," "Aphrodite," "Mecca"—the like of which our stage had never known, and I fear, will never know again, Gest being without competition and his own only rival.

Some day, I hope Morris Gest will bend his energies to the production of an American drama. But he is still young. And meantime every critic and playgoer in this land is under obligation to him for bringing the theatrical art of the old world to the local doorstep. He, whose education is nothing at all, measured by books, has been a powerful educational force for us aisle-seaters whose business it is to teach him his business. What the critics have learned from Gest would make a five-foot shelf. But most of it, I regret to say, is adjectives.

But "The Miracle" defeats words. There are, as you know, no words in it. And, so far as I am concerned, there are no words for it. I say this who wrote my head off when Gest first staged it in New York. I gave the telegraph operators some words they never saw before, nor since.

So far as I know, "The Miracle" is the noblest exhibition of theatre in the world. But you can't—at least I can't—write "The Miracle." It must be seen; felt; lived. It is the biggest, boldest, bravest assault upon the senses that I can imagine; as simple as a Gregorian chant and as stinging as a prize fight. Never was there such an uncompromising appeal to the senses and the spirit. My conscious mind has a perfect vacation at "The Miracle." For me it is the music of the eye. Never mind your intelligence when you go to "The Miracle." Just be receptive and it will do the rest. It will hypnotize you.

What master showmanship is behind this matchless spectacle the world will never know. Morris Gest tells most everything, but not everything. And he tells it romantically, not with the cold calculation of the auditing department.

From the start there has been master showmanship in his casting; a social sense as well as a theatrical. Not Mary Garden herself would have been a greater than Lady Diana Manners in the role of the Madonna. She was the most beautiful aristocrat in England; the ideal gentlewoman as Du Maurier and Burne-Jones might have pictured her together. And Lady Diana was, it seems, a born actress to boot. Gest genius plus Gest luck!

Well, she is better than a born actress now; she is a skilled one. Nobody associated with the Reinhardt staging of the Vollmoeller play senses its values more delicately than Lady Diana. She has given the richest days of her life to "The Miracle"; it has become a part of her life, and through it she has become one of the really great artists of the world. Her Madonna already belongs to history and to poetry.

You will not think of the Miracle Man while "The Miracle" holds you in its spell. You will think as little of the man who made it as of the players who act it or the workmen who toiled with its steel, canvas and paint. Gest is an afterthought—when you ask yourself how it all came to be.

No other theatrical manager challenges him. They all quit when Gest began to make his great, crazy dreams materialize, waiting for the bankruptcy court and the sheriff to catch him. Why not? It was a logical wait. And Gest has been twenty times a bankrupt in fact if not at law; he has failed a score of times on paper.

But somehow he goes on, doing in red ink what more solvent managers dare not do in black . . . goes on making the theatre a romantic adventure for those that love it as I do. No man has done so much to make the long life of the American dramatic critic seem short.

He has done these huge things without crashing only because he is as great a salesman as he is a showman. With this difference: that he hates his salesmanship as passionately as he loves his shows.

Gest is the best press agent in the world. No showman, no newspaperman, will dispute that statement. And he hates being a press agent, although all the money he owes couldn't tempt him to be the press agent for a show he didn't worship himself. But he loathes to go to editors, hat in hand or bullying, and exchange this worship of his for the space in their papers without which he could not continue for a single day.

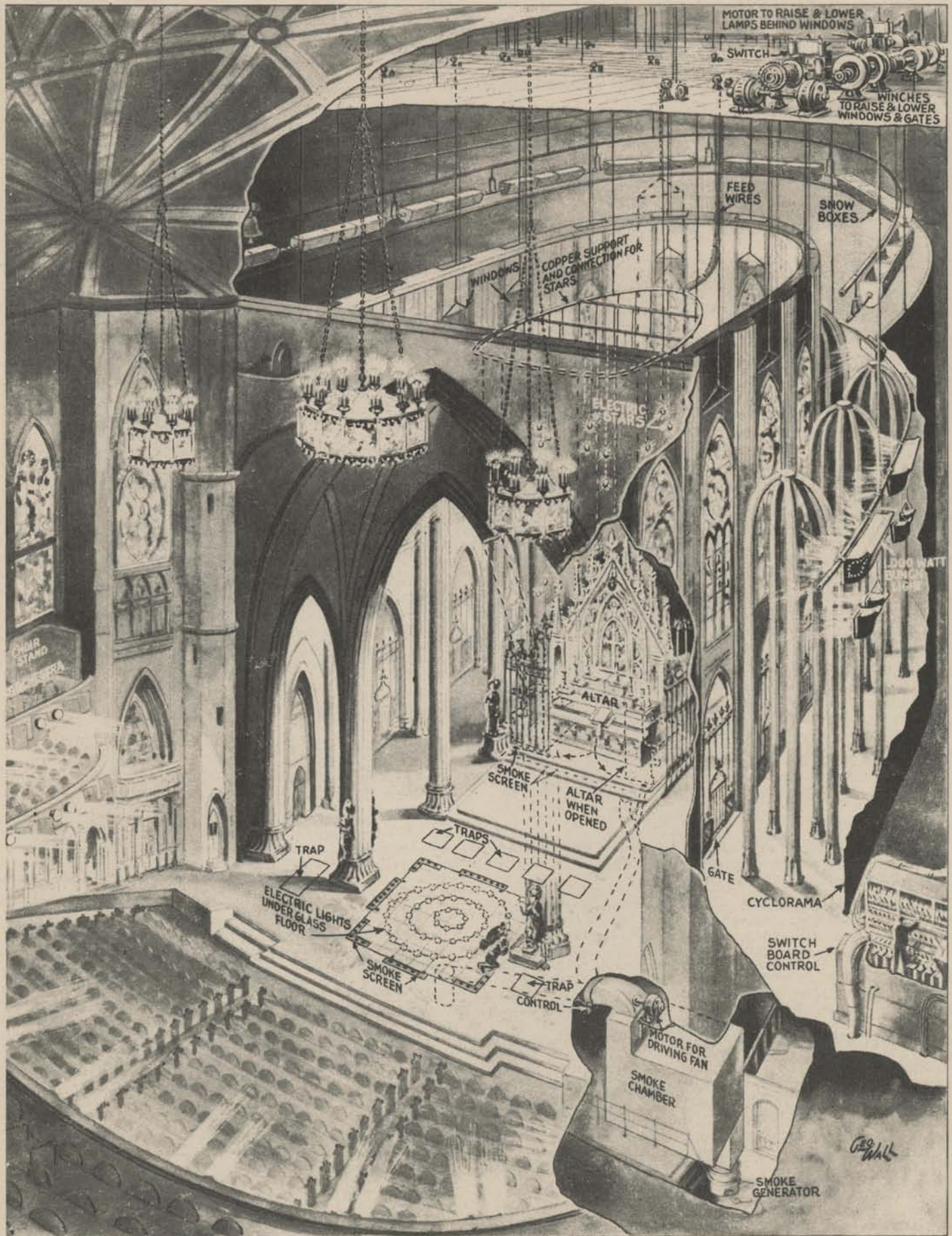
No man loves "publicity" more—it is his only reward on earth. But for this passion for printer's ink, there would be no Morris Gest. Without it he would stop; would never have started. His enterprises depend on those columns of the newspapers which are not sold for cash, but may be purchased with persuasion.

I have known editors to run at the approach of Gest, bent on editing their papers for them; but I have yet to meet the newspaperman who does not in his heart admit that Gest gives as good as he takes, that he never peddles a "story" which shames the man who prints it.

Gest loves romance and loathes notoriety. Of all great madmen he is the most respectable at heart. I once suggested to him the possibility of putting Peggy Joyce in a certain part—not in "The Miracle," God forbid! "I should be afraid of the publicity," he said.

He, who with a few weeks of school might have been a brilliant editor, despises what are known as "the press agent stunts" of journalism. He likes real news, and knows how to make it.

But what very few newspapermen know about this most widely newspapered of the managers is that he himself is ashamed of being an occasional bully or beggar at their door. I have not heard it from him in so many words, but I (who know him a bit closer than most of my clan) feel it as certitude that Gest feels that this "publicity," which is at once his breath and bread, ought to come to him unsought.



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SECTIONAL VIEW, SHOWING THE MECHANISM OPERATING "THE MIRACLE"

*On the Living Theatre

By Max Reinhardt.

IT would be a theory as barbaric as it is incompatible with the principles of theatrical art, to measure with the same yard stick, to press into the same mold, the wonderful wealth of the world's literature. The mere suggestion of such an attempt is a typical example of pedantic scholasticism. There is no one form of theatre which is the only true artistic form. Let good actors today play in a barn or in a theatre, tomorrow at an inn or inside a church, or, in the Devil's name, even on an expressionistic stage: if the place corresponds with the play, something wonderful will be the outcome. All depends on realizing the specific atmosphere of a play, and on making the play live. And yet, do not banish from the temple merely the traders and money-mongers, but also the over-zealous high priests who desire to rob the theatre of all its brilliancy and sensuousness, who would like nothing better than to turn it into a preacher's pulpit, who swear by the written word, and who after having murdered the spirit of that word, would like to press it back again into its place in the book.

Just the contrary is the true mission of the theatre. Its task is to lift the word out of the sepulchre of the book, to breathe life into it, to fill it with blood, with the blood of today, and thus to bring it into living contact with ourselves, so that we may receive it and let it bear fruit in us. Such is the only way; there is no other. All roads which do not lead into life, lead us astray, whatever their name may be. Life is the incomparable and most valuable possession of the theatre. Dress it up in any manner you wish, the cloak will have to fall when the eternal human comes to the fore, when, in the height of ecstasy, we find and embrace each

other. The noble dead of a hundred, of four hundred, of a thousand years ago, arise again on the boards. It is this eternal wonder of resurrection which sanctifies the stage.

Therefore, do not write down prescriptions, but give to the actor and his work the atmosphere in which they can breathe more freely and more deeply. Do not spare stage properties and machinery where they are needed, but do not impose them on a play that does not need them. Our standard must not be to act a play as it was acted in the days of its author. To establish such facts is the task of the learned historian, and is of value only for the museum. Now to make a play live in our time, that is decisive for us. The Catholic Church which aims at the highest, the most spiritual, the most supernatural, does so by means which appeal directly to the senses. It overwhelms us with the pathos of its temples towering in the sky, it surrounds us with the mystical dimness of its cathedrals, it charms our eye with wonderful masterpieces of art, with the brilliancy of its colored windows, with the lustre of thousands of candles, which reflect their light in golden objects and vessels. It fills our ear with music and song and the sound of the thundering organ. It stupefies us by the odor of the incense. Its priests stride in rich and precious robes. And in such a sphere of sensuousness the highest and the most holy reveals itself to us. We reveal ourselves, and we find the way to our innermost being, the way to concentration, to exaltation, to spiritualization.

The church, especially the Catholic Church, is the very cradle of our modern theatre. Therefore, down with the iconoclasts at any cost: They cheat the theatre out of its eternal bliss.

*From "Max Reinhardt and His Theatre," edited by Oliver M. Saylor, (Brentano's) 1924.

Criticisms of "The Miracle"

"Seeing 'The Miracle,' one willingly forgets persons and place. The thing has become a cohesive and dominant unity. It is above its authors and interpreters. It is become sheer communal drama, without precedent or parallel on the American stage."—DAVID W. BAILEY in the *Boston Evening Transcript*.

"All that we can say about 'The Miracle' is that we have never witnessed anything half so magnificent in the theatre before and never expect to again."—ROBERT C. BENCHLEY in *Life*.

"A harmony of color, nay, more, quite literally a hymn of color. . . The most spacious and resplendent expression of poetry in song and picture and pantomime in the records of American theatrical production."—JAMES O'DONNELL BENNETT in *The Chicago Tribune*.

"From the beginning of the play to the end there is not one word or hint that is not wholly respectful towards Catholicism; there is not one action or incident that does not point to the misery of sin and broken vows; to the beauty of holiness, the infinite mercy of God, and the loving patronage of Mary.

"It is certain that the intention is good; there is not one sneer at religion; nor one deliberate misrepresentation of Catholic dogma or practice.

"From the artistic side nothing but praise is possible; and it is interesting to learn that many of the principal performers and assistants are devout Catholics, and facilities are offered to all religious bodies who care to organize parties to witness the play."—(The Late) MONSIGNOR ROBERT HUGH BENSON in *The Tablet* (London), January 20, 1912.

"Wonder cannot describe it. Fear falls far short. Awe is nearer the mark, but that, too, carries the stigma of pitiless, hopeless inadequacy. . . What are words and phrases, such hundreds of them as were used on this occasion? Marvelous! Unbelievable! Immense! Stupendous! Wonderful!"—*The Boston Herald*.

"It is a most favorable production. I was very much impressed by the solemnity of the performance. The artistic presentation was given a religious atmosphere in keeping with the spirit of the medieval days of the old cathedrals. The scenic effects produced by the

exquisite stage arrangements, the lights and music were magnificent. Especially artistic were the group settings and the characters taken by the leads. The story is based on a narrative in one of the church's ascetic writers, Scararamelli."—THE REVEREND HUBERT BROCKMAN, S. J., Rector of St. Xavier's College, Cincinnati, O.

"An extraordinary event in the history of the American stage. Max Reinhardt has brought into the theatre more beauty than we have ever seen there before. And combined with this beauty there is a mad, terrifying excitement. . . The beauty of 'The Miracle' is continuous. The manner of the staging seems to us nothing less than genius. . . Achieves an intensity of effect new in our theatre. Norman-Bel Geddes who designed the production has set a mark in magnificence. And not even the Russians of the Moscow Art Theatre have made man in the mass more completely alive. The significance and fidelity of the tale are beyond belief. . . Morris Gest has just completed the bravest of theatrical gambles and he has won. As an achievement in stagecraft America has nothing to match it."—HEYWOOD BROWN in *N. Y. World*.

"Until Max Reinhardt or one of his successors devises a means of putting Mount Shasta on the stage without cutting it down materially, 'The Miracle' which opened at the Auditorium last night is likely to hold the record for the gigantic in spectacles."—C. J. BULLIET in the *Chicago Evening Post*.

"The cathedral into which the Century Theatre has been transformed by Norman-Bel Geddes is indescribably rich in color, unimaginably atmospheric in its lofty aerial spaces. The company of principals which Morris Gest has provided is of artists tried and true. But the feature of the performance which most impressed last night's audience was that which has been least heralded. It was the noble band of seven hundred supernumeraries. Everywhere the scene was multitudinously animated, vitalized, by the sweep of Reinhardt's imagination and his marvelous sense of detail. . . Gigantic and thoroughly worthy artistic venture. . . In the way of atmospheric largeness and splendor, nothing more original and

more beautiful has ever been seen on earth. . . Each individual plays his part as distinctly as in an ensemble of the Moscow Art Theatre."—JOHN CORBIN in *N. Y. Times*.

"The greatest triumph that the theatre can know—the priceless boon of complete silence—greeted this semblance of verity. . . Where was I? The theatre? But this was so real, so curiously untheatrical, so absolutely gripping in its appeal, that it was difficult to believe it was just make-believe. It was. . . It was Max Reinhardt's 'The Miracle.' It was the spectacle of which we have heard so much, but not enough. For once the realization beat the anticipation. . . Beyond doubt, the event of my thirty years of 'review.' It was something that battled for supremacy and got it. It was assuredly the triumphant happening of a season. . . Although I have made a practice through a strenuous career seldom to mention managers, I can not help giving to Mr. Gest the honor that he won last night."—ALAN DALE in *N. Y. American*.

"There is a strange, fierce energy about it that metamorphoses the spectator into a participant. . . The enchantment of 'The Miracle' is like nothing else in the theatre. It is so big, so tremendous, both in emotion and spectacle, that it seems to begin where the greatest thing you have ever seen before had topped its crescendo. . . 'The Miracle' marks a high point in the history of the world's theatre, and in the hands of Mr. Gest it makes theatrical art an international thing. No other producer has done so much as Gest in sponsoring the internationalism of the stage."—VIRGINIA DALE in the *Chicago Daily Journal*.

"Has the quality of timelessness: it was never new; and it will never be old. The groping faith and bewildered desire that gave birth to it will outlast the human race."—FREDERICK DONAGHEY in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*.

"To the eye, and in effect, it was not a stage cathedral: it was a real see church in the reverent every-day life of the Middle Ages. The beautiful architecture, the wonderful lighting effects, only emphasized the great central idea, that here, on that rich, candle-lit altar, was the dwelling of the Savior; that that red light burning in the sanctuary indicated His Presence in the tabernacle; and that the congregation, the audience in the auditorium, had come to pay homage to their Savior. The dim lighting and the hushed assembly of people only tended to heighten the semblance to reality. Music Hall had become a church; the audience had become the congregation. . . 'The Miracle' is a magnificent morality play, worthy produced. It transcends our power of proper description. All of our people should see it. It is, probably, the opportunity of a lifetime to witness the greatest drama produced upon any stage since the dawn of history."—EDITORIAL in the *Catholic Telegraph* (Cincinnati).

"The essence of the religion of 'The Miracle' is the essence of all the great religions. Christian and Jew, Moslem and Buddhist—all must find their hearts touched by this story of human hearts and human faith. . . Morris Gest's production of 'The Miracle' is probably a greater event in American stage history than anything that anybody has ever done before."—EDITORIAL in the *Chicago Journal of Commerce*.

"A new and very high mark has been set in theatrical enterprise and artistry; the presentation of Max Reinhardt's masterpiece is in itself a practical miracle worthy of comparison with that legendary vivification of a statue which is featured in the play. . . To fit together effectively the elements that give power to 'The Miracle' has required genius and art instincts of a high order. All of us who believe in a real mission for the stage, and in an always possible uplifting, have reason to be grateful to Mr. Reinhardt, Mr. Gest and their associates in the marvel at the Century."—EDITORIAL in *N. Y. Evening World*.

"In the case of 'The Miracle' there have been brought to bear all the spectacular effects that the genius of men and the resources of the stage can afford. . . New York is moved and shaken by this play as believers in the worst of the great city never could have expected it to be."—EDITORIAL in *N. Y. World*.

"Unquestionably the outstanding religious-theatrical event of many seasons, probably of all seasons. . . You will go away with a vision of beauty and grace and magnificence such as you have never beheld in a theatre before. Our hats off again to Morris Gest!"—JOHN FARRAR in *The Bookman*.

"It was a very beautiful performance. It will certainly arouse the kind of emotion that makes for religion, no matter whether Jewish, Catholic or Protestant. It is a great answer to the people who do not understand the ritual of the Catholic church. It is really a magnificent spectacle."—THE REVEREND FRANCIS J. FINN, S.J. famous author.

"Humperdinck seems to have performed a large, congenial miracle of his own. . . It is music that vivifies, intensifies, thrusts the bewilderment of mobs up to physical and emotional sweep. . . The music, like all else of it, is lavish, tidal, downpouring."—GILBERT GABRIEL in *N. Y. Sun and Globe*.

"It grips the fancy, it stirs the emotions, it staggers the imagination, it sways the sentiments, it rouses the religious instinct common in all mankind and it amazes by its astounding profundity despite its utter simplicity of thought and action."—WILLIAM SMITH GOLDENBURG in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

"Intensely religious in conception, and reverent in nearly everything pertaining to Catholic ideals. From beginning to end there is nothing in the representation of the Madonna which should offend Catholic susceptibilities or religious reverence.

"From a spectacular point of view it would be difficult to imagine anything more wonderful than the pilgrimages. The acting shows the most perfect grace and reverence, the very silence, almost breathlessness, of the audience indicating its high appreciation. The opinion may be ventured that most Catholics will find a maximum of good and a minimum of harm either in the theme or in its living representation. One thing the play makes evident to all, namely that disaster follows upon desertion of duty and the abandonment of religion; and that there is no peace of soul to be found except in the narrow way, in the straight path."—MONSIGNOR GROSCH, M.R., in *The Tablet* (London), February 3, 1912.

"Nothing like it for illuminative and suggestive detail has ever before been known to the theatre of the United States. . . No matter how abundant your anticipations they will be surpassed by their realization at the Century Theatre. . . Incredibly splendid and beautiful. . . Reinhardt's achievement, of course, is the notable feature of the American production of 'The Miracle,' unless it be that of Morris Gest, its financial visionary. . . Perhaps the most actual vision of a great dramatic idea outside of Oberammergau."—PERCY HAMMOND in *N. Y. Tribune*.

"The most beautiful and impressive, the most atmospheric and richly colorful stage spectacle this or any other generation of American theatregoers have ever witnessed."—ARTHUR HORNBLow in *The Theatre Magazine*.

"The event of the season, of the era, of all our recorded history of the stage. . . magnificently artistic, symbolic of sanctity and actual romance, entertaining and full of music and thrills."—AMY LESLIE in the *Chicago Daily News*.

"The most astonishing and astonishingly beautiful thing in the entire art of the theatre."—LUDWIG LEWISOHN in *The Nation*.

"The supreme achievement of Reinhardt. . . As veritable a cathedral as Westminster Abbey."—LITERARY DIGEST.

"The arrival of Max Reinhardt upon the American stage has proved a far more astounding and staggering business than any of his admirers could have imagined. . . Three hours of beauty and torture almost indescribable in the demands that they make upon the emotions of an audience. . . The spell of old cathedrals descends upon you. Your spirit is dazed and mystified by beauty. . . Reinhardt's extraordinary mobs sweep everything before them. . . An overpowering lunge into a mystic beauty. . . Reinhardt is magnificent."—KENNETH MACGOWAN in *Theatre Arts Monthly*.

"The total effect is tremendous. . . Represents an extraordinary outpouring of energy on the part of Morris Gest."—*In Vogue*.

"Of the truthfulness of the illustration there can be no question. Catholics who try to identify the confused mixture of ceremonial rites herein presented with the austere and orderly prescriptions of the present Roman Catholic functions will be bewildered and must remember that this is a theatrical attempt to crowd the richness and gorgeousness of medieval ritual into one or two scenes of pageantry, striving to combine multiplicity with the elimination of aught that might be distasteful or savor of actual irreverence. The result, of course, is bizarre, but not necessarily untruthful, nor even unreal, as will occur to those who have travelled much and seen even at the present day the interpretation of the ceremonial of the Catholic Church as affected by long standing customs or the conditions of village churches remote from the great centres.

"There is, moreover, a patient and honest effort to avoid any ground for complaint. Ofttimes the representation of things Catholic on the stage is apt to be rather caricature than representation. Here at least, is the obvious desire to be accurate even in detail. There is, no doubt, a jumbling together of different functions. But the religious processions are dignified, orderly, reverent, impressive. The fact that the lunette in the ostentorium is empty is an indication of the care exercised to remove any suspicion of irreverence. . .

"To the intelligent Catholic who can appreciate the exquisite use the Church has made of all that is beautiful and inspiring in human art to render fitting honor to the God who was eternal beauty, this attempt to present to a modern audience, with the aid of all the wonderful mechanical contrivances and resources of the contemporary stage, the gorgeousness of the external expressionism of that faith that made possible the monumental churches of the Catholic times will be an almost unalloyed pleasure.

"'The Miracle' aroused the greatest enthusiasm in England among Catholics and non-Catholics alike. . . We consider the production as possessing great educational possibilities if rightly viewed."—MONSIGNOR McMAHON, Rector of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, New York City, in *New York American*.

"The first hour of 'The Miracle' at the Century offers probably the most impressive hour any playgoer in any age ever spent in any theatre. . . The entire auditorium of the Century has been relined with the trimmings of a huge cathedral. The transformation is gorgeously, amazingly, even thrillingly complete. . . A great night for the American theatre. It proved at least that we can still do big things in a bigger way than any of our poorer competitors. . . Will probably stand for all time as representing the peak of America's dramatic spectacles."—BURNS MANTLE in *N. Y. Daily News*.

"The beauty, the completeness and the impressiveness of this scene have never before been equalled on our stage."—JAMES METCALF in *Wall Street Journal*.

"Reinhardt's 'Miracle' makes every other theatrical production in town look like a parlor trick. It is, without the customary feat of superlatives, the biggest and most beautiful thing that the walls

of an American theatre have ever housed. Just why I timidly limit the observation by sticking in the adjective American, I don't know, for surely no European theatre building has ever contained so richly thrilling a production. . . . Morris Gest has negotiated a superb job of entrepreneurship. . . . The scenic achievements of Norman-Bel Geddes stamp this young artist as the leader of the American school. . . . Stop reading criticisms of 'The Miracle' and go to see it."—GEORGE JEAN NATHAN in *Judge*.

"The combined talents of Max Reinhardt, Norman-Bel Geddes and Morris Gest have brought to the American theatre the most vividly impressive and thunderously beautiful spiritual spectacle, not that it has ever known—for it is too easy to say that—but, more, that it has ever dreamt of. . . . Beyond question the greatest production, in taste, in beauty, in effectiveness and in wealth of rich and perfect detail, that has thus far been chronicled in the history of American theatrical art. All the elements that go into the life blood of drama are here assembled into a series of aesthetic and emotional climaxes that are humbling in their force and loveliness. . . . The theatre that we have known becomes lilliputian before such a phenomenon. . . . For here are hope and pity, charity and compassion, humanity and radiance wrought into an immensely dramatic fabric hung dazzlingly for even a child to see. . . . There is in it the innocence of a fairy tale, and the understanding of all the philosophers who ever were. There is the sentiment that is eternally implicit in gentle faith, and the sternness that one finds always in the heart of beauty."—GEORGE JEAN NATHAN in *The American Mercury*.

"A great audience sat hushed, tensely attentive, at times breathless, at moments awestruck. This, while a new and splendid high mark was set on the score of spectacular drama as New York has seen it. . . . 'The Miracle' is stupendous. It is almost unbelievable. It is in itself a miracle, true and splendid of today's stage. . . . Back of all the rest stand Max Reinhardt, who created and staged the pantomime-spectacle, and Morris Gest, to whose liberality and personal supervision the production owes its magnitude. A combination of giants who have produced gigantic results. . . . Overwhelming, overpowering, all-embracing."—E. W. OSBORNE in *N. Y. Evening World*.

"Without question the most notable theatrical production New York has ever seen. . . . Marks the highest peak of Reinhardt's achievement; an achievement so fine that, whether it continues for a year or for a month, it will be remembered as a notable event in the history of the American theatre."—*The Outlook*.

"The layman or the priest reared from childhood in his faith, may detect here and there anachronisms and inaccuracies, but to the great world outside the fold of the Church, 'The Miracle' must be a powerful antidote against the poison of anti-Catholic calumny. To present to the non-Catholic world in the only way they are likely to behold it, the splendor of Catholic ritual, the sweetness of hymn and litany, the modesty and purity of convent life, the devotion to the Eucharist, the power of prayer and, over all, the mercy of God and the compassion of Mary to the fallen and repentant sinner, is an attempt which merits enthusiastic endorsement from all Catholics and goes far to offset the salaciousness and degradation of the modern stage."—THE REVEREND CLAUDE J. PERNIN, S. J., Department of English, Loyola University, Chicago.

"Never in the American theatre has so much pure beauty been crowded into an evening. Never has so great an amount of money been expended in the creation of a stage spectacle as Morris Gest has spent on this. And never has one been less conscious of cost in the presence of loveliness. We have had beauty aplenty here before, but never has it been so authentic, so free from ostentation. . . . 'The Miracle' is something of a kind you have never seen before and are not likely soon to see again. An event of great importance to the American theatre."—ARTHUR POLLOCK in *Brooklyn Eagle*.

"Unquestionably the most impressive and most gorgeous dramatic production ever staged in the United States. . . . Proved that Professor Reinhardt is fully as great an artist as he has been heralded and that Mr. Gest is an even greater impresario than he has heretofore been generally conceded to be. . . . In retrospect, one carried away from the Century, a wealth of gorgeous pictures and sounds that will be remembered for a lifetime."—LEO POLLOCK in *N. Y. Evening Journal*.

"The world's greatest dramatic spectacle is now on view at the Century Theatre. As a pageant, full of life, color, detail and movement, Max Reinhardt's production of 'The Miracle' exceeded all expectations. The transformation by Norman-Bel Geddes of the interior of the Century into a beautiful Gothic cathedral and the rest of the production are marvellous achievements and, Morris Gest deserves the greatest praise for his undaunted courage in carrying the work through to its present consummation. . . . This Reinhardt-Gest production is one of the stage wonders of the world."—STEPHEN RATHBUN in *N. Y. Sun and Globe*.

"It is a gorgeous and impressive spectacle. It is the high romance of art and religion. It is as colorful as life itself and always there hovers over it, the solemn majesties of life, death and religion. To any, whose souls are ascetically and religiously starved, it has many very high moments."—THE REVEREND FRANCIS A. REARDON, Pastor of Holy Name Church, Mt. Auburn, Cincinnati, O.

"St. Louis audience amazed and awed by splendor and solemnity of 'The Miracle'. . . . It has been reserved for Morris Gest and his associates to give St. Louis its greatest indoor drama creation. This much was apparent as the overpowering phases of the production were unfolded last night."—*St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

"Humperdinck at his very best—not for a moment forgetting the wonderful composition in 'Hänsel and Gretel' and the exquisite beauties of the 'Königskinder.' From beginning to end there was an almost constant succession of wonderful harmonies given forth by the orchestra or by the big organ, glorious choruses or exquisite melodies, while now and again the sonorous tones of the chants resounded through the cathedral."—CHARLES PIKE SAWYER in *N. Y. Evening Post*.

"'The Miracle' should be accepted as a whole. Its larger lesson of divine mercy should overshadow, as it does, minor defects. Moreover, to those who have never known the serenity of Catholic mysticism, this drama must bring a profound and richer understanding of things, hitherto unknown—the charity that conquers death, the love that pursues and rescues human weakness, the power and the glory of a mystic bond that can summon light from the deepest shadow."—R. DANA SKINNER in *The Commonwealth*.

"I think Morris Gest is the greatest power for beauty that the American stage has ever known, and 'The Miracle' proves it. . . . The spell of 'The Miracle' is hypnotic; one feels rather than thinks. . . . 'The Miracle' is greater than its actors, all 600 of them. It is the most miraculous thing the theatre has known in our time. Nobody, not even Gest, can tell you how miraculous."—ASHTON STEVENS in the *Chicago Herald and Examiner*.

"St. Louis is to be congratulated upon the presentation of that stupendous and wonderful spectacle of 'The Miracle' and due credit should be given to those citizens who have made the production possible. 'The Miracle' is admirable in color and form, in music and movement, in action and general moral purpose and tone. For those great features we are thankful and could wish the stupendous spectacle boundless success. . . . I consider 'The Miracle' quite worthy of the patronage of Catholic people. . . . I believe it is really an uplifting and highly moral influence."—FATHER MICHAEL I. STRITCH, S. J., St. Louis University.

"The Angelus, the various chanted hymns to Our Lady and the Laurentian Litany, with its more and more fervent appeals to Mary for help, and finally the effective introduction of the 'Adeste Fideles,' and the triumphant hymn of thanksgiving in the final scene, are all illustrations of fidelity to Catholic traditions, displayed by non-Catholic producers of 'The Miracle,'—acclaimed for its dramatic value in Protestant and Catholic cities of Europe and America alike. . . . The Catholic heart will beat in sympathy and throb with pride, as it realizes that others, not of the household of the Faith, will be thrilled and uplifted by inspiring visions of some of that eternal Beauty, 'ever ancient and ever new,' which shines, like softened and glowing-hued light, through the windows of old-world Cathedrals and streams, an unbroken flood of radiance, upon the altars and sanctuaries of the new world, close at home."—ROBERT COX STUMP in *The Catholic Columbian*, Columbus, O.

"The most magnificent stage offering New York has ever known. Worth a transcontinental journey to see."—TOWN TOPICS.

"In respect to size, vivid and artistic color effects, living masses in violent or picturesque movement, in general impressiveness and sustained interest, it excelled any spectacle yet seen in the local theatre. . . . Truly a magnificent, artistic, fascinating and, in various ways, an instructive panorama; a noble entertainment, with an appeal to intelligence and sensibility; an achievement of which any theatre might be proud."—J. RANKEN TOWSE in *N. Y. Evening Post*.

"A colossal achievement which has never been equalled on the New York stage. Even the many other big productions made by Morris Gest who is the moving spirit that brought 'The Miracle' here, are dwarfed by this new achievement. . . . The sensation of the present dramatic season. New York has never seen anything to equal this superb pageant, nor is it likely to see anything which surpasses 'The Miracle'. . . . Norman-Bel Geddes' magical achievement in turning the Century Theatre into a medieval cathedral is the most astonishing feat the New York stage has ever seen. . . . The co-ordination of players, musicians and workers behind the scenes is a masterpiece of stage generalship. The one production that no one should miss. . . . There are some things so great, so powerful, that they paralyze the strongest pen. This is one of them."—ROBERT G. WELSH in *N. Y. Evening Telegram*.

"With endless, criss-crossing processions; with sweet voices from high, invisible choirs lifted in the chants of an elder day; with the throb of organ, music, the twang of harps, the sorcery of a thousand candles and such dimlit and startling spaces as the old cathedrals had guarded as their secret—of such stuff is made the most prodigious theatrical production within the memory of man. . . . 'The Miracle' was carried from the ends of the earth by the insatiable Morris Gest, the greatest of our importers. . . . At once a play and a prayer and a pageant, and in its service the work of thousands of hands over many months, in many lands, has culminated at last in the unbelievably transformed Century, itself touched by some magic new in the theatre. The result was such a spectacle as this country has never seen before. . . . The most leaping ambition in the American theatre had attempted the theatre's most staggering task. For while Reinhardt made 'The Miracle' beautiful, Morris Gest made it possible. . . . 'The Miracle' in its scheme and its aspiration and its craftsmanship is like nothing we have had before. . . . Here was a pageant more astonishing and more beautiful even than we had been led to expect. Your correspondent's hat may be considered as officially off to Mr. Gest, Mr. Reinhardt and Mr. Geddes."—ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT in *N. Y. Herald*.

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