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THE PRODUCTION OF AN AMATEUR
MUSICAL REVUE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Elaine Adams Novak, A. B., A. M.

The Ohio State University
1963

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
Department of Speech
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the nineteenth century, the musical revue has been one of the chief forms of theatrical entertainment in this country. With the rise in popularity of television and musical comedy in the late 1940's, the number of professional musical revues declined; but the musical revue continues to be popular with amateurs because it can be written to fit the number and the talents of available performers and the tastes of the spectators. Also, it can attract and entertain large audiences. For these reasons, schools, colleges, universities, women's clubs, leagues, community theatres, church associations, service organizations, lodges, guilds, and the like often turn to the musical revue as a means of raising money, having fun, and giving their members a chance to exhibit their abilities in writing, acting, singing, dancing, and designing.

The Purpose

Statement of the purpose

The purpose of this dissertation was to design an organization and a procedure for the local production of an
amateur musical revue which would be appropriate for most clubs, schools, lodges, and other groups which wish to present a show of this kind.

Importance of the study

While many amateur musical revues are being given each year in the United States, no one has as yet written a detailed description of a suitable organization and procedure for the local production of amateur musical revues. The purpose of this dissertation was to offer an organization and procedure with the hope that they might prove useful and profitable for those who want to give this type of production.

Method of procedure

The method of procedure for this dissertation was to make a comparative study of the organization and procedure used for three different types of musical revues: the professional musical revue, a locally-produced amateur musical revue, and the packaged amateur musical revue.

First, a study was made of the professional musical revue in New York from 1894 to the present and the usual organization and procedure used in producing modern professional musical revues. Second, a study was made of eight locally-produced amateur musical revues presented by the Junior Department of the Woman's Club of Huntington,
West Virginia, the organization used for these shows, and the procedure followed in producing them. Third, a study was made of the Jerome H. Cargill Producing Organization, the largest packager of amateur musical revues in the United States, the organization which this company ordinarily establishes for a show, and the procedure used in producing Cargill revues.

After making these studies, the writer reached certain conclusions regarding weaknesses in the two types of amateur revues studied and a design for an organization and a procedure which should counteract these weaknesses and be useful and profitable for groups which wish to produce their own musical revues. The writer's suggestions in this regard are expressed in the last chapter of this dissertation.

Limitations of study

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to offer a complete history of the musical revue. A brief survey of the professional musical revue in New York from 1894 to the present is given in Chapter II to provide the reader with an historical background for a better understanding of this genre and to remind the reader that the musical revue was at one time one of the chief forms of professional theatrical entertainment in this country.

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to offer
a design for the production of a professional musical revue. The purpose of this dissertation was to present a design for the production of an amateur musical revue only. A study of the professional musical revue was made only to determine what could be found in the typical organization and procedure for a modern Broadway revue which could be utilized in an amateur production.

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to offer detailed information on comedy scriptwriting. It is recognized that finding or writing comedy material is one of the biggest problems in producing an amateur musical revue, but writing comedy is a large subject which has already been the topic of many books.

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to offer detailed technical information on designing, constructing and handling sets and properties, costuming, making up, lighting, and operating sound equipment. Many excellent books already exist on these subjects.

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to show a club how to raise money for charities or other purposes. It is recognized that the principal reason held by most clubs for presenting a musical revue is to make money for charities or for themselves. Suggestions, therefore, are offered in this dissertation as to how the club can operate on a financially sound basis; but the emphasis in this
dissertation is on presenting an organization and a procedure for producing an entertaining revue which at the same time will, it is hoped, make money for the sponsoring club because its excellence will attract large audiences.

Definitions of Terms

Musical revue

Since there have been many types of variety musical entertainment in this country, it is necessary to define exactly what is meant by the term musical revue.

The word revue comes from revu, the past participle of the French verb revoir, which means "to look over;" and from this definition it is possible to obtain one of the chief characteristics of a revue which is that it looks over events making satirical comments upon them.

The term revue can cover a wide range of theatrical productions from the large, spectacular musical revue, such as the Ziegfeld Follies, to the small, satirical non-musical revue, such as Beyond the Fringe. This dissertation, however, is concerned only with the musical revue.

In the musical revue, songs and dances, which may range from solos to large group numbers, are interspersed with specialty acts, blackouts, sketches, monologues, duologues, parodies, pantomimes, running gags, and other numbers. The entertainment is light; each unit is brief;
the number of people on the stage may be small or large; production is often spectacular; and there is no unifying plot which runs through the show, although there may be a theme.

Musical comedy and musical are general terms that are sometimes used to refer to a musical revue as well as to other types of musical entertainment, such as operettas, light operas, comic operas, ballad operas, musical plays, extravaganzas, and spectacles. There is overlapping among the various kinds of musical productions; but, in general, one may say that the musical revue differs from musical comedies, operettas, light operas, comic operas, ballad operas, and musical plays in that a revue has no plot. It differs from extravaganzas in that it does not feature ballet dancing as extravaganzas did when they first appeared in the United States in the nineteenth century, although ballet may be a part of a musical revue. Later, however, any elaborate production was sometimes called an extravaganza or a spectacle, and these terms were often applied to revues.

The musical revue differs from variety, vaudeville, and music-hall entertainments in that the revue is more spectacular in production and it may have a theme.

It differs from the nineteenth-century pantomime (which also contained comedy, songs, dances, and specialty acts) in that the revue does not feature the dumbshow
and the typical characters (Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot, and others) of the pantomime.

The musical revue differs from the minstrel show in that the revue does not usually have the minstrel arrangement of an interlocutor with Negro entertainers or white men in blackface makeup who feature Negro jokes and melodies, although Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, and others appeared in revues in blackface.

The musical revue differs from burlesque in that it is more elaborate and it does not usually feature baggy-pants comedians, coarse humor, and stripteasing, although some producers have tried to introduce these elements into professional revues.

**Unit and number**

Two more words which need to be defined are *unit* and *number*. When referring to revues, these terms are used in this dissertation to designate an episode which is complete in itself; for example, a sketch, a monologue, a song, a blackout, a dance, a specialty act, or any other distinct part of a revue.

**Organization of Remainder of Dissertation**

Since many ideas appropriate for amateur musical revues can be gleaned from a study of professional musical
revues, Chapter II of this dissertation is devoted to the professional musical revue in New York. A survey of the Broadway musical revue from its beginning in 1894 to the present is given. It is shown how the musical revue reached its peak of popularity in the second decade of this century and then how it declined to the current state of only a few Broadway productions each year. Next, a brief description is given of the organization and procedure used in producing most modern musical revues on Broadway.

Chapters III and IV are concerned with the amateur musical revue in the United States. Two different types of amateur musical revues are described: locally-produced and packaged. In Chapter III, information is given about eight locally-produced amateur revues, entitled the Gay Capers (of the current year), which were presented by the Junior Department of the Woman's Club of Huntington, West Virginia, between 1955 and 1962. Then, a description is offered of the organization and the procedure used in producing these shows. In Chapter IV, a brief description is given of the Jerome H. Cargill Producing Organization, which is the largest packager of amateur musical revues in the United States, and the organization and the procedure used in producing Cargill revues.

Chapter V contains the suggestions of the writer concerning an organization and a procedure for producing an
amateur musical revue which should be suitable and profitable for most groups which wish to present a production of this kind.
CHAPTER II

THE PROFESSIONAL MUSICAL REVUE IN NEW YORK

The purpose of this chapter was to present a survey of the professional musical revue in New York and a description of the organization and the procedure used in producing most modern Broadway musical revues.

Survey of the Professional Musical Revue in New York

The revue has had a long and honorable existence according to John Gassner, who wrote:

The revue was inherent in the primitive comic processions of Greece and Italy when the people celebrated the fertility of the earth and its children, as well as indulged in a greatly needed release from social convention. Wherever, in fact, villagers and townspeople sought release—in pageants, medieval saints' processions, country revels, and in seasonal festivals—the germs of the revue were present.¹

The Encyclopaedia Britannica traced the origin of the musical revue to the French street fairs of the Middle Ages, at which events were reviewed in comic song and spectacle.

The musical revue took its present form during the early nineteenth century in France when the Folies Marigny were presented by the Cogniard brothers at the Paris Theatre, Porte Sant Martin.  

Musical revues, which included satirical comments upon topical events blended with specialty acts and beautiful girls, became popular in Paris; but it was not until 1894 that a producer was brave enough to attempt an American imitation.

While the American musical revue was primarily indebted for its form to the Parisian revues, it also showed the influence of other types of musical variety entertainment which were popular in the United States in the nineteenth century: the pantomime, the minstrel show, vaudeville, music-hall entertainment, the extravaganza, musical comedy, and comic opera.

Pantomime was popular in the United States during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century; however, after George L. Fox, its greatest American exponent, retired in 1873, pantomime died out in New York.

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Minstrel shows were in vogue in New York from 1843, when the Virginia Minstrels first performed at the Chatham Square Theatre,\(^4\) until the latter part of the century; and there were minstrel companies performing in this country until the 1920's.

Music-hall entertainment came into favor when Tony Pastor opened his Opera House in 1865 and his Fourteenth Street Theatre in 1881.\(^5\) Before Pastor, there had been variety entertainment in museums, saloons, and for-men-only dives, but Pastor was the first to offer this type of show to the family trade. It actually was the same as vaudeville, as the term is understood today, but this name was not used until the 1870's. There is doubt about who was the first to use the French term *vaudeville* for a variety show, but possibly it was Sargent's Great Vaudeville Company which played in Ohio and Kentucky in 1871.\(^6\) Variety entertainment in the nineteenth century could also be found in medicine shows and on the showboats.

The term *extravaganza* was first used in New York to describe the presentation of the Ronzani troupe, a European


\(^6\)Ibid., p. 10.
ballet company which arrived in 1857. Eventually, *extravaganza* and *spectacle* came to mean almost any type of an elaborate production, as they still do today.

*Burlesque*, in the middle of the nineteenth century, contained slapstick, satire, and parodies of plays, people, songs, novels, and fashions. It was usually the secondary attraction on a bill which featured a farce, comedy, or melodrama. It was not until Lydia Thompson and her British blondes arrived in New York in 1868 to present *Ixion* that burlesque began the path to the Minsky type of entertainment.  

*Burlesque* in the latter part of the nineteenth century came to feature girls in tights playing male roles, rustic comedians in baggy pants and red noses, and "blue" humor.

It is usually said that musical comedy dates from the first performance of *The Black Crook* on September 12, 1866, although some writers insist that other shows should be given this honor. In any event, *The Black Crook*, which ran for sixteen months when it was first presented and was revived in New York eight times from 1868 to 1892, did much to start the vogue for musical productions with a plot.

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8Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-31.  
The arrival in New York of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in 1878 brought comic opera into popularity,\(^{10}\) and many more importations from London, Paris, and Vienna followed.

According to Cecil Smith, the plot of these early musical comedies, such as *The Black Crook*, was usually the worst part of the show; and it was inevitable that some producer would hit on a formula that would enable him to bring the glamour, the spectacle, the fun, and the variety of a musical comedy without the traditional encumbrance of a plot.

Vaudeville and music-hall entertainments were good in their places but did not warrant top prices in a large New York theatre. The Parisian revue was the answer; and George Lederer, the dean of Broadway girl-show producers, was the first to present an American musical revue.\(^{11}\)

**Nineteenth-century revues**

The first musical revue in the United States opened on May 12, 1894, at the Casino Theatre in New York. The title was *The Passing Show*, and the cast included Jeff de Angelis, Adele Ritchie, Johnny Henshaw, and Paul Arthur. Produced by George Lederer, the show had a book by Sydney

\(^{10}\)Ewen, *loc. cit.*

\(^{11}\)Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.
Rosenfeld and a score by Ludwig Englander. Containing imitations of well-known actors, parodies of contemporary plays, "a plantation dance," "Acrobatic Burlesques of the Amazons," living pictures, "Divertissement on L'Enfant Prodigue," and comedy by the Tamale Boys, it provided a little of everything so that nobody could fail to like something in it.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 120-121.}

There was little difference between this musical revue (for the first few years the name used was review) and the vaudeville, music-hall, and burlesque shows which were then being done. What made The Passing Show different enough to be given a new name was that it was an expensive production with a Paris reference which was given in a large New York theatre.

In 1895, Lederer presented his second revue, The Merry World, featuring Dan Daly and David Warfield. Warfield was also in 1896's In Gay New York. In 1897, The Whirl of the Town arrived; and in 1898, with much the same cast as its predecessors, the Casino musical revue was called Yankee Doodle Dandy. Gustave Kerker provided the music for the last three shows; all were staged by George Lederer.

It is interesting to note that these attractions
opened at the Casino Theatre in May, June, or July and played during the summer. They then did short runs at other houses, sometimes returning to the Casino for additional performances; but usually the Casino had comic operas and musical comedies during the fall, winter, and spring. The musical revue was considered good hot-weather entertainment, and this peculiarity was associated with the revue for many years to come.

Several poor imitations followed the Casino shows but did not contribute to the progress of the musical revue. Then, for the next few years, there were no revues because of the great popularity of music-hall entertainment by Weber and Fields and a growing number of musical comedies and comic operas. The next revue of importance to this study was produced in 1907.

**Early twentieth-century revues**

In 1906, Florenz Ziegfeld, Jr., went to Paris; and, prompted by Anna Held, who was then Mrs. Ziegfeld, he decided to give the United States a revue modeled after the *Folies Bergère*. Harry B. Smith, who wrote the book for Ziegfeld's show, planned to borrow a title from a current newspaper column, "Follies of the Day," and call the production *Follies of the Year*; but Ziegfeld, who was superstitious, insisted on a thirteen-letter title. The result
was the Follies of 1907, which opened on July 8, 1907, at the Jardin de Paris, Ziegfeld's new name for the New York Theatre's roof.  

The first Follies, which featured Harry Watson, Jr., George Bickel, Grace LaRue, and Helen Broderick, cost only thirteen thousand dollars; but it was an immediate success and started the trend for glamour, pace, and novelty, the main ingredients of the Follies. Offering a review of happenings in New York in the previous season, the show was described by a contemporary reviewer as follows:

Ten scenes—the action so rapid there is never a dull moment, a strong cast, careful coaching and thirty beautiful women displayed to the King's taste.

The following summer in the Follies of 1908 Ziegfeld presented Watson, Bickel, Miss LaRue, Nora Bayes, and Mae Murray in a more elaborate revue which made a survey of civilization from the Garden of Eden to New York in 1908. Miss Bayes rose to star status in this show with her singing of "Shine On, Harvest Moon."

The Follies of 1909, with Miss Bayes, Lillian Lorraine, Eva Tanguay, Sophie Tucker, and Bessie Clayton,

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featured Harry Kelly in a boisterous impersonation of Teddy Roosevelt on a hunting trip. Miss Lorraine was a success scattering flowers on the audience while singing "Up, Up, Up in My Aeroplane." In the Follies of 1910, she swung out over the audience as she sang to an accompaniment of Swiss Bells rung by eight other girls in swings. In this cast were also Fanny Brice and Bert Williams, making their first of many Follies appearances. Miss Brice remained under Ziegfeld's management for fourteen years, and it was in the Follies that she first did her comic version of the Dying Swan Ballet, sang "My Man," and played Baby Snooks.15

Other producers, seeing the success of Ziegfeld, followed his lead. After all, the formula was reasonably simple: take a couple of vaudeville or burlesque comedians, a line of beautiful girls who could parade and pose, some good singers and dancers, a few specialty acts, some sketches and blackouts, songs from one or more Tin Pan Alley composers, gorgeous costumes, exotic sets, and beautiful lighting; mix these together adroitly; arrange to have a climactic first-act curtain and a spectacular finale; and the result was a revue. There was no necessity for continuity, although sometimes there was an attempt at a unifying theme.

Lee and Jacob Shubert's Winter Garden Theatre opened in 1911 to present revues and extravaganzas. The first revue, which was described in the program as "a Cook's tour through vaudeville, with a Parisian landscape," had music by Jerome Kern and Frank Tours and sketches by Edgar Smith. In the cast was the young Al Jolson who subsequently played in many Winter Garden shows.

In 1912, the Shuberts revived a famous name when they called their revue The Passing Show of 1912. Eighty beautiful girls paraded on a runway for this production which starred Charlotte Greenwood and Eugene and Willie Howard. A rehearsal pianist by the name of Irving Berlin contributed a song to the first act. Thereafter, through 1924, a Passing Show arrived each spring or summer with such notable performers as Marilyn Miller, Ed Wynn, DeWolf Hopper, Fred and Adele Astaire, Charles Ruggles, and Frank Fay. More risqué than the Follies, The Passing Show featured scantily-costumed show girls. Gilbert Seldes noted that there was a lack of good music at the Winter Garden and that "the humour has always been broad and the slap-stick merry. The shows there always seem to be hankering a little for the additional vulgarity of out-and-out burlesque. . . ."16

In 1914, George M. Cohan and Sam H. Harris produced *Hello, Broadway!, "A Musical Crazy Quilt Patched and Threaded Together with Words and Music and Staged by George M. Cohan."* Travesties of *Pygmalion* and *Outcast* were offered by Louise Dresser, Peggy Wood, Roszika Dolly, and Cohan. There were also *Cohan Revues* in 1916 and 1918 which starred Charles Winninger. The latter show also featured Nora Bayes and had many songs by Irving Berlin as well as Cohan. Seldes wrote, "The high spirits and sophistication of the Cohan revues have not frequently been equalled on our stage. . . . The parodies and satire were merciless and spared not even himself. . . ."17

Meanwhile, the "glorifier" of "the most beautiful girls in the world," Flo Ziegfeld, presented annually elaborate new editions of the *Follies.* Ziegfeld liked the girl scenes, but he fidgeted when comedians were on. He had to admit that comedy was necessary to add variety to the *Follies,* but to Ziegfeld comics were just fill-in acts while the show girls changed clothes. Allen Churchill recorded that Ziegfeld once infuriated W. C. Fields by sitting mute through his comedy routine. At its conclusion, Ziegfeld asked an assistant, "How long does it take the girls to dress here?"

17Ibid., p. 138.
"Seven minutes," he was informed.

"Hold your sketch to seven minutes," he told Fields.18

Stars like Leon Errol, Ann Pennington, Fanny Brice, W. C. Fields, Ina Claire, Bert Williams, Eddie Cantor, Will Rogers, Marilyn Miller, Charles Winninger, Gilda Gray, and Gallagher and Shean appeared in the Follies. To design the Follies of 1915, Ziegfeld employed Joseph Urban, who tried to apply the teachings of Gordon Craig and Max Reinhardt to Ziegfeld's sets. Ziegfeld liked Urban because he designed settings which showed off the girls to their best advantage. Urban used plain colors on flat surfaces, soaring arches, and spectacular stairways. He also designed the lighting, and for some productions he planned the lavish costumes. Urban worked for Ziegfeld for many years and was the architect for the Ziegfeld Theatre, which opened in 1927.

Writing about the Follies, John Mason Brown recalled "their magnificent skill, their unmistakable opulence, their costly frigidity, their honor roll of comics."19 Gilbert Seldes attributed the Follies' success to Ziegfeld's ability "to create the atmosphere of seeming." Seldes


wrote that Ziegfeld could make everything appear perfect by a consummate smoothness of production.20

To celebrate the redecoration of the large Century Theatre in 1916, The Century Girl was produced by Charles B. Dillingham and Ziegfeld. Described by Variety's reviewer as "the biggest thing of its kind New York has ever seen,"21 it starred Hazel Dawn, Leon Errol, Elsie Janis, Marie Dressler, and Lilyan Tashman. It had music by Victor Herbert and Irving Berlin and sets by Joseph Urban. The show was such a success that Dillingham and Ziegfeld planned another elaborate production for the following year; but despite many top names in the cast and a score by Victor Herbert and Jerome Kern, Miss 1917 closed shortly after it opened.

In 1917, Raymond Hitchcock and E. Ray Goetz produced a small musical revue, Hitchy-Koo, starring Irene Bordoni, Leon Errol, and Hitchcock. Francis Hackett in New Republic described this show as "the delectable form of art that one dreams about." He condemned the big shows with their mechanized chorus men and girls and praised this revue

20Seldes, The 7 Lively Arts, p. 135.

highly. The producers had said that, on account of the war, they had avoided needless extravagance. "Whatever the reason," wrote Hackett, "the result is a vast improvement."22

The year 1918 saw "a musical mess cooked up by the boys of Camp Upton"—Yip, Yip, Yaphank by Sergeant Irving Berlin. In this show were such songs as "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning" and "Mandy."

Patriotism was evident in many of the shows during World War I including the Follies of 1918, which starred Will Rogers, W. C. Fields, Eddie Cantor, Marilyn Miller, and Ann Pennington. Opening-night spectators found on the seats slips of paper stating that the chorus boys were not slackers; each had been exempted from the draft. The overture was a rousing version of "The Star-Spangled Banner"; but the greatest moment, according to Allen Churchill, came with the tableau which ended Act I:

Conceived and staged by Ben Ali Haggin, the figures in this breathtaking scene run the gamut from two bedraggled French war orphans (female) to a Red Cross nurse and a dying soldier attended by rugged (but draft-exempt) chorus boys wearing Red Cross arm-bands. Other battle-muddy French and American soldiers are in the act of tossing grenades, throttling Huns, bayonetting Huns, dying, bandaging themselves, and charging Over the Top. High above stand the inevitable Follies Girls.
Kay Laurell, bosom exposed, delineates the Spirit

of France, while other girls (fully attired) hold the flags of other Allies. "Forward Allies!" the tableau was named. It evoked thundering applause.23

After World War I

After the war, the musical revue seemed to be the ideal way to express the tempo of the fast jazz age. The swift, lavish, glamorous revue suited the taste of the time, and in the 1920's the musical revue rose to its peak of popularity in all sizes of production: large, medium, and small.

George Beiswanger stated that in the twenties there was a big improvement in lyrics and music:

Lyrics that sparkled and were actually literate became the insignia of such men as Kaufman, Ryskind, and the two Harts, and were wedded by Gershwin, Rodgers, and Porter to witty and shrewdly composed tunes.24

It was also noted that the dancing became better. Ballet was brought into a few revues, and some choreographers demanded that the chorus girls perform intricate routines.

This period saw a revolution in American stage design. Joseph Urban, Robert Edmond Jones, Lee Simonson, Norman Bel Geddes, Aline Bernstein, and others were experimenting. Edith Isaacs and Rosamond Gilder wrote that at this time


revues were all competing in lavishness so that in retrospect the twenties seem "to have been bathed in a cascade of Dazian fabrics, of glitter and sheen, of plumes and rosebuds, changing lights and velvet backdrops making appropriate backgrounds for pretty girls."\(^{25}\)

The year 1919 saw a much-needed improvement in working conditions for actors following the Actors' Equity strike. During this summer, actors walked out of forty Broadway shows and prevented sixteen more from opening. All over town scenes occurred like the one at the Follies of 1919 in which Eddie Cantor stepped forward and told the audience, "My conscience will not allow me to play. My place is to stand by the actors and see that justice is done." He marched out of the theatre followed by Van and Schenck, Eddie Dowling, Ray and Johnny Dooley, and a number of Follies show girls.\(^{26}\) After about a month, producers agreed to meet Equity's demands; and the shows reopened.

The Follies of 1919, which also starred Marilyn Miller and Bert Williams, had scenery and costumes by Joseph Urban and a score by Irving Berlin which included "Mandy," "A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody," and "You'd Be Surprised." Ziegfeld set the pace for the large revues of

\(^{25}\)Isaacs and Gilder, op. cit., p. 477.

\(^{26}\)Churchill, op. cit., p. 287.
this period by producing each year through 1927 spectacular editions of the *Follies*, some of which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

*Hitchy-Koo of 1919* had Cole Porter as a composer, and the 1920 edition had Jerome Kern. The popular *Elsie Janis* appeared in several revues including 1919's *Elsie Janis and Her Gang*, which had Eva Le Gallienne in the cast. George White began his yearly *Scandals* in 1919, and from 1920 to 1924 his composer was George Gershwin. Although usually inferior to Ziegfeld's *Follies*, two or three of the *Scandals*, according to Ward Morehouse, "were the equal, in all-around showmanship of the best productions of Ziegfeld."27

The year 1919 also saw the beginning of the *Greenwich Village Follies*, which appeared annually until 1925 and again in 1928. Directed by John Murray Anderson until 1925, these revues were more sophisticated than their predecessors and more dedicated to the intelligentsia. Beiswanger stated that in these *Follies*, in *Balieff's Chauve-Souris*, which first played in the United States in 1922, and in *André Charlot's Revue*, which appeared in 1924, the "book and musical continuity moved toward intelligence in idea and

smartness in effect." The term intimate was used to describe these smaller productions which concentrated on wit and satire instead of opulence and beautiful girls.

Because of his activities in the actors' strike, Ed Wynn in 1920 found it difficult to get a job, so he wrote the songs and dialogue, staged, and starred in the Ed Wynn Carnival. It was so successful that he did the same for The Perfect Fool in 1921 and The Grab Bag in 1924.

In 1921, Joseph Schenck, Sam H. Harris, and Irving Berlin built the Music Box Theatre to house annual revues by Berlin. From 1921 through 1924, these Music Box Revues, which were medium-sized productions, had stars like Clark and McCullough, William Gaxton, Grace Moore, Fanny Brice, and Robert Benchley.

Another 1921 success was the Shuberts' Bombo, starring Al Jolson, who sang the memorable "April Showers" by Lew Silvers. Sigmund Romberg composed the rest of the score for this revue which played 219 times in New York.

One of the biggest hits of this period was Nikita Balieff's Chauve-Souris. Originally organized by members of the Moscow Art Theatre for their own diversion, the Chauve-Souris was reorganized during the Russian revolution by refugees who played successfully in Paris and London. Brought

28 Beiswanger, loc. cit.
to America by Morris Gest and F. Ray Comstock, they played 520 performances in New York. Later editions in 1931 and 1943, however, had only short runs.

From 1922 to 1929, a series entitled the **Grand Street Follies** played in New York. Starting at the Neighborhood Playhouse, the revue was moved to an uptown theatre in 1927. Smaller and less costly than its competitors, the **Grand Street Follies** proved that a show can be entertaining although it is not spectacular and expensive.

Earl Carroll began the **Vanities** in 1923 and offered new editions until the forties. He, too, featured a large number of stunning, undressed girls in big-budget productions. Ward Morehouse's comment on these revues was that "Carroll's **Vanities** swarmed with beautiful girls but they generally offered inferior music and mediocre sketches."^{29}

In 1923, the Shuberts began their **Artists and Models** series which continued through 1925 and appeared again in 1927 and 1930. Starring Frank Fay, Phil Baker, Aline MacMahon, and Jack Oakie, this series also featured the almost-nude show girl.

The **André Charlot Revue** of 1924, a small English show for which Noel Coward supplied most of the music and lyrics, starred Beatrice Lillie, Gertrude Lawrence, and

^{29}Morehouse, *loc. cit.*
Jack Buchanan. The same principals also appeared in 1926.

The Garrick Gaieties of 1925 and 1926, produced by the Theatre Guild, achieved such a high level of humor and music that many critics have noted that they set the style for small revues. With a score by Rodgers and Hart, these revues featured songs like "Manhattan" and "Mountain Greenery" and performers like Libby Holman, Sterling Holloway, Lee Strasberg, and Sanford Meisner. The 1930 edition, however, with other composers, was not as successful as the first two.

Many revues appeared in the 1920's. Some had such odd names as Bunk of 1926, Bad Habits of 1926, Bare Facts of 1926, Nice Nax of 1926, and Padlocks of 1927. Some were successful; some were not; but this was the peak period of the musical revue. In 1928, a contemporary reviewer, Ernest Boyd, gave this formula for a successful musical: he said that a show will succeed "if it has good tunes, good dancing, pretty girls, principals who know how to sing, and comedians who know how to be humorous. . . ."30

The most successful of several Negro revues was Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928, starring Bill Robinson. This show performed 518 times, but later editions did not succeed.

Noel Coward in 1928 wrote one of the happiest revues of this period, *This Year of Grace*, for himself and Beatrice Lillie. Another London production, *Wake Up and Dream*, starring Jessie Matthews, Jack Buchanan, and Tilly Losch, with music by Cole Porter, appeared in 1929. Calling this an old-fashioned and a typical English revue, Seldes wrote that there were "far too many sketches depending upon a quick black-out of the (fully-dressed) lover concealed in bed or cupboard and far too much singing and dancing allowed to Jack Buchanan and Jessie Matthews."^31

Also in 1929, there was The Little Show, which brought together Fred Allen, Clifton Webb, and Libby Holman in settings by Jo Mielziner. According to Cecil Smith, this production remapped the whole course of the revue. Smith stated:

> From the first measures of a paean to the celebrated hardware store that ran "Hammacher Schlemmer, I love you," it was evident The Little Show cherished a purpose far removed from that of the various Follies, Scandals, and Vanities. In it, the viewpoint of the Grand Street Follies was elevated to the highest Broadway level, and a piece for an audience with a reasonable I.Q. was given the advantage of the skilled presentation usually reserved for revues of less aristocratic pretensions.^32

Since the musical revue reached its apogee of

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popularity in the latter part of the twenties, it is interesting to read Benjamin DeCasseres' summary of his feelings after seeing musical shows for five straight nights plus two matinees in the summer of 1929:

Result: My soul, waking and dreaming, is a mass of pattering limbs, crescendos and decrescendos of clogs, saxophone caterwaulings, fluffy negligees, whirling pyjamas, Dionysian tangos, bathrooms, beds, scabrous jokes, convex stomachs, delirious ensembles, negroid bellowings, tights, l'jets and libido bites, cream-puff tenors, permanent-wave sopranos and basso-bluffo comedians.

He concluded that there was little art in these productions and continued:

Fury! Speed! Whip it up!—are not these Broadway musical comedies essentially American? They mirror our carelessness, our "step on it!" slogan, our liking for massed noises, massed beauty and mass leg production. Thus speaketh the Producer: Ingenuity without brains, gayety without joy, comedy without thought, nudity without shame (let him who is without sin cast the first stone at Shubert!)--such is the essence of musical comedy on our dear old Broadway in the good old summertime. . . .

The thirties

With the depression in full swing and with the new competition of musical motion pictures, the number of musicals declined in New York in the thirties. Some producers now realized that they had to offer a quality

33Benjamin DeCasseres, "The 'Artificial Paradise' of Broadway," Arts and Decoration, XXXI (September, 1929), 72 and 110.
product of wit, charm, and beauty to attract audiences.

Isaacs and Gilder stated:

The musicals of the Thirties continued to be built on the triple formula that had proved so eminently satisfactory in the Twenties: pretty girls, song hits and comics. But the average of intelligence and taste rose steadily.34

John Mason Brown wrote:

New impudence is manifest, good-natured yet demolishing. Satire, fleet, unsparing, and uproarious, has raised its welcome head. No one is safe; no pretension above exposure. A healthy disrespect is abroad.

Brown noted that smaller revues like the Garrick Gaieties had blazed the trail in this respect. He added:

There is now a great many things to be thought about in our musicals. They no longer permit us to be pleasantly relaxed. They demand us to be jubilantly alert.35

In 1930, the first Little Show’s stars, Holman, Allen, and Webb, joined Tamara Geva, Fred MacMurray, and Allan Jones for Max Gordon’s successful Three’s a Crowd. By this time, all good revues had to have a torch song, and Miss Holman’s was “Body and Soul” by Johnny Green. Arthur Schwartz and Howard Dietz wrote the rest of the score as they did for many other musicals of this era. Their smooth, sophisticated revues seemed to set the pace for the thirties.

34 Islaacs and Gilder, op. cit., p. 489.
35 Brown, op. cit., p. 268.
Earl Carroll's Vanities in 1930 had Jack Benny, Patsy Kelly, and Jimmy Savo plus a fan dancer, some coarse sketches, and a swimming tank in which several girls and one man pursued each other. Stopped briefly by the police, it was allowed to continue for a profitable run.

Billy Rose went into the production of musical revues in 1930 with Sweet and Low, starring Fanny Brice, who was then Mrs. Rose, George Jessel, James Barton, and Arthur Treacher. In 1931, Billy Rose's Crazy Quilt, with Miss Brice, Phil Baker, and Ted Healy, was less successful.

The Second Little Show in 1930 had failed to duplicate the success of the first; but the Third Little Show in 1931, with Beatrice Lillie, Ernest Truex, and Walter O'Keefe, played 136 times in New York.

Then, in June, 1931, came Max Gordon's The Band Wagon which, according to Cecil Smith, started a new era in revues. With music by Schwartz and Dietz, who wrote "Dancing in the Dark" for this show, and a book by George S. Kaufman and Dietz, it starred Fred and Adele Astaire, Tilly Losch, Frank Morgan, and Helen Broderick. It was the first American revue to take full cognizance of the revolving stage, and it had two of them.36

Brooks Atkinson began his review of *The Band Wagon* as follows:

After the appearance of "The Band Wagon," which was staged at the New Amsterdam last evening, it will be difficult for the old-time musical show to hold up its head. George S. Kaufman and Howard Dietz have put the stigmata on stupid display by creating a thoroughly modern revue. It is both funny and lovely; it has wit, gaiety and splendor.

Atkinson wrote that *The Band Wagon* "is a long step forward in the development of a civilized art of stage revues."^37

Ziegfeld produced his last *Follies* in 1931 with Harry Richman, Jack Pearl, Helen Morgan, Ruth Etting, and Gladys Glad. Though many talented people worked on the show, it did not seem up-to-date to the critics. Marjorie Farnsworth explained:

It should have been a success, but it wasn't despite the tremendous effort that went into it. The reason was that the *Follies* formula had become old-fashioned. It all began to seem passé, . . . a fact that Ziegfeld would not or could not recognize.^38

Ziegfeld, the great showman, who did so much to popularize the musical revue, died the next year—with debts of about five hundred thousand dollars. His widow, Billie Burke, wrote that "the world remembers Mr. Ziegfeld as the man

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who revealed a whole new world of color and light and gaiety in the modern musical revue."

Max Gordon in 1932 produced *Flying Colors*, a more spectacular production than *The Band Wagon*. Starring Charles Butterworth, Tamara Geva, Clifton Webb, and Buddy and Vilma Ebsen, it had music by Schwartz and Dietz and sets by Norman Bel Geddes.

Because of the depression, some producers decided to cut down on costs; consequently, George White's 1932 production, *George White's Music Hall Varieties*, was more modest in size than his previous shows. In 1935 and 1939, however, he returned to large productions of the *Scandals*.

In 1933, a topical revue, *As Thousands Cheer*, won great approval. Written by Irving Berlin and Moss Hart, it starred Marilyn Miller, Clifton Webb, Ethel Waters, and Helen Broderick and had such hit songs as "Easter Parade" and "Heat Wave." Brooks Atkinson wrote that "in form it is a newspaper revue with columns of type streaming up and down the curtains and headlines introducing the various numbers." He added that "this column can only give its meek approval to every item on the program." 

39 Ibid., p. 8.

Dillingham's *New Faces of 1934* offered Imogene Coca, Henry Fonda, and Leonard Sillman in a smart revue. Sillman produced the successful *New Faces of 1936*, which had Miss Coca and Van Johnson in the cast.

Despite Ziegfeld's death, the Follies went on. Backed by the Shuberts, Mrs. Ziegfeld (Billie Burke) presented the *Ziegfeld Follies of 1934*, starring Fanny Brice, Jane Froman, and Willie and Eugene Howard. The Shuberts also produced the *Follies of 1936-1937*, which opened in January, 1936, with Miss Brice, Bob Hope, and Josephine Baker. After 115 performances, it closed to reopen in September for 112 more performances with Miss Brice, Gypsy Rose Lee, Bobby Clark, and Jane Pickens. It was thought that these shows lacked the intangible Ziegfeld touch, although they were competentely put together.

Earl Carroll put out an economical *Sketch Book* in 1935. Featuring Ken Murray, it played 207 performances in New York.

The same year, Schwartz and Dietz were represented with *At Home Abroad*. Featuring the old around-the-world theme which had been used in revues and extravaganzas since the nineteenth century, it starred Beatrice Lillie, Ethel Waters, Eleanor Powell, and Reginald Gardiner and was designed by Vincente Minnelli.

In another revue for Miss Lillie in 1936, the
Shuberts employed Schwartz and Dietz, Rodgers and Hart, Moss Hart, and others for *The Show Is On*. Miss Lillie imitated Josephine Baker, spoiled Gardiner's attempt to play Hamlet, and threw garters at the audience while swinging in a moon. Minnelli designed and directed this production, which also included Bert Lahr's famous rendition of "Song of a Woodchopper."

As the United States recovered from the depression, revues of social consciousness appeared. The most popular of these was *Pins and Needles*, which had music by Harold Rome and a cast of amateurs from the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union who made up in enthusiasm for what they lacked in theatrical experience. The revue poked fun at the Republican Old Guard, the D.A.R., and Clifford Odets among others. The songs included "It's Better with a Union Man" and "Sing Me a Song of Social Significance."

To keep it up-to-date, they revised the show periodically, changing the name to *Pins and Needles 1939* and later to *New Pins and Needles*. It received high praise for raising the thought content of revues and ran for 1108 performances in New York.

In 1938, Max Gordon, George S. Kaufman, and Moss Hart tried to follow much the same idea in *Sing Out the News*, but they were less successful. It ran in New York for only 105 performances.
In the same year, Ole Olson and Chic Johnson brought out the historic **Hellzapoppin**, which ran for three years. Not for the intelligentsia, it was loaded with slapstick, vaudeville acts, running gags, and audience-participation units; but it achieved the longest run of any revue on Broadway.

In 1939, Nancy Hamilton's costly, intimate revue entitled **One for the Money** played about four months in New York. Called a "right-wing revue" (in contrast to *Pins and Needles*), it had only twelve performers, including Alfred Drake, Gene Kelly, and Keenan Wynn.

The Shuberts put Bobby Clark, Abbott and Costello, Carmen Miranda, and Jean Sablon together for a successful production, *The Streets of Paris*. Three months later, *The Straw Hat Revue* arrived, which is notable only for the fact that Danny Kaye made his Broadway debut in this show. Alfred Drake and Jerome Robbins were also in the cast of this revue which played just 75 times in New York.

**The forties**

Early in 1940, Earl Carroll tried another large *Vanities* revue, but by then the old ideas and names were wearing out and did not have their customary drawing power. It lasted for 25 performances. Producers of the forties were finding out that beautiful girls alone could no
longer attract audiences. George Jean Nathan wrote in 1941:

... The Simon-pure girl-show is, at least temporarily, a thing of the past and ... its place in the public affection has been taken either by the comedian show or the song and dance show, irrespective of the personal pull of the girls in them. The girls in themselves are no longer enough, as Earl Carroll not long ago found out when he returned to town with enough hot-lookers to have satisfied two or three old Ziegfeld Follies, but with, unfortunately, nothing else. A single Victor Moore or Ed Wynn or Eddie Cantor today draws more trade than any returned-to-earth eye-walloping George Lederer chorus possibly could. ... 41

In 1940, Nancy Hamilton followed One for the Money with Two for the Show. The cast again included Alfred Drake and Keenan Wynn plus Eve Arden. Betty Hutton and Richard Haydn scored great personal successes, but the show closed after about four months. In 1946, Miss Hamilton's larger revue, Three to Make Ready, played 327 performances, mainly because of the superb dancing of Ray Bolger and Harold Lang.

A small, intimate revue which poked fun at Hollywood, dictators, Aimee Semple McPherson, and others charmed audiences in 1940. Meet the People had no stars, but it brought Nanette Fabares to fame. She later changed her name to Fabray.

During the war, Hellzapoppin inspired the production of several revues which were more like vaudeville shows.

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These included the following: Ed Wynn's *Boys and Girls Together; Priorities of 1942* with Lou Holtz, Willie Howard, and Phil Baker; *Top-Notchers* with Gracie Fields and Argentina; *Show Time* with George Jessel, Jack Haley, and Ella Logan; and *Laugh Time* with Ethel Waters, Frank Fay, and Bert Wheeler. After *Hellzapoppin*, Olson and Johnson presented in 1941 *Sons o' Fun*, which played 742 times in New York, and in 1944 *Laffing Room Only*, which gave 233 Broadway performances.

Irving Berlin produced another soldier musical as he had done during the first World War. This time it was called *This Is the Army* and featured three hundred soldiers. Once again Berlin sang "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," which he had first sung in *Yip, Yip, Yaphank*.

Michael Todd brought burlesque into the revue genre when he produced *Star and Garter* in 1942 with Gypsy Rose Lee and Bobby Clark. It had a successful run of 609 performances in New York.

The following year, the Shuberts, in association with Alfred Bloomingdale and Lou Walters, offered the *Ziegfeld Follies of 1943*, starring Milton Berle, Arthur Treacher, and Ilona Massey. Staged by John Murray Anderson, it had 553 performances in New York.

One of the most expensive failures of this period was Billy Rose's *Seven Lively Arts* in 1944. With music by Cole
Porter and Igor Stravinsky, sketches by Ben Hecht and Kaufman and Hart, and sets by Norman Bel Geddes, it starred Beatrice Lillie, Bert Lahr, Jack Donahue, Anton Dolin, and Alicia Markova.

After the war, Harold Rome produced the songs and lyrics for 1946's *Call Me Mister*, which used all veterans in the cast with the exception of Betty Garrett. Dealing with postwar adjustment, it reflected the temper of the times and enjoyed a profitable run in New York of 734 performances.

At the end of 1947, Paul and Grace Hartman scored with *Angel in the Wings*. A month later, in January of 1948, Sid Caesar was the hit of *Make Mine Manhattan*. Schwartz and Dietz were represented that year with the delightful *Inside U.S.A.*, starring Beatrice Lillie and Jack Haley. *Small Wonder* with Tom Ewell was considered good-looking and engaging, but financially it was a failure. More successful was *Lend an Ear*, which had songs and sketches by Charles Gaynor and featured Carol Channing and William Eythe.

But 1948 was the last big year for musical revues. One reason for the decline in popularity at this particular time was television. The year 1948 saw the rapid growth of television, which used the revue format on many programs. When people could see good performers in revue material at
home for nothing, they were not inclined to pay to see it in a theatre. Another cause was the rise in popularity of musical comedies which emphasized the close relationship of story, song, and dance. As musical comedies rose in audiences' favor, the musical revue declined. A third reason was the rising cost of theatrical productions, which made a large musical revue too expensive for most producers. A fourth cause, which was noted by Gilbert Seldes, was the fact that musical revues are as costly to produce as a "book show," yet the latter can be sold to the movies, whereas topical revues can usually sell only a few songs. Also, as Lehman Engel pointed out, since sketches go out of style quickly, there can be no revue-revivals. Thus, professional producers, writers, and composers are inclined to look with more favor on the musical comedy than the revue because of greater financial returns.

The year 1949 had only one revue to go beyond 100 performances. It was Touch and Go with sketches and lyrics by Jean and Walter Kerr and music by Jay Gorney. Ken Murray's Blackouts, which had run for more than seven years in Hollywood, played only 51 times in New York.

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42Seldes, The Lively Arts, p. 134.

From the fifties to the present

There were only a few successful musical revues during the 1950-1963 period. Mike Todd's Peep Show in 1950, which starred Lina Romay and Lilly Christine, was a hit; but it was so much like burlesque that after the opening performance Todd was invited to a conference with New York's Commissioner of Licenses. Todd subsequently changed certain sketches and striptease numbers.

In 1951, Two on the Aisle, which starred Bert Lahr and Delores Gray, had a run of 281 performances. Produced by Arthur Lesser, this revue had music by Jule Styne and lyrics and sketches by Betty Comden, Adolph Green, Nat Hiken, and William Friedberg.

The following year two revues could be classified as hits. Leonard Sillman's New Faces of 1952, which was staged by John Murray Anderson and featured Paul Lynde, Ronny Graham, Alice Ghostley, Robert Clary, Eartha Kitt, and Carol Lawrence, was successful in New York and on the road and is one of the few revues which was made into a motion picture. Later in 1952, An Evening with Beatrice Lillie, which was directed by Eddie Dowling and starred Miss Lillie and Reginald Gardiner, opened in New York to play for 276 performances.

In 1953, Hermione Gingold, Harry Belafonte, Orson Bean, Billy DeWolfe, and Polly Bergen played 229 performances
of John Murray Anderson’s Almanac. Despite this number, this revue was classified as a financial failure by Variety.\textsuperscript{44}

Leonard Sillman’s New Faces of ’56, which brought T. C. Jones to prominence, entertained audiences for 220 performances but also made Variety’s list of financial failures.\textsuperscript{45}

The following year another Ziegfeld Follies appeared. Produced by Mark Kroll and Charles Conaway, it starred Beatrice Lillie, Billy DeWolfe, and Harold Lang but played only 123 times in New York.

The musical revue to have the longest run in the fifties was 1958’s La Plume de Ma Tante. A French importation which was written and directed by Robert Dhery, it enjoyed a lengthy and profitable engagement of 835 New York performances.

The year 1960 had A Thurber Carnival with Tom Ewell, Paul Ford, and Peggy Cass, which also was called a financial failure by Variety.\textsuperscript{46} Even less successful was 1961’s Show Girl with Carol Channing and Jules Munshin, which was


described as a small revue "that could scarcely have been smaller."\textsuperscript{47} The following season of 1961-1962 had three musical revues to open, all of which failed financially.

During the 1962-1963 season, three vaudeville-revues (or, as Billy Rose called them, "black-tie vaudeville shows") played successful limited engagements: Eddie Fisher at the Winter Garden, with Juliet Prowse and Dick Gregory; The Jack Benny Show, which featured Jane Morgan; and Danny Kaye, with Señor Wences and others. The only true musical revue, The Beast in Me, which was based on the fables of James Thurber, closed soon after it opened.

Summary

At the end of the 1962-1963 season, there were only nine musical revues in the history of the New York theatre to have run more than 500 performances. These were:

\begin{tabular}{lll}
Revue & Year of Opening & New York Performances \\
\textit{Hellzapoppin} & 1938 & 1,404 \\
\textit{Pins and Needles} & 1937 & 1,108 \\
\textit{La Plume de Ma Tante} & 1958 & 835 \\
\textit{Sons o' Fun} & 1941 & 742 \\
\textit{Call Me Mister} & 1946 & 734 \\
\textit{Star and Garter} & 1942 & 609 \\
\end{tabular}

In the 1920's, there was an average of 14 musical revues offered each season. In the third decade of this century, there was an average of 7; in the fourth decade, 6; and in the fifth, 3.\(^4\) There are, at least, five reasons to account for this decline: (1) the growth of television with its great use of musical revue material; (2) the rise in popularity of the musical comedy; (3) rising costs of theatrical productions; (4) the fact that musical comedies can be sold to the movies while usually revues cannot; and (5) the fact that revues cannot be revived.

While Broadway producers have, for the most part, turned away from the musical revue genre, the professional musical revue is far from dead. Off-Broadway producers are still interested in presenting musical revues. To mention only a few of the many which have appeared at Off-Broadway theatres, *Phoenix '55*, featuring Nancy Walker and Harvey Lembeck, had a successful run at the Phoenix Theatre. In 1958, Steven Vinaver and Carl Davis wrote and produced

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\(^4\)Ibid., pp. 369-371.

Diversions at the Downtown Theatre. It won mixed notices from the critics; but Bruce Savan, who believes that Broadway should develop a new style of revue, commented that "this kind of experimenting is certainly a step in the right direction." In 1959, the Billy Barnes Revue played Off Broadway for 64 performances, moved to a Broadway theatre for 87 performances, then returned to an Off-Broadway theatre for 48 more performances. Near the end of the 1962-1963 season, Put It in Writing opened at the Theater de Lys but closed shortly thereafter.

Nightclub revues are popular in New York and other large cities. At the present time in New York, The Establishment, a British revue, is the attraction at the Strollers Theatre-Club; Julius Monk's Plaza 9 is presenting Dime a Dozen; Ronny Graham's Graham Crackers is playing Upstairs at the Downstairs; and small satirical revues, some of them improvised, are the main attractions at other nightclubs and coffeehouses. In Las Vegas, the large Lido de Paris revue has been drawing big audiences since 1958.

Musical revues are also found at state and county fairs. Headed by several stars, some of these productions,

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which are often packaged by agents or producers, tour a circuit of fairs.

Summer theatres and tents sometimes present musical revues; and at a few adult vacation camps and hotels, original musical revues are produced for the entertainment of their guests.

In summary, one can say that a successful professional musical revue can be a large production, such as the Ziegfeld Follies, a medium-size show, such as the Music Box Revue, or a small revue, such as the Garrick Gaieties. Whatever the size, it should have good performers, tuneful music, wit, humor, gaiety, novelty, pace, beauty, and glamour—all fused into a technically-perfect production.

**Organization for a Professional Musical Revue**

The organization for a professional musical revue given on Broadway varies to a certain extent according to the size of the cast, the talents of the individuals concerned, and the demands of the script. The following is a brief description of the usual duties of the important people, exclusive of performers and members of the orchestra, in the organization of the company and the theatre for professional musical revues.
Producer

The primary duties of the producer are to raise the money for the show and to supervise the entire production. A successful Broadway producer must be a good businessman in order to control adroitly the financial side of the enterprise; but, in addition, he should be an astute judge of people, scripts, music, and designs.

To assist him, the producer may want one or more coproducers, a lawyer, an accountant, and a production secretary. In addition, a producer with a permanent office may also have a general manager, a press representative, a casting director, a playreader, and several secretaries and clerks who work for him continuously.

The producer customarily supervises the leasing of revue material, the preparing of the budget, the raising and spending of money, the hiring of employees, and the obtaining of theatres. He watches over rehearsals and the work of designers and press agents. He makes decisions regarding a pre-Broadway tour and/or New York previews, the seating on opening and second nights, the closing of the show, the post-Broadway tour, and the organization of additional companies. He should also keep backers informed of the status of their investment, see that the various taxes are paid, and try to keep harmonious relations with the many unions to which his employees belong.
Company manager

If the producer's general manager is a member of the Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers, he may act as the company manager. If not, another person is hired to fill this important position.

The company manager is concerned primarily with the financial aspects of the show. He may help to prepare the budget; assist in forming a limited partnership; negotiate contracts with employees; help the producer obtain theatres; assist in getting bids on scenery, electrical equipment, properties, and costumes; secure rehearsal space; plan the out-of-town tours; and make travel arrangements. He attends every performance; pays the company; fires employees when necessary; checks the receipts and bills; makes a weekly financial settlement with the theatre's manager; represents the producer in dealings with the audience, the company, and theatre owners' representatives; and performs such other duties as the producer may direct.

Authors, composers, and lyricists

Seldom is one person responsible for the music, lyrics, and sketches of a revue. In 1961, Charles Gaynor wrote all three of these for Show Girl, but he had the help of Ernest Chambers in writing additional sketches. It is likely that three or four people will have a hand in the
writing of a revue—or more. For David Merrick's *Vintage '60*, twenty-two people contributed material.

Whether one person or many be involved, the producer makes contracts with the authors, composers, and lyricists for the right to present the finest sketches, music, blackouts, and other material which he can obtain. Usually, the producer has the right to cut sketches and to arrange the numbers in any order he wishes; any other changes must be made by the author, who may be requested to attend rehearsals for the purpose of making alterations.

**Director, choreographer, and musical director**

For a musical revue, the producer normally employs a director, a choreographer, and a musical director, although sometimes for musicals with a great deal of dancing the producer may hire one person as the director-choreographer. Jerome Robbins and Gower Champion are two examples of choreographers who have combined directing with dancing.

Usually, however, a director is employed to stage the entire production, direct the sketches and blackouts, confer with the writers, and coordinate the artistic work on the show. A choreographer is hired to design the dances, train the dancers, and, perhaps, to stage all musical numbers. The musical director trains the singers, makes suggestions concerning the orchestrations, decides on the instrumentation
(with the advice of the orchestrator, arranger, and composers), confers with the musical contractor who hires the musicians for the orchestra, and conducts the orchestra during performances. The musical director or composers may also do the vocal arrangements and orchestrations, but more likely orchestrators and arrangers are employed for these duties. Music copyists are also needed.

All directors usually have one or more assistants.

Set, costume, and lighting designers

One person may handle the designing for the sets, costumes, and lighting, or three or more people may be engaged for these tasks. Each may need one or more assistants.

The set designer designs the scenery, supervises the construction and painting of it in union scenic shops, selects or designs the properties, prepares a hanging plot, and superintends the hanging and shifting of scenery at dress rehearsals.

The costume designer may design the costumes and accessories which are made by a costume house, or he may purchase already-made clothing. The costume designer supervises fittings and stays with the show until all costume problems are eliminated.

If a special lighting designer is not employed, the
set designer is in charge of lighting the show. Needless to say, good cooperation is needed between the set, costume, and lighting designers so that their work will have artistic units.

**Stage managers and key men**

By regulation of Actors' Equity Association, there must be a stage manager and two assistant stage managers for a musical show. Among other duties, they may assist with auditions; call performers to rehearsals; see that all concerned have scripts or sides; mark rehearsal floors to indicate where the scenery will be; keep two copies of the script up-to-date with line changes, blocking, and business; aid the directors in rehearsals; help with moves of the company; assign dressing rooms; assist with the hanging of scenery and setting of lights; and help to work out scenery, property, light, sound, and wardrobe problems. During final run-throughs and performances, the stage manager is in charge backstage and is responsible for maintaining the caliber of the revue. He and his assistants check on the attendance of performers; give thirty-minute, fifteen-minute, five-minute, "overture," and "places" calls; give all light, curtain, and sound cues; prompt the show; keep time sheets on performances; see that performers are properly made up and costumed; check bills for operating expenses before
turning them over to the company manager; rehearse understudies; call company rehearsals when necessary; audition replacements; and make sure that costumes are cleaned, scenery is repaired, and light gelatins are replaced when necessary.

The stage managers are helped by the key men and their assistants. The key men are the head carpenter, electrician, property man, and wardrobe man or woman. They may each have one or more assistants. An electrician may handle the sound amplification equipment, or sound specialists may be employed. In addition, the theatre also employs a carpenter, electrician, property man, and other stagehands to handle the houselights, the front curtain, and other duties.

**Press agent**

The press agent is responsible for all publicity, paid as well as free. He supplies newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations with stories and pictures, plants items with columnists, arranges interviews, directs the taking of pictures, and supervises the preparation of advertisements for newspapers, magazines, radio, throwaways, cards, houseboards, billboards, book matches, and so forth. He prepares the copy for the program and souvenir books, arranges for press seats for reviewers, keeps
a press book, and plans stunts to attract attention to the revue.

Travelling ahead of the company on tour, he arranges out-of-town publicity with the theatre's press agent, prepares copy for the program, hires local people who will be needed, schedules newspaper interviews and radio and television appearances for performers, and makes hotel reservations.

The press agent usually has one or more assistants to help him with his duties.

**Theatre employees and concessionnaires**

Employed by the theatre owner are the house manager, the treasurer and his box-office assistants, the ticket-taker, the ushers, the engineer, porters, doormen, janitors, and some of the musicians and stagehands.

The house manager is the paymaster for all house employees and is the theatre owner's representative in dealing with the producer and company manager. He checks the receipts and bills for the show and makes a weekly settlement with the company manager. He pays bills which pertain to the theatre and not to the show occupying the theatre. He sees to the safety and comfort of the audience, removes objectionable people, takes care of lost-and-found articles, and approves of refunds on tickets. He or the
treasurer orders tickets and checks them to be sure that they match the number of seats.

The treasurer manages a bank account for receipts, runs the box office, fills mail orders, makes arrangements with ticket-brokers, pays the taxes due on sold tickets, prepares the box-office statements which are checked by the house and company managers, and is responsible for his and his assistants' mistakes.

A concessionaire rents space from the theatre owner to sell refreshments and cigarettes. There may also be a concessionaire to operate a checkroom or sell souvenir programs, sheet music, or records.

Programs are supplied free to the theatre by a company which may pay the theatre owner for the privilege of distributing programs in his theatre.

Procedure for Producing a Professional Musical Revue

The procedure involved in producing a professional musical revue on Broadway varies according to the preferences of the important individuals concerned, but the following is a brief description of the customary method.

Leasing revue material

In order to raise money for a show, a producer usually has to have a script and music. Most prospective
investors want to see and hear at least some of the sketches and music before putting up money; therefore, the producer must lease most or all of the revue material before attempting to find investors.

A producer also usually has the material before casting the show, but Leonard Sillman wrote that for his New Faces revues he obtained his principal performers first and then had "the material written about them—to fit their talents and personalities."51

Written contracts are made between the producer and the authors, composers, and lyricists which give the producer the exclusive right to use the material for a specified length of time. The contracts state the amounts which the producer must pay for this privilege—the advances, payments for out-of-town expenses, and royalties—and give other stipulations; for example, contracts may state that fifty percent of the cost of preparing orchestra scores and vocal parts must be paid by the producer and fifty percent by the composers and lyricists, who own the scores and parts after the show closes, and that, if a number is not performed for three weeks, the rights revert to the author.

Finding investors

A few producers are able to finance their own shows, but most producers must find investors. For this purpose, a producer usually has his lawyer set up a limited partnership. Other types of financial arrangements are possible, but this is the most common one. In this situation, a backer provides a certain amount of money and no more, except for, perhaps, an overcall. (If specified in the agreement, the producer may call on each investor for an additional amount in case of necessity.) The backer has no say in running the partnership, but he is not responsible for actions taken by the partnership and is not liable in case of legal action brought against the partnership.

A budget is made by the producer, letters are sent to prospective backers describing the plans for the production, scripts are submitted to good prospects, and auditions may be held to tell them about production plans and to show them some of the numbers.

Hiring employees

The press agent, company manager, director, choreographer, musical director, stage managers, designers, and their assistants are hired in accordance with the regulations of the unions concerned. Auditions are held for performers. The director and the producer usually cast
principals, perhaps with the advice of the choreographer and
the musical director. The choreographer customarily chooses
the dancers, and the musical director picks the singing en-
semble, both with the consent of the director. The director
decides on the actors to be used. The producer may have a
lot or little to say about hiring employees, but he is the
one who determines the amounts of salaries and fees and
signs all contracts or gives his manager the power to sign
for him.

The director and choreographer receive fees, which
are paid on signing and during the rehearsal period, ex-
penses while out-of-town with the show, and percentages of
the gross box-office receipts. A principal performer may
also receive a share of the box-office receipts.

The designers receive fees according to the amount
of work to be done plus expenses while travelling on the
road with the show. The others mentioned above work for
salaries as contracted with the producer plus certain
stipulated expenses.

Since few composers do their own orchestrating and
arranging, an orchestrator, arranger, and copyists are
usually employed. As for the orchestra, a part of the
musicians is paid by the theatre owner and some by the
producer. After the instrumentation is decided upon, the
musical director confers with a musical contractor who does the hiring of union musicians.

The designers and the producer decide on the technical crew. The head carpenter, electrician, property man, and wardrobe man or woman and their assistants are then employed in accordance with the regulations of their unions. If sound amplification is important to the show, a sound specialist may be employed rather than entrusting this work to an electrician.

Obtaining theatres

The producer must negotiate with theatre owners for New York and out-of-town theatres in which to play. Some producers, such as Billy Rose and Feuer and Martin, own their own New York theatres; but most producers do not.

Contracts vary, but the usual arrangement in New York is for the theatre owner to get thirty percent of the gross box-office receipts with seventy percent going to the producer. For this amount, the theatre owner pays for a part of the show's advertising, some of the stagehands and musicians, and all of the theatre help (the house manager, the treasurer and his assistants, the ticket-taker, ushers, the engineer, porters, doormen, and janitors).
Designing the revue

The set designer begins work on a musical revue about twelve weeks before dress rehearsals since the union scenic shops demand six weeks to construct and paint the sets for a musical. The designer submits his sketches and/or models for the approval of the producer and then makes working drawings. He may help to obtain estimates for the construction and painting of the scenery; and, after the producer decides on which shops to use, the designer supervises the work in those shops.

The set designer selects the properties, including draperies and furniture, which are usually rented or bought; however, if they are unobtainable, they are built to the designer's specifications in a union shop.

The set designer prepares the hanging plot and attends the dress rehearsals before the first out-of-town and New York openings to make sure that the scenery is hung and shifted as he had planned and to take care of changes brought about by alterations in the script.

The costume designer submits sketches for the approval of the producer. He then purchases already-made clothing and accessories or selects the fabrics and supervises the fittings of costumes which are made by a costume company. Special consideration must be given to dance costumes which must be designed to give freedom of movement.
and to withstand great stress and strain. Before the out-of-town opening, a costume parade is held at the costumer's to check the wearing apparel before dress rehearsals begin.

The set designer or a special lighting designer decides on the needed lighting equipment and plans the light plot with the electrician and stage managers. Lighting equipment is usually rented for the production. Although work on lights goes on during technical and dress rehearsals, a final light plot cannot be obtained until the show is set, because each change in the script probably necessitates a change in the lighting.

Sound amplification equipment, if needed, is also rented for the revue and is operated by an electrician or sound specialist.

Rehearsing the revue

Rehearsal space is obtained by the producer or company manager, and five weeks of rehearsals begin. Usually in the beginning, the singing ensemble rehearses with the musical director, dancers with the choreographer, and principals and actors with the director. These separate rehearsals may continue for a few days or much longer, if necessary. During this period, featured singers and
dancers must also work in their private rehearsals with the musical director and choreographer.

After these preliminary rehearsals, units are put together. Then, later, run-throughs are held of entire acts and, finally, the complete show.

Work on the script and music continues through the rehearsal and tryout period. Sometimes the music for dances is not written until the choreographer has an opportunity to rehearse with the dancers; often the overture, which contains the best music from the revue, is not written until just before the New York opening. Because the revue has a flexible structure, ineffective units may be replaced by new songs, dances, sketches, and specialty acts until the New York opening.

If the show is to open out-of-town, the first rehearsal with the orchestra, composed of a few musicians from New York with additional members from the local union, is held in that city. After the sets are hung and lighted in the out-of-town theatre, technical rehearsals for lights, scenery, properties, and sound are held. Then come full dress rehearsals and, finally, the first performance.

During the entire pre-Broadway tour, rehearsals may continue; and after the company returns to New York, additional rehearsals are held before the big opening night.
Trying out the revue

Because of the many difficulties involved in an out-of-town tryout, some shows are opening in New York without one. *The Beast in Me*, a musical revue which played briefly in 1963, had ten New York preview performances at reduced prices instead of going on tour.

When a production does have an out-of-town tryout, an advance agent is sent ahead of the show to secure publicity and make preparations. The company manager, assisted by the stage managers, plans the tour and makes travel arrangements. The company travels by railroad; the sets are transported by union truckers to and from the railway stations where they are shipped in boxcars.

During the tryout period, units may be changed or replaced, numbers perfected, and cast changes made—all while the company is trying to give eight performances a week.

Performing the revue

During performances, the stage manager is in charge backstage supervising performers and stagehands with the help of his assistants. Makeup is provided by each performer unless something special is desired; however, it is the stage manager's responsibility to see that all performers are properly made up and costumed before going
It is also his responsibility to see that scenery and properties are in their correct places and that light, sound, and curtain cues are executed properly.

In the pit, the musical director as conductor of the orchestra has a great deal to do with the smoothness of the performance. He sets the tempo of each number, reminds the musicians of changes, sometimes prompts singers who forget words, and, if he is a good conductor, offers smiling encouragement to all performers.

In the front of the house are stationed employees of the theatre owner to sell tickets and take care of the audience. Concessionaires offer refreshments, cigarettes, souvenir programs, and music. The company manager is on hand to represent the producer, and the house manager is present to represent the theatre owner. The press agent is in and out of the theatre as he continues working for publicity until the show closes.
CHAPTER III

THE LOCALLY-PRODUCED AMATEUR MUSICAL REVUE

While not many professional musical revues are being produced on Broadway at this time, there are many amateur musical revues being given each year in the United States. Although television was one of the main causes of the decline of the professional musical revue, it may well have furnished an impetus to the amateur musical revue. As local clubs watched television revues starring Jackie Gleason, Perry Como, Garry Moore, Bob Hope, and others, they may have been inspired to create their own revues.

In the early 1950's, Richard Beckhard wrote:

Every year the local Rotary or Junior League or American Legion organization of most towns puts on a fund-raising event. These events used to take the form of carnivals, or bingo games, or country fairs. In recent years, many of these organizations have turned to the theatre and have presented a revue or "follies" production.1

To cite just one example of a university organization which has turned from original musical comedies to musical revues,

John S. Wilson noted in 1960 that at Princeton University's Triangle Club "the previously unchanging use of a book show, no matter how flimsy the book, is giving way to revues."2

As Lehman Engel pointed out, people with limited experience find that "the revue is a 'natural.'" He wrote:

Since all of the parts are short (sketches, songs and dances) there is not the problem of creating a sustained, fully developed piece as in a "book" show or operetta.3

Clubs also like the facts that revues can give each person who has a particular theatrical talent the opportunity to exhibit it and revues can be written to use all of the people who want to get on the stage.

Some amateur musical revues are produced by packagers; many are produced locally by individual clubs, leagues, school organizations, church associations, and other groups. This chapter describes the activities of one club, the Junior Department of the Woman's Club of Huntington, West Virginia, which since 1955 has produced an annual musical revue entitled the Gay Capers. Other amateur groups may use different organizations and procedures; but since the Gay Capers revues have attracted and entertained large

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3 Engel. op. cit., p. 23.
audiences each year and have been successful financially, it was thought that a study of these eight productions might contribute substantially to the design of an organization and procedure which would be appropriate for most groups which want to present an amateur musical revue. After a brief look at all eight editions of the Gay Capers, this chapter describes the organization and the procedure usually used in producing these shows.

The Gay Capers

There are many progressive organizations in Huntington, West Virginia, which have done much to further the welfare of this city of 84,000 inhabitants, but one of the most active groups is the Junior Department of the Woman's Club. Composed of 100 to 130 young ladies of 18 to 35 years of age, the Junior Department has aided many charities in the Huntington area through its activities. The founder of the department, Mrs. Samuel G. Biggs, stated on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary:

The department has grown, thrived and progressed until the present time and has become one of the powerful influences in the city, state and nation. Their influence has been felt wherever there was need for help.⁴

The Juniors have several fund-raising projects each year, but the Gay Capers is the principal one. From the profits of the Gay Capers alone, they have contributed $23,371 to charities since 1955. Among other donations, they gave $2,500 to a local hospital building fund, $2,700 to a retarded child program, $4,928 for library books for public schools, $1,650 for recreation equipment for a state mental hospital, $1,093 to the Boys Club of Huntington, $2,120 to a sheltered workshop for mentally-retarded adults, and $1,000 toward an ambulance for the Huntington Fire Department.

The Junior Department first became interested in the idea of raising money for charities by putting on a musical revue when it was approached in 1951 by a professional packager of amateur musical revues. The Juniors made an agreement with this producing organization to the effect that the latter would write, direct, and costume a musical revue with Huntington talent for fifty percent of the profits. Accordingly, a professional director was sent to Huntington from New York with sketches, dance routines, music, and costumes. After two weeks of daily rehearsals, the revue, which was called the Follies of 1951, was presented for two nights at a high school auditorium. They charged $1.00 for general admission, $1.50 for reserved seats, and $5.00 for patrons. They sold advertising for
the program and refreshments at performances. After all expenses were paid, including the fee to the packager, the Juniors had $1,359 with which they purchased an iron lung for a local hospital.

For the next three years, the same producing organization contacted the Junior Department about putting on another revue; but the Juniors refused. They liked the idea of giving a revue to raise money for charities, but they had three main objections to working with the packager: (1) they thought that too much money had gone to the producer and not enough to charities; (2) they did not like the costumes which had been shipped in for their use; and (3) they believed that the sketches had not been as amusing as they should have been. Accordingly, in 1955, they voted to present another musical revue, but this time they planned to produce the show themselves. In this way, they could control production expenses and make, they hoped, more for charities; they could design and sew their own costumes; and they could supervise the content of the revue to produce, they hoped, a more entertaining show.

The job of organizing the 1955 revue was handed to the chairman of the ways and means committee, who proceeded to appoint a chairman and ten committees for the show. Recognizing the need for professional direction and accompaniment, they employed an experienced director, a dance
director, and a well-known local orchestra; but members of the Junior Department and their husbands and friends did all of the rest. About one hundred appeared onstage, and many more assisted backstage. Calling their production the Gay Capers, they gave two performances in a high school auditorium. By charging $1.00 for general admission, $1.50 for reserved seats, and $5.00 for patrons, by selling advertising for the program and candy, popcorn, and soft drinks at performances, they made a net profit of over $3,000.

The Juniors were pleased for two reasons: (1) they had made about $1,640 more by producing the show themselves than by working with a packager, and (2) the 1955 revue had been better received by the audience than the packaged show. Encouraged by these facts, they decided to produce a more elaborate show in 1956. For this production, they rented for two nights the largest theatre in Huntington, the Keith-Albee Theatre, which has 2,550 seats.

Retaining the same director, dance director, and orchestra from the first year, they added to their professional help by employing a musical arranger, a rehearsal pianist, and an assistant dance director. Performing in the Keith-Albee Theatre also necessitated renting sound equipment and hiring a union sound operator and seven union stagehands and electricians. Otherwise, the organization of the revue, the planning of numbers, the writing of
special material, the performing, the costuming, the sets, the properties, and the business work were in the hands of the Juniors and their husbands and friends. Grossing over $7,193 with two performances of the *Gay Capers of '56*, they netted $3,668 for donations to charities.

Since 1956, expenses for the revues have varied from $3,525 to $4,412. The net profit for 1957 was $2,495; for 1958, $3,382; and for 1959, $2,827. In 1960, the price for general admission was raised to $1.25, and there were no reserved seats other than those for patrons. The net profit that year was $3,209. In 1961, it was $3,458. In 1962, the price for general admission was raised to $1.50, and the net profit rose to $4,113. Table 1 on page 73 shows the income and expenses for 1960, 1961, and 1962.

In 1962, each of the 108 active members of the Junior Department served on at least two of the committees for the revue. It was estimated that 7,233 hours were spent by these members in working on the show, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work on 1962 Revue by Members</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsals</td>
<td>1,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Meetings</td>
<td>4,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Costumes</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performances</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Duties</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General-Admission Tickets</td>
<td>$3,227.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Tickets</td>
<td>1,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising in Program</td>
<td>2,189.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concession</td>
<td>235.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>$6,952.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenses:**    |            |            |            |
| Rental of Theatre | $1,000.00  | $1,000.00  | $1,000.00  |
| Director         | 300.00     | 300.00     | 225.00     |
| Dance Director & Assistant | 175.00    | 175.00    | 175.00     |
| Rehearsal Pianist | 150.00     | 150.00     | 150.00     |
| Orchestra        | 375.00     | 385.00     | 385.00     |
| Musical Arranger | 125.00     | 195.00     | 250.00     |
| Music, Scripts, Royalties | 50.75     | 83.83     | 44.16      |
| Union Stagehands | 364.50     | 315.00     | 444.75     |
| Sound Operator & Equipment | 110.00 | 100.00 | 135.00     |
| Costumes         | 340.76     | 593.58     | 752.00     |
| Properties & Scenery | 127.62    | 130.03    | 183.55     |
| Makeup           | 6.00       |           |            |
| Programs         | 175.00     | 263.08     | 185.00     |
| Publicity        | 103.86     | 59.19      | 77.86      |
| Selling Advertising & Tickets | 80.31    | 52.48     | 138.12     |
| Cast Party       | 222.50     | 68.22      | 105.78     |
| Record Player    |            | 87.05      |            |
| Tape Recorder    |            |            | 75.00      |
| File Cabinet     |            |            | 51.75      |
| Miscellaneous    | 36.42      | 18.50      | 34.95      |
| **Total Expenses**| $3,742.72  | $3,975.96  | $4,412.92  |

| **Net Profit:** | $3,209.68  | $3,458.19  | $4,113.56  |
The cast in 1962 included 37 club members, 16 husbands and friends of members, and 19 past club members and their husbands. Three sets were designed and constructed for a total cost of $183; 203 costumes were designed and made for $752; 3,140 general-admission tickets were sold at $1.50 each for a total amount of $4,711; 301 patrons tickets were sold at $5.00 each to make $1,505; 24 sponsors and 231 boosters contributed $2,001 to have their names advertised in the program; and 300 pounds of fudge were cooked by club members for the concession committee which made a net profit of almost $309. Gross receipts were $8,526.

Through the years, expenses for these revues have risen. A part of this can be accounted for by the general rise in prices in this period, but most of the increase must be attributed to the fact that more elaborate productions are being given each year. In 1962, a large circular staircase was constructed for the opening scene, which was entitled "Stairway to the Stars." For the second scene of Act I, which was given the title of "Candy," a large candy box was built which, when the lid was opened, revealed twelve men costumed in different colors to look like bonbons. For the last act, which was entitled "Santa Claus Is Coming to Town," a spectacular toy shop was
designed. Magnificent costumes also contributed to the beauty of this production.

It has been the consensus among spectators who have seen all productions that the revues are getting better each year. As the Juniors have gained experience in writing, performing, and doing the technical work, have decided to try to discourage those with no talent from wanting to perform, and have resolved to spend more money for costumes and scenery, these elements have improved. The Gay Capers of '62 received excellent reviews and was a show of which all of the members were proud. Their concern now is how they are going to produce a better revue in 1963.

Organization for the Gay Capers

The job of being general chairman of the Gay Capers became such a large one that in 1962 it was decided to create a special post in the organization of the Junior Department of the Woman's Club solely for this purpose. At present, the young lady who is elected by the membership to be the fourth vice chairman of the Junior Department is the general chairman of the annual revue. She is the only person in the revue's organization who is elected. She appoints the general cochairman, the treasurer, sixteen committees, and the stage manager; she hires approximately twenty-five employees; and she supervises the casting of
the performers. The purpose of this section was to take up the duties of these officers, committees, employees, and performers. An organization chart, Figure 1, is on page 77.

Officers

There are three officers for the Gay Capers, who are all members of the Junior Department: a general chairman, a general cochairman, and a treasurer.

General chairman

The general chairman is the producer of the revue. As soon as she is elected in April, she goes to work immediately on the Gay Capers even though she does not officially take office until June, rehearsals do not start until September, and performances are not until November. Her first concern is to establish an organization for the show. She then prepares a budget, engages the theatre, oversees work on the entire production, authorizes expenditures of money, secures permission to use copyrighted material, and is responsible to the officers of the Junior Department for the success or failure of the show. Bearing this responsibility, this person, who is usually the hardest-working participant in the show, has the final decision with regard to any artistic or financial problem which arises concerning the revue.
Fig. 1.—Organization for the Gay Capers
General cochairman

The general cochairman is second in command, assisting the chairman in any way possible. This help may take the form of advice or encouraging a lagging committee or heading a committee or taking over completely if something should happen to the general chairman. The position of general chairman is such an important one that it has been thought necessary to have an assistant who is aware of all of the details of the production and who is ready to carry on if something should prevent the general chairman from continuing.

Treasurer

The treasurer for the revue is responsible for receiving and disbursing money. A separate bank account is maintained for the Gay Capers which is managed by the treasurer. She keeps committees informed of how much money they may spend, pays all bills, banks the receipts, keeps financial records, and submits a summary report after the show is over to the general chairman.

Committees and Stage Manager

Every club member serves on at least one committee whether she is performing in the show or not. In 1962, when the membership was about thirty lower than usual,
every club member served on two committees. The stage manager and the members of the committees are all club members who are assigned their duties by the general chairman. Each committee is headed by a chairman and a co-chairman.

**Production committee**

The first committee to go to work on the show is the production committee, for these are the ladies who are responsible for planning the themes and the format for the revue, writing any special material needed, and seeing that their plans are understood and are carried out.

This is a small committee composed of about five members, but it is an important committee because the success or failure of the show depends to a great extent on the format and the material which these members write. For this reason, the general chairman puts women on this committee who have had experience with musicals and who have demonstrated that they have some creative ability.

**Talent committee**

The talent committee, which is charged with casting the revue, has five-to-ten members who have participated in many *Gay Capers* productions. The goal of the members of this committee is to get the best person possible for each part; but since this is a club activity, they are obligated
to use present and past club members, their husbands, and their friends whenever they can. When it is impossible to cast a part with these people, they invite well-known local performers to participate.

The talent committee sets up a rehearsal schedule, makes arrangements for rehearsal rooms, makes replacements in the cast when necessary, checks attendance at all rehearsals and performances, prepares a list of the cast for the program committee, designates dressing rooms at the theatre, and calls performers to the stage for their numbers at run-throughs and performances.

**Calling committee**

Closely associated with the talent committee is the calling committee which telephones all performers each week to remind them of the times of their rehearsals.

**Wardrobe committee**

One of the most important committees is the ten-to-fifteen-member wardrobe committee which is responsible for costuming the cast. The members of this committee design 150-to-200 costumes, select or make patterns, buy materials, and deliver patterns, fabrics, and instructions to the performers who are responsible for making their own outfits or having them made. The members of this committee also borrow, rent, or buy clothing as necessary.
After the last performance, they return borrowed or rented costumes and sell the others to any performers who wish to buy them. Those unsold are stored at the Woman's Club for use in future shows. Often, other organizations ask to borrow the Junior Department's costumes, and the wardrobe committee must approve of each request before the costumes are lent.

Properties committee

Under the supervision of the set designer, the properties committee borrows, buys, or builds the scenery and properties required for the revue. This is a large committee of about fifteen members who are often assisted by their husbands in constructing and painting set-pieces, drops, steps, and other items.

During the dress rehearsal and performances, this committee and the stage manager supervise the union stagehands as they handle the scenery and properties. After the show is over, it is the duty of this committee to return borrowed props and arrange for the transportation of scenery and other properties to the Woman's Club for storage.

Lighting committee

Composed of only a few members, the lighting committee works closely with the director to design and supervise the execution of the lighting for the show. Handling of stage
lights and two follow spots is done by union electricians, but members of the lighting committee stay with the union men at dress rehearsal and performances to make certain that the plans are executed properly.

**Makeup committee**

The makeup committee, which is composed of about five members, arranges for the donation of most of the makeup from a local cosmetic studio. Items, such as tissues, leg makeup, and hair spray, which are not supplied by the studio are usually furnished by the performers; however, unusual makeup items, such as nose putty, false hair, spirit gum, and so forth, are customarily bought by the makeup committee when they are needed.

The members of this committee apply or supervise the application of makeup at dress rehearsal and performances and help to keep the dressing rooms in order.

**Ticket committee**

The members of the large ticket committee handle the general-admission tickets, which sell for $1.50 each. (The tickets themselves are donated by a local printing firm.) They distribute thirty general-admission tickets to every club member, who is expected to sell all or most of them. To stimulate selling, they arrange for a donated prize to be awarded to the person who sells the most. (In 1962, the
prize was a fur hat and muff.) This committee also puts tickets on sale in two local stores, has a representative present at all rehearsals to collect money and give out additional tickets, works at the theatre's box office on the days of performances, provides a ticket-taker, keeps a record of the number of tickets sold by each seller, and submits an accurate report with the collected money to the treasurer.

Patrons committee

The patrons committee of about ten members telephones all past patrons and new prospects who may be interested in patrons tickets, which sell for $5.00 each. For $5.00, a patron receives a reserved seat in the front, center section and has his name printed in newspaper stories and in the program.

This committee is responsible for billing patrons, collecting money, and turning it over to the treasurer with an accurate accounting.

Advertising committee

The largest committee of all is the advertising committee, which is made up of twenty-to-fifty members. This committee asks as many local businessmen as possible to advertise in the Gay Capers' program. For a donation of $1.00 through $24.99, the name of the advertiser is listed
under "Boosters." For a donation of $25.00 or more, his name is placed under "Sponsors."

This committee is responsible for billing advertisers, collecting money, and turning it over to the treasurer with an accurate accounting.

**Concession committee**

The ten-to-fifteen-member concession committee sells refreshments—soft drinks, popcorn, and fudge—in the lobby before and after the show and at intermission. Every club member, using her own ingredients, makes two or more pounds of fudge which are sold by this committee; but the concession committee prepares the popcorn and the soft drinks.

**Publicity committee**

The publicity committee, composed of about ten-to-fifteen members, is one of the most active committees working on the revue since it is responsible for obtaining free publicity and paid advertising for the show. Because this production is given for the benefit of charities, newspapers, radio and television stations, outdoor advertising companies, and store owners are exceptionally generous in giving publicity without charge.

This committee is responsible for all publicity
except hand-made posters, which are taken care of by the poster committee.

Poster committee

The poster committee arranges for the free enlargement of pictures by a local photographic laboratory and persuades another company to donate the cardboard with which they make large posters containing rehearsal pictures for display in store windows. This committee also takes care of preparing the publicity for the houseboards at the theatre.

Program committee

The small program committee is responsible for the content and layout of the program. This committee makes the necessary arrangements with a printing company, writes the program (after checking with many people to get the titles of units and scenes, acknowledgments, and the names of participants, writers, committee chairmen, cochairmen, patrons, sponsors, and boosters), and is present at performances to distribute programs to ushers and performers.

Ushers committee

The eight-to-ten ladies who make up the ushers committee pass out programs and usher the patrons to their reserved seats. Also, one member of this committee functions
each night as the Junior Department's house manager. (The theatre owner also provides a house manager to assist in taking care of any emergencies which may arise in the audience.)

**Cast party committee**

To show appreciation to the many people who contribute so much time and effort to the *Gay Capers*, the cast party committee arranges for a large party which is held following the last performance at a near-by hotel or lodge hall.

**Stage manager**

One club member works as the stage manager for the revue. During run-throughs, she sits with the director to learn the show and to time all numbers. During dress rehearsal at the theatre and at performances, the stage manager is in charge backstage, supervising the performers and all backstage workers. The stage manager is responsible for giving curtain, light, and sound cues; she superintends the placing of properties, scenery, and cycloramas; she sees that performers get onstage at the right time, using members of the talent committee to call performers from their dressing rooms to the stage; she maintains order and quiet; and she prompts the sketches. If any emergency arises backstage, she is the person who must deal with it.
Employees

In order to get experienced people in key positions in the organization for the *Gay Capers*, the general chairman employs about twenty-five people who are not members of the club or husbands of members. Although they are professionals in their fields and some are governed by union regulations, they all work for lower fees than normally because this is a charity show.

**Director**

A director is employed by the general chairman to stage the show which is written by the production committee and is cast by the talent committee. The director, however, may offer suggestions to the production committee concerning the format and material and to the talent committee about casting. Also, after the show goes into rehearsal, the director usually has the last word on any decision affecting the artistic quality of the revue; however, the director customarily consults with the production committee, the talent committee, and the general chairman before making any major changes. Only the general chairman could over-ride the director if she wished to do so.

The director stages the entire show, supervises all rehearsals, coaches singers and actors, directs singing choruses, coordinates the technical work, and rehearses
special numbers for publicity appearances. A separate musical director has never been employed for the *Gay Capers*, so the director must perform most of the duties of a musical director in addition to the regular work of a director; however, the job of conducting the orchestra is given to the musical arranger.

The director is the person who primarily directs the work of the dance director, rehearsal pianist, musical arranger, stage manager, set designer, sound operator, and the properties, lighting, and makeup committees. The director observes the work of the wardrobe committee and makes suggestions when necessary, but this committee has operated so competently that close supervision by the director has not been necessary.

**Dance director**

A dance director is hired to do the choreography and train the dancers. She is guided by the format established by the production committee and the general staging designed by the director. She is aided in her work by the assistant dance director.

**Assistant dance director**

The assistant dance director helps the dance director in any way possible. She choreographs a few numbers, drills dancers, teaches routines to replacements in the
cast, and dances in four or five units to assist in keeping the amateur dancers together.

Rehearsal pianist

The rehearsal pianist accompanies musical rehearsals, publicity appearances of performers, and performances. She composes any incidental music which is needed for the revue and helps to get all of the music ready for the arranger.

Musical arranger

Choral and orchestral arrangements are written by the musical arranger in accordance with the wishes of the director and the dance director. He attends many rehearsals to learn the show, assists as a rehearsal pianist when a second one is needed, and conducts the orchestra at rehearsals and performances.

Orchestra

The best dance orchestra in the community is employed to provide the musical accompaniment. Composed of ten or eleven members of the American Federation of Musicians, this band is hired to play for three rehearsals as well as the two performances.
Set designer

Usually local artists donate their services for designing the scenery; but sometimes a fee is paid to the set designer. Guided by the director, this person designs the scenery and properties and supervises the properties committee which executes his plans.

Sound operator

Since the Gay Capers plays in a large theatre which was constructed for the showing of motion pictures, it is necessary to employ a sound operator and rent audio equipment so that the performers can be heard. On this stage, which has a proscenium opening of forty-seven feet and a depth of thirty feet, the sound operator hangs five microphones, places three standing microphones at the footlights, and uses lavalier or hand microphones for some soloists.

In addition, the sound operator is responsible for playing any phonograph or tape recordings which are needed.

Stagehands

To play in the Keith-Albee Theatre, the Junior Department is required by union regulations to hire seven stagehands from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Pictures Machine Operators of the United States and Canada. Two of these men run the follow spots; one controls the stage lighting; one pulls the
curtains; and the other three hang and shift the scenery and properties.

Performers

In 1962, there were 72 performers in the revue, but this figure was unusually low. In previous years, the number had ranged from 100 to 130. The reason for this decline in the amount of people onstage is that in 1962 there was an emphasis on casting only good performers in the show.

One former club member put it this way:

At the beginning of the Gay Capers, the show was just a lot of fun. It was simply a group of friends getting together to have a good time putting on a show and, incidentally, raise money for charity. It didn't really matter if a person couldn't sing or dance very well. But lately, the emphasis has been on producing a show which looks as professional as any Broadway revue. Only the good performers can take part now, and they have to work hard at rehearsals—-not play! The Gay Capers is big business now.

No children are permitted to be in the production except in an unusual situation, such as the time a little girl was used in the number "Thank Heaven for Little Girls." The ages of cast members usually range from twenty to forty-five with thirty the average age.

Casts have included the finest entertainers in the locality. A few have worked professionally in show business, but most of those onstage are housewives, businessmen,
and professional people who enjoy singing, dancing, or acting and are willing to go through seven weeks of rehearsals to perform in public. Some of the community's most prominent doctors, dentists, lawyers, teachers, salesmen, politicians, and business people work for the fun of it in this annual event. No performers are paid.

Jerome H. Cargill gave an accurate description of the performers in the Gay Capers and most amateur musical revues when he said:

We're dealing with young married couples who like to get out of their humdrum routine and have a romp. Publicly, they say they do it to raise money for charity; privately, they admit it's because they're having fun.5

**Procedure for Producing the Gay Capers**

The purpose of this section was to record the procedure usually following in producing the Gay Capers each year.

Obtaining money to pay initial expenses is not a problem for this group, as it may be for some, since every year several hundred dollars from the profits of the Gay Capers are banked to pay the expenses on the next show which are incurred before incoming money is received.

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5Paul F. Healy, "Big Hit on Main Street," The Saturday Evening Post, CCXXXII (April 2, 1960), 50.
Preparing a budget

After establishing an organization and engaging the theatre for November performances, the general chairman is in a position to make a budget for the show. With her knowledge of past income and expenses from previous editions of the Gay Capers, she prepares an estimate of income and expenses for the current revue. Table 2 on page 94 shows the budget for the Gay Capers of '60 which was prepared before rehearsals by the general chairman. Table 1 on page 73 gives the actual income and expenses for this show and indicates that the net profit for this revue was about three hundred dollars lower than had been anticipated.

Club members are informed of this budget, and the treasurer is charged with trying to keep committees within their allotments. In order to hold expenses down, all committees are advised to ask for donations of materials rather than purchasing them; and since this revue is produced for charities, many businessmen generously give items from cardboard for posters to paper for billboards. If a club member cannot secure the gift of an item, she tries to buy it at wholesale cost; and almost all firms will grant some reduction in price for a charity show. By getting donations and discounts and by persuading employees to work at lower fees than they ordinarily do, the Junior Department saves about a thousand dollars or more on expenses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General-Admission Tickets</td>
<td>$3,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Tickets</td>
<td>1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising in Program</td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concession</td>
<td>350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,350.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rental of Theatre</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Director and Assistant</td>
<td>175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal Pianist</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical Arranger</td>
<td>150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music, Scripts, Royalties</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Stagehands</td>
<td>325.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Operator and Equipment</td>
<td>125.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costumes</td>
<td>400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Properties and Scenery</td>
<td>175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makeup</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>175.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td>75.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling Advertising and Tickets</td>
<td>125.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast Party</td>
<td>125.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>90.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses:</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,825.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Net Profit:** $3,525.00
The budget also sets goals for ticket, patrons, advertising, and concession committees. Sometimes these objectives are met or exceeded, but more often they are not. The general chairman is wise, though, to make the figures high enough to motivate the sellers to work hard.

**Writing the revue**

In May of each year, the production committee goes to work on the task of putting together a show. The first job is to establish the themes for the revue.

Production committees for the *Gay Capers* have never used an overall theme or a frame as is customary in most professional revues. Instead, production committees have preferred to get some semblance of unity by having a theme for each scene. The usual construction is to have two scenes in Act I, separated by sketches, monologues, solos, or small-group numbers which are done "in one"—that is, on the forestage—and one or two scenes in Act II. Each of the three or four scenes in the revue has one setting and one central idea; for example, one scene in the *Gay Capers of '61* was entitled "Girls, Girls, Girls" and contained songs and dances to such well-known tunes as "Marie, "Lulu's Back in Town," "Sioux City Sue," "Minnie the Mermaid," "Madame Pompadour," "Amy," "Chloe," and "Dinah," with all of the performers in these numbers coming back for a
finale to the music of "Girls, Girls, Girls." Other scenes that year were built around the themes of "The Blues" and "Sunday in the Park."

After the production committee has decided on themes for the scenes, it next determines the nature of each unit (song, dance, comedy, or specialty act) and the order of the numbers.

For each unit, the production committee plans the music to be used, the number of people to be cast (with some suggestions as to the principal performers), their actions, the set, costumes, and (if unusual) the lighting, sound, and makeup. In doing this, the members of this committee consider the available performers and their capabilities; the abilities of the directors and technical people to execute their ideas; the facilities of the theatre; the budget of the show; and, above all, the tastes of the audience. Since they are planning numbers for people who are, for the most part, amateurs at performing, they try to work out numbers which are simple to do but which, they hope, will make a good impression on the audience.

Members of the production committee often write original songs or change lyrics to familiar tunes to add local references to the show. By consulting joke books, play catalogues, and other sources of comedy material, they write or obtain running gags, jokes, monologues, and
sketches for the revue; but locating good comedy material has been a problem year after year. Probably the greatest fault to find with the Gay Capers revues is that there is not enough comedy in the productions.

In planning the Gay Capers, the members of the production committee keep in mind that many children and elderly people will be in the audience. They try to devise "family" entertainment which is always within the bounds of good taste and not very sophisticated. For example, precision dancing routines which feature a line of beautiful girls in pretty costumes doing high kicks are seldom seen in New York outside of Radio City Music Hall, but this type of number gets cheers in Huntington, West Virginia. Also, no respectable Broadway producer would put a chorus of men onstage dressed in women's clothing, but every year in the Gay Capers the two or three appearances of local doctors, pharmacists, lawyers, salesmen, and others dressed as cancan girls or ballerinas or hula dancers stop the show.

After many meetings in May, June, July, and August, some of which are attended by the general chairman, general cochairman, director, dance director, and rehearsal pianist, who all make suggestions, the production committee writes a tentative format for the show which is presented to the key people in the organization in August. The following are invited to attend this conference by the
general chairman and the production committee: the general cochairman, treasurer, director, dance director, rehearsal pianist, set designer, stage manager, and the chairmen of the talent, wardrobe, properties, lighting, and makeup committees.

After incorporating ideas offered at this meeting, the production committee prepares a production format, copies of which are given to all who need it by the last of August. The following is the format which was written for the 1961 revue:

GAY CAPERS OF '61

ACT I

Overture - Orchestra

Scene 1 - "Girls, Girls, Girls"

"Hello" - Spoken and sung by male soloist in tuxedo before front curtain. Halfway through song, on specific cue, front curtain opens to reveal ten couples, eight girl dancers, and girl soloist in full-stage set to represent entrances to fur, jewelry, dress, and beauty shops. Girl soloist wears red sheath dress, white fur stole, gloves, and tiara; eight dancers wear green and blue dresses with full skirts; men wear tuxedos with derby hats trimmed with gold bands; their partners wear gold lamé sheath dresses. All dresses are street-length. Everyone sings last part of "Hello." Male soloist exits.

"Hey, Look Me Over" - Girl soloist sings with chorus while eight girls dance. For half of one chorus, soloist dances with girls. Soloist and dancers exit.
"Marie" - Ten couples sing and dance number, then exit.

"Lulu's Back in Town" - Second male soloist sings number while three girls in brief, tuxedo costumes dance. All exit.

"Sioux City Sue" - Eight girls dance in short cowgirl outfits with fluorescent hats, gloves, boots, and lassos. On second chorus, they dance in blacklight. In blackout at end, they exit, and next number gets in place onstage.

"Minnie the Mermaid" - Man dressed as mermaid with long, blonde wig sits on rock. He is sung to by ten girls dressed as sailors. At end, he picks up rock and runs off, pursued by girls.

"Madame Pompadour" - Sung by girl trio dressed as scientists. They exit.

"Amy" - Third male soloist sings while four men do soft-shoe routine.

"Chloe" - Sung by comic male trio.

"Dinah" - Twelve girls in short, pink costumes do high-kick precision routine. They remain onstage.

"Dinah" - Twelve men in similar short, pink costumes do parody of girls' routine. They remain onstage.

"Girls, Girls, Girls" - First chorus is sung by second male soloist. Then all in Scene 1 enter to sing second chorus. Front curtain closes.

Between Scenes

"If Men Played Cards as Women Do" - Four men do sketch by George S. Kaufman "in one."
Scene 2 - "The Blues"

"Birth of the Blues" - Front curtain opens to reveal full-stage set of street in New Orleans. House with balcony is on one side of stage, street café on other. All costumes in scene are in different shades of blue. Fourth male soloist sings number as eight couples dance. Girls wear blue chiffon dresses; men wear blue trousers and jackets. They exit.

"Blow, Gabriel, Blow" - First girl soloist comes from table in café to sing number at center. She returns to table.

"Shaking the Blues Away" - Ten girl dancers do line routine. Each has sad mask on stick. At end, they turn sticks to reveal happy masks.

"Blue Skies" - Male quintet sings at tables as girl does ballet dance.

"My Man" - Sung by second girl soloist at table.

"Learning the Blues" - Danced by six who are dressed as waitresses. They exit.

"Blues in the Night" - Sung by fifth male soloist and danced by three couples dressed as beatniks.

"Bye Bye Blues" - Sung and danced by all performers in Scene 2. Front curtain closes.

Intermission

ACT II - "Sunday in the Park"

"Alexander's Rag Time Band" - For music to begin the act, orchestra plays one chorus. Halfway through first chorus, front curtains open to reveal outdoor park scene with bandstand, benches, trees, and flowers. Everyone in act is dressed in costume of 1890's. Musicians on bandstand
wear bright red uniforms. Eight couples and others (nurse with baby carriage, policeman, girl with jumping rope) are onstage. Band leader and couples sing number. He returns to bandstand. Two comics do short jokes between following numbers.

"While Strolling Through the Park" - Sung and danced by eight couples. At end, four couples exit and four remain.

"Daisy," "Alice Blue Gown," and "Moonlight Bay" - Medley sung by man and woman who enter on a tandem bicycle.

"The Band Played On" - Duo stays on to sing while four couples waltz. All exit.

"Lollipop" - Twelve men in little boy outfits with lollipops sing and dance number. They exit.

Medley - Sung and played by comic male trio. They exit.

"Ballin' the Jack" - Three couples sing and dance the number. They remain onstage.

"Do You Remember" - Duet by two girls. They remain onstage.

Medley - Sung by male quintet. They stay onstage.

"After the Ball" - Tap dance by six girls. They stay onstage.

"Good Night, Ladies" and "Ta-ra-ra-boom-der-e" - All others in act enter. All sing and dance finale. Front curtain closes.

Curtain calls

Exit music - Orchestra

It should be noted that a respected newspaper reviewer wrote of the Gay Capers of '61: "If there can be any
criticism of 'Gay Capers,' it only is that there is an overabundance of dancing." This opinion is shared by the present writer who also believes that there was not enough comedy in this show.

As soon as the format is decided upon, the general chairman obtains permission to use all copyrighted material in the show by writing to the copyright owners and paying any required royalties. She also buys the music and scripts needed to go into rehearsal and has sides typed for the original material.

A member of the production committee attends the first meeting of the talent, properties, wardrobe, and lighting committees to explain the format and to make sure that the ideas of the production committee are understood and will be carried out. A member of the production committee also attends every rehearsal to be certain that the plans are executed and to make any changes in the format or original material which become necessary as rehearsals progress.

Casting the revue

In August and September, the talent committee, after talking with the production committee, the general chairman,

the director, and the dance director, casts the revue. No tryouts are held. To date, the members of each talent committee have thought that they knew the capabilities of their friends well enough to cast the show without holding auditions. People who have been in previous editions—and some have been in all or most of the eight productions—are well-known to the talent committee, which is always composed of those who have been in many earlier Gay Capers revues. Anyone who has worked competently in one show will probably be cast in another. On the other hand, anyone who has caused trouble or has not performed well will not be cast.

The rule is that every club member who wants to be in the show will be placed in at least one number. Every club member's husband who wants to perform will also be used at least once. While this rule is still in effect, the practice lately has been to discourage those with no talent from wanting to be onstage and to encourage them to do backstage work. Those people with the most talent in singing, dancing, and acting are sometimes cast in as many as three or four numbers in one show.

The talent committee recognizes that there may be new members who have not had an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. Accordingly, a questionnaire is circulated to the more-than-one-hundred members of the Junior
Department asking what they and their husbands would like to do in the show and what suggestions they have as to performers from outside the club. If a member indicates on the questionnaire that she or her husband sings or dances or acts well, the talent committee places her or him in suitable numbers. If the newcomer proves in rehearsal to be of soloist caliber, a solo spot may be created for that person immediately. Ordinarily, though, the singing and dancing soloists and featured comedians are people who are known in the community for their ability to entertain through professional appearances or work in other amateur shows.

When it is impossible to cast a part with present members and their husbands, past members and their husbands are called upon. If these people still do not have the right qualifications, well-known local performers who have no connection with the club are invited to take part. The result is that present and past members and their husbands fill most of the singing and dancing choruses and small groups and do a few of the solos. "Outsiders" are called in mainly for other solos and specialty acts.

It is the writer's opinion that casting for the Gay Capers could be improved by holding tryouts or private auditions and by letting the directors cast the show with the advice and consent of the general chairman and the advice of the talent committee. In this way a better balance of
singing voices could be obtained in the vocal ensembles, and those with no talent could be kept off the stage.

**Planning the units**

In order to save time in rehearsal, the director, dance director, and musical arranger do a good deal of pre-rehearsal planning. The director first decides on the general staging for each unit by determining the appearance, sound, and length of each number, the movements of all performers except dancers, and (for song-and-dance numbers) the parts to be sung and the parts to be danced. The director next notifies the dance director of her responsibilities and informs the musical arranger of the choral arrangements which will be needed. The dance director then does most of the choreography, and the musical arranger writes most of the choral arrangements before rehearsals begin.

In planning the units, the capabilities of the performers are a major consideration. The directors are dealing with people with a wide range of abilities from professional entertainers to those who have never been on a stage before. While the directors have little to say about casting, they must confer frequently with the talent committee to find out the abilities of performers and plan the units accordingly.
Designing the costumes

Before rehearsals begin, the wardrobe committee goes to work on designing the costumes, although the actual making of them does not take place until the show goes into rehearsal. After talking with the production committee, the director, dance director, and set designer, the members of the wardrobe committee consult catalogues from fabric, pattern, and costume companies for ideas and prices; then they prepare their designs.

While the scenery for some productions has not been elaborate, the costumes for the Gay Capers have always been outstanding. This committee works hard to try to get wearing apparel which is spectacular yet functional, which provides color to the production, which harmonizes with the set and the other costumes onstage, and which is suitable for the time and locale of the scene.

The committee must also consider the modesty and shapes of some of the performers. Some young mothers refuse to wear brief costumes because they are modest or because they do not have good figures. The committee tries to plan clothing which the performers will enjoy wearing, in which they will be comfortable, and which will hide the unshapely features of their bodies.

Another factor to be considered by this committee is the degree of difficulty in making the costumes. Since
most of the outfits will be made by the female performers, some of whom are not expert seamstresses, they must be relatively easy to make. For this reason, the sheath dress is a favorite for girl singers since it is simple to sew. Because coats and trousers for men are difficult to make, the committee plans, whenever possible, for men to wear their own suits or tuxedos with the addition of some trimming to make them look like costumes and to blend with the other clothes in the scene. For male dancers, striking costumes are obtained by making elaborate shirts or vests and shirts to be worn with their own black trousers.

The members of the wardrobe committee must also consider the cost of the material, trimming, and patterns since they are on a strict budget and cannot spend money indiscriminately. Occasionally an outfit which would be extremely difficult or expensive to make is rented from a costume company, but usually all costumes are made by the performers. To hold costs down, costumes from previous shows are sometimes remade. When furs are wanted, the wardrobe committee can usually persuade a local merchant to lend furs in exchange for a line of credit in the program. By reusing former costumes, borrowing, buying at discount prices, and getting performers to sew their own outfits and provide their own shoes, this committee can costume a show, which means about 150-to-200 costumes, for $340 to $750.
Designing the scenery and properties

After the general staging and choreography have been determined by the director and the dance director, the set designer can go to work, aided by the properties committee.

The usual policy for the Gay Caper has been to use set-pieces, properties, steps, and levels in front of one of the theatre's three cycloramas, which are red, black, and light blue, or one of the theatre's two curtains, which are salmon and gold. For a scene in 1959 which was entitled "A Tribute to George Gershwin," a large abstract design of a piano keyboard, hung in front of the light-blue cyclorama, provided an effective background for the units. For a sequence of numbers in 1960 entitled "Capertour," the placement of a stylized bus, trees, and shrubbery in front of the light-blue cyclorama furnished a good setting for this scene which took the audience on a bus tour of the United States. The scenery is usually designed to be flown, since the theatre has thirty lines for flying scenery but small wing space.

By redoing scenery and properties from earlier shows and by buying new materials at discount prices, the set designer and the properties committee spend only about $125 to $185 annually for scenery and properties.

It is the writer's opinion that the scenery for the
Gay Capers productions has not always been as good as it should have been, although the last edition showed a definite improvement in this regard. Also, there has not been enough coordination between those who design the sets, costumes, and lighting. It seems to the writer that the general chairman should hire an experienced designer to design or supervise the designing of the sets, costumes, properties, lighting, sound, and makeup and a technical director to supervise the stagehands and the technical work on the sets, props, lights, and sound. The girls of the Junior Department and their husbands are willing to try to do the technical work, but they need better guidance than they have been getting.

Arranging the music

The musical arranger prepares most of the choral arrangements before rehearsals begin; but he cannot start on the orchestrations until the directors have an opportunity to rehearse with the performers for a week or two. After the key, the tempo, the length, and the arrangement of verses and choruses are determined for each number, he can begin the orchestrations, which must be finished in time for the first rehearsal with the orchestra at the end of the fifth week of rehearsals.
Rehearsing the revue

Seven weeks before performances, rehearsals begin for the Gay Capers, which plays for two nights, a Thursday and Friday, in the second week of November. The talent committee prepares the rehearsal schedule which is made to the convenience of the performers as much as possible.

The customary hours for rehearsals are 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. The rehearsals are held in two separate auditoriums at the Woman's Club. Occasionally, when these rooms are unavailable, the talent committee arranges for rehearsals to be held at a dancing studio, a gymnasium, or a lodge hall.

Ordinarily, each number in the program is allotted thirty minutes of rehearsal time on one of these three nights. The dance director works in one auditorium with dancers while the director works in the other room with singers or actors. In this manner, eight units can be rehearsed in one evening or twenty-four in the three-day period.

The rehearsal pianist is assigned by the director to the rehearsal which has the greatest need for her. Often, a volunteer pianist or the musical arranger is pressed into service so that both rehearsals may have an accompanist.

Starting with the third week of rehearsals, Sunday
run-throughs are scheduled from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. with the entire cast of one act or both acts. These are held to give the performers an idea of the relationship of their numbers to the whole revue, to get singers, dancers, and actors together who have been rehearsing separately, to block in the action of groups who must sit or stand onstage while others perform, to stage the finales, and to give performers the experience of working in front of an audience (the other performers).

The third Sunday is devoted to a run-through of Act I, the fourth Sunday to Act II, and the fifth Sunday to the entire show. The latter is the first rehearsal with the orchestra. On the sixth Sunday, the one-and-only dress rehearsal at the theatre is held from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. During this five-hour period, the revue is run through twice with everything as close to performance standards as possible. The reason for this unusual hour is that the theatre, which is a motion-picture house, must open for business at 1 p.m. On Monday of the last week, a run-through is held of Act I; on Tuesday, there is a run-through of Act II; and on Wednesday, there is a run-through of the entire show with orchestra. At the latter rehearsal, costumes are worn for some numbers if it is thought that more rehearsal in costume is needed. These last three run-throughs are all held in an auditorium at the Woman's Club.
because the theatre owner would charge an additional $500 per night to rehearse there. Figure 2 on page 113 gives the rehearsal schedule for the Gay Capers.

The reason for rehearsing only two hours on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays is that the great majority of the performers are young adults who are parents of small children. They do not like late rehearsals, nor do they like to rehearse on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Some men protest having to rehearse on Sunday afternoons; but if a television set is available so that they can watch the football games while they are waiting to go on, they will attend. Surprisingly, there are few complaints about the Sunday dress-rehearsal call for 7:30 a.m. When a person is assigned a part in the Gay Capers, he is warned of this rehearsal and told at that time that he must be present since it is the only rehearsal at the theatre. If the performer says that he cannot attend the dress rehearsal, he is not cast in the show.

Because the rehearsal schedule is limited, time cannot be wasted at rehearsals. To make sure of prompt attendance, the calling committee telephones every performer each week to remind him of the time of rehearsals. Attendance is checked by the talent committee, and any performer who misses without a good reason is replaced. Directors cannot take the time to do much experimentation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>7-9 p.m.</td>
<td>Individual Units</td>
<td>7-9 p.m. Individual Units</td>
<td>7-9 p.m. Individual Units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-5 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Run-through Act I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-5 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Run-through Act II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-5 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Run-through Acts I &amp; II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Same</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dress Rehearsal Orchestra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>7-9 p.m. Run-through Act I</td>
<td>7-9 p.m. Run-through Act II</td>
<td>7-10 p.m. Run-through Acts I &amp; II</td>
<td>8:15 p.m. Performance Orchestra</td>
<td>8:15 p.m. Performance Orchestra</td>
<td>8:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2.—Rehearsal schedule for the *Gay Capers*
For this reason, most of the staging and choreography are decided upon before rehearsals begin. When the directors go into a rehearsal, they usually know exactly what they want the performers to do. The thirty-minute rehearsal period with each unit every week is then devoted to drilling the performers on what is desired. If some step or movement planned by the directors does not work out well, they have to substitute another quickly and go on.

At the dress rehearsal and the three subsequent run-throughs, the director works primarily for a fast pace to the revue. All "stage waits" must be eliminated. Slow changes of scenery must be analyzed, and a system worked out for speeding them up. Long units must be cut. Dull spots must be eliminated or enlivened by the introduction of new business or comedy material. On a few occasions, the director has had to cut complete numbers out of the show because they were not up to performance standards.

**Doing the technical work**

The wardrobe committee gives each performer materials, patterns, and instructions for making his or her costumes. Before dress rehearsal, a member of the wardrobe committee checks the costumes to be sure that they are made correctly.

At dress rehearsal, the wardrobe committee scrutinizes the costumes which are under stage lights for the
first time. Sometimes the members of this committee request changes in the lighting; and occasionally, after consulting with the director and the general chairman, they make changes in the costumes before opening night.

While rehearsals are going on, the properties committee is in another building—in space donated by a generous businessman—working on the scenery and properties with the set designer. The director makes a periodic check of their work to make sure that everything is going as planned. Before dress rehearsal, the properties committee arranges for a moving company to haul gratis the scenery and properties to the theatre. This committee and the stage manager see that the union stagehands set the cycloramas and curtains in the desired locations and hang the scenery which is to be flown. During the dress rehearsal and performances, they supervise the work of the stagehands in shifting the scenery and props.

After it is known what the scenery and costumes will look like, the director confers with the lighting committee to plan stage and follow spotlighting. Lighting this show is not difficult. The theatre is equipped with adequate stage lighting in three colors, red, blue, and white; and it has two carbon arc follow spotlights which have color wheels. The Junior Department owns an ultraviolet filter glass to place in front of a follow spot for
numbers done in blacklight. For each unit, it is necessary to decide on the amount and color of the stage lighting and the color, place, and size of the light from each follow spot.

For the one-and-only dress rehearsal at the theatre on the Sunday morning preceding performances, a great deal of advance planning is done in order to get through the show twice in the five-hour period. This is the only rehearsal with the union stagehands, electricians, and sound operator; therefore, the stage manager, properties committee, and lighting committee must know the revue well in order to guide the union men who do not know the show.

To help get through this rehearsal as smoothly as possible, the director makes a technical format for curtains, lights, sound, and sets which is given to the stage manager, sound operator, lighting committee, and properties committee. As an example, the first part of the technical format for the 1961 revue is given below:

**GAY CAPERS OF '61**

**ACT I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER, PROPS, MIKES</th>
<th>CURTAINS</th>
<th>STAGE LIGHTS</th>
<th>FOLLOW SPOTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overture - Orchestra.</td>
<td>Gold curtains closed.</td>
<td>Dim out houselights slowly.</td>
<td>Front strip on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Hello" - Male soloist at right mike. On cue, when curtains open, all downstage mikes on. Onstage are "Girls" set, 10 couples, 8 dancers, and girl soloist.

"Hey, Look Me Over" - All mikes on. Girl soloist, 10 couples, 8 dancers.

"Marie" - All mikes on. 10 couples.

"Lulu's Back in Town" - Male soloist at right mike, 3 dancers.

"Sioux City Sue" - 8 dancers.

During the first run-through at dress rehearsal, some experimentation takes place with regard to the lighting and sound. The best colors for the follow spots are determined to enhance the costumes and scenery. Through a communication system, the director, sitting in the auditorium, talks with the follow-spot operators and stage manager to get the best combination of lights. Adjustments are also made in the sound equipment when necessary.

During the second run-through at dress rehearsal,
it is hoped that everything will go smoothly technically; but when necessary, further experimentation is done.

Sound has been a particular problem in this theatre which was built to show motion pictures, not musicals. One idea which has been used when good volume from stage choruses cannot be obtained is to place five or six of the show's best singers on a backstage microphone to sing along with the onstage chorus.

After the dress rehearsal at the theatre, a meeting is held with the general chairman, general cochairman, director, dance director, stage manager, lighting, properties, and wardrobe committees to iron out technical problems. The technical format is then revised by the director, and copies are given to the stage manager, sound operator, lighting committee, and properties committee before the opening performance.

Doing the business work

The large advertising committee goes to work in June of each year because it has found that many businesses make up their advertising budgets in June for the fiscal year which begins July 1. If the members of this committee wait until after July 1, they are refused by many businessmen who say that their advertising budget for the fiscal year has already been decided upon.
Sellers telephone or see as many businessmen and women as possible. They stress the fact that the proceeds from the revue go to charities and tell the prospect that for a donation of any amount his name or the name of his company will be listed in the program. If the advertiser gives $1.00 through $24.99, his name is printed under "Boosters" in the program; if he gives $25.00 or more, he is placed under "Sponsors." By simply listing the names of advertisers, this committee avoids the work of making up individual advertisements.

In order to sell advertising and tickets, the publicity committee works hard to make sure that everyone in the area knows that there is going to be another Gay Capers revue. Pictures of committees start appearing in the newspapers about four months before performances. After rehearsals begin, pictures of various numbers are printed. The names of the patrons and everyone connected with the show are published. Several editorials are written explaining how the profits go to charities. Stories appear giving the amounts which have been donated to charities from previous shows. The publicity committee also arranges for newspaper reviewers to be present on opening night so that reviews appear in the next day's papers.

Radio and television stations are also generous with free publicity. Local disc jockeys use taped and live
interviews on their programs; TV news programs cover final rehearsals; numbers from the revue appear on many local television shows; and some stations make free ten-second and twenty-second announcements advertising the revue.

When numbers are ready and costumed, some are sent to other clubs and organizations to appear on programs in order to advertise the Gay Capers.

Bumper cards are affixed to the automobiles of everyone in the show; posters are put in store windows, on the theatre's houseboards, and on taxis; and throwaways are placed in Huntington hotel rooms on the days of performances. The committee arranges for the donation of a large banner which is painted to advertise the show and hung across the busiest street in Huntington. The committee also gets a local outdoor advertising company to give the Gay Capers space on a few billboards and other firms to donate the paper to put on the billboards. The committee persuades some local store owners to create large window displays advertising the revue and to put a mention of the show into their newspaper advertisements.

For some shows, this committee has had badges made for all members to wear which say "Gay Capers." Another publicity stunt which has been used is to have a parade through downtown Huntington with members in costumes.

Meanwhile, the ticket and patrons committees are busy
selling their $1.50 general-admission and $5.00 reserved-seat tickets, respectively. No complimentary tickets are given out. The only people who see this show for nothing are some special opening-night guests from local institutions in which the Junior Department is particularly interested: a state mental hospital, a sheltered workshop for retarded adults, a home for aged women, and a community center for Negro children. Arrangements are made for chartered buses to bring these guests to the theatre.

Shortly before performances, the concession committee collects two pounds of fudge from each club member and purchases the ingredients to make popcorn and soft drinks.

Because of last-minute changes in the cast and units, the program committee waits until the printer's deadline to turn in the copy for the program.

Then, at last, the big days arrive.

Performing the revue

It is the theatre owner's responsibility to provide custodians to clean the theatre and to regulate the temperature and ventilation in the auditorium. The owner also furnishes a house manager to work with the person designated by the ushers committee to be the Junior Department's house manager.
During performances, some members of the ticket committee work in the box office, and one of their husbands collects tickets at the door. The program committee delivers the programs to the theatre and distributes them to the ushers and performers. The ushers are on duty to pass out programs, to seat the patrons in their reserved seats, and to make sure that the club's special guests from local institutions are taken to the sections reserved for them. The concession committee works at a stand in the lobby selling refreshments.

Backstage, the makeup committee assists the performers in applying makeup and keeping the dressing rooms in order. The wardrobe committee is present to deal with the last-minute emergencies which invariably happen to costumes. Some members of the talent committee are on hand to assign dressing rooms and to call performers to the stage at the right time. The stage manager is in complete charge backstage supervising the performers, the stagehands, the properties committee, the sound operator, and all others. One member of the lighting committee stays with the follow-spot operators in the projection booth.

In the pit are the orchestra, the musical arranger, who conducts the orchestra, and the director, who conducts the vocal choruses.

Two performances are held with the overture beginning
promptly at 8:15 p.m. The goal is to have a first act which lasts one hour. After a fifteen-minute intermission, the chairman of the Junior Department welcomes the spectators and thanks them for their patronage. She then introduces the revue's general chairman and cochairman who make short speeches of appreciation. The time of the second act is usually forty minutes so that the show is over by 10:15 p.m.

After the second performance, everyone connected with the Gay Capers is invited to a large party at a near-by hotel or lodge hall. All are so relieved that the show is over that they have a wonderful time at the party doing a parody of the revue. Invariably, though, some participants start thinking about the next show, and you will hear, "Now, next year we must be sure to do it this way. . . ."
CHAPTER IV

THE PACKAGED AMATEUR MUSICAL REVUE

When a club does not have available experienced people to write, direct, and design a musical revue, it often calls on a professional producing organization for assistance. Several producing companies in the United States offer "packages" to groups; that is, they furnish the director, costumes, scenery, sketches, and music for a revue in exchange for a certain percentage of the profits.

This chapter describes the activities of the largest packager of amateur musical revues in the United States, the Jerome H. Cargill Producing Organization of New York, and the organization and procedure usually used in producing a Cargill revue.

The Jerome H. Cargill Producing Organization

The Jerome H. Cargill Producing Organization was started thirty years ago when Cargill, who had been a talent-booking agent for vaudeville performers, decided to try his hand at producing amateur revues for clubs. He thought that most amateur shows could be greatly improved
by adding the professional touches which he had learned in vaudeville. His first revue was for a club in Rochester, New York, in 1933. It was so successful that he began the business of producing amateur shows.

Since that time, Cargill claims that he has produced a show in every city in the United States with a population of more than ten thousand. He now produces 175-to-200 shows every year in the United States, Canada, and Bermuda. He is employed primarily by junior departments of women's clubs, the Junior League, and others who are interested in raising money for charities.

His fee for providing the director, costumes, draperies, scripts, and music is fifty percent of the profits until Cargill gets his fee, which ranges from fifteen hundred to thirty-five hundred dollars, depending on the size of the town. The rest goes to the sponsoring group. According to Cargill, this amount usually ranges anywhere from a few thousand dollars in a small city to more than thirty thousand dollars in a metropolis.¹

Cargill currently employs thirty to thirty-five directors. For songs and sketches, he buys from professional writers in and around New York. He also sees English revues and brings back material. His directors are often

¹Healy, op. cit., p. 50.
writers, too, who can rework old material and write new. To costume his revues, he now stocks in New York more than thirty-five hundred costumes which are made by his own dressmakers or purchased from Broadway and nightclub shows that have closed. He abandoned the moving of scenery some years ago, but he can provide draperies and furnish designs so that the local club can construct set-pieces.

Organization for a Cargill Revue

The key person in a Cargill revue is the director, who not only directs but also puts the revue together from material furnished by the Cargill company, by a club member, or by himself; selects the performers and members of the orchestra; rehearses singers, dancers, actors, and musicians; orders costumes and draperies from the Cargill office; acts as designer, technical director, stage manager, business adviser, publicist, and makeup man; and packs up after the show. These directors are usually personable young men between twenty-five and forty years of age who have had professional motion picture, television, or stage experience.

The club's chief officer for the show is called the general chairman. She and the director are usually assisted by a general cochairman, a treasurer, and the following committees: a talent committee to assist with
casting, the "talent party," and getting performers to rehearsals; a costume committee to help in fitting costumes; a makeup committee to arrange for the donation of makeup from a local cosmetic studio and to assist in making up the performers; a properties committee to obtain and handle the props; a staging committee to obtain or build and move the scenery; a tickets committee to sell general-admission and reserved-seat tickets; a patrons committee to secure patrons; an advertising committee to sell program advertisements; a program committee to prepare the copy for the program; an ushers committee; a music committee to help with the music for the revue; a cast party committee to prepare for a party after the last performance; and a contest committee to take care of any contests held in conjunction with the revue.

Procedure for Producing a Cargill Revue

An advance man gives instructions to the club about setting up an organization for the revue and starting the publicity and sale of tickets and program advertising; then he departs.

Usually the Cargill director tries to arrive in town on a Sunday evening about nineteen days before performances. Customarily that evening he takes a walk through the business section of town to study the store-window displays
to get some idea of the degree of sophistication in the town.

The next morning there is a production meeting with the director, the general chairman, the general cochairman, and the chairmen of the various committees to plan the units of the revue. That evening there is a "talent party" for the director to meet the prospective performers who have been rounded up by the talent committee and for the performers to hear the director tell about the revue.

Watching the couples dance and sing informally at the party, the director notes which ones he can use in featured parts. With the help of the talent committee, the show is cast; and rehearsals begin immediately. Those who are available rehearse during the day; those who work rehearse during the evening.

In the following two-and-a-half weeks, performers are rehearsed and costumed; scenery and props are built, borrowed, or purchased; lights and sound are set; free makeup is procured; tickets and program advertising are sold; patrons are obtained; the program is written; and a cast party is prepared.

A typical Cargill revue may include units such as the following, which were used in a Follies produced by Cargill in Bristol, Virginia, in 1960 for the Border Guild: a Charleston dance, a South Sea Island number,
an Indian dance from Rose Marie, a soft-shoe chorus with a singing duet, a parody of "The Children's Marching Song," a sketch about beatniks, a song satirizing juvenile delinquents, a hobo song-and-dance duet, a trio doing a take-off on old chorus girls, and eight heavier matrons in a song-and-dance routine about reducing exercises. The units were held together by a running gag: between numbers, an officious general chairman was shown badgering a caricature of a Cargill director with questions about rehearsals.²

Sometimes to increase the income and stimulate ticket sales, a contest is held in conjunction with the revue. In 1963 in South Charleston, West Virginia, as a part of the Red Stocking Revue, which was produced by Cargill for the Junior Department of the Woman's Club of South Charleston, a "Fast Draw Contest" was held. Six local men's organizations paid fees to enter a member in the contest. Pictures of these contestants were displayed with containers for money, and the man whose picture drew the most money was declared the winner during a segment of the revue.

After the final performance, the director supervises the packing and shipment of the costumes and draperies

²Ibid., pp. 52 and 55.
to other Cargill revues; then he can go to the cast party where usually he is presented a gift by the grateful club members.
CHAPTER V

A SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE
FOR THE LOCAL PRODUCTION OF AN
AMATEUR MUSICAL REVUE

It is the writer's opinion that there are certain weaknesses in the organization and procedure used for the Gay Capers and for some packaged revues.

It seems to the writer that the Gay Capers productions need the following: (1) one theme for each revue instead of several; (2) more and better original material; (3) more comedy; (4) better scenery which is in harmony with the costumes; and (5) better casting. It is the writer's opinion that the shows could probably be improved by employing an experienced writer to prepare the format and original material; an experienced designer to design or supervise the designing of the costumes, sets, properties, lighting, sound, and makeup; and an experienced technical director to supervise the stagehands and the technical work on the sets, properties, lights, and sound. It would also seem to be advisable to revise the casting system so that the revue is cast by the directors with the advice and
consent of the general chairman and the advice of the talent committee and to place a business manager in charge of the business committees to relieve the overworked general chairman of many of these responsibilities.

It appears to the writer that the following are the principal faults in some packaged revues: (1) the packager receives too much money for the services and materials provided; (2) the sponsoring club has little control over the content of the revue or the costumes; (3) too much responsibility is given to the director; and (4) the productions need better scenery and costumes.

This chapter sets forth the conclusions of the writer concerning an organization and a procedure for the local production of an amateur musical revue which should counteract the weaknesses listed above and which should be suitable for most clubs, lodges, associations, guilds, and other groups which want to present a show of this kind. In the following discussion, the word club is often used to designate the sponsoring group, but this design is suitable for other amateurs, such as community theatres, schools, drama departments, and various groups which may not be clubs.

The writer has followed as far as possible the organization and procedure used for a professional revue, departing from them only when it was necessary to plan for
conditions which are different from those in the professional theatre. For example, since amateurs usually make or borrow their own scenery and properties instead of having them made in union scenic shops, the design presented in this chapter calls for a technical director to supervise much of the technical work; since amateurs customarily sell their own tickets, handle the concessions, prepare the program, usher, and manage the house—jobs which are supervised by the theatre owner or concessionaires in the professional theatre—the plan presented in this chapter has a business manager to supervise this work plus publicity; since amateurs ordinarily need help in applying makeup, this chapter's design has a makeup crew which is not usually found in the professional theatre; since amateurs do not ordinarily play more than a few performances and do not customarily go on the road, this design does not have a company manager and gives any duties normally performed by a company manager to the business manager or producer. Although publicity is as important to the amateur theatre as it is to the professional, it was not thought necessary to employ a press agent for an amateur revue, as is done in the professional theatre, since a committee of amateurs can usually handle the publicity satisfactorily. Other similar departures are made from the professional theatre's organization and procedure to fit the conditions found
in most amateur productions given in the United States today.

Before presenting the design for an organization and procedure for an amateur musical revue, a few words of caution are necessary: before starting to work on an amateur musical revue, the question of whether or not to present such a show should be put before the club's members and voted upon. Unless a majority of the members are wholeheartedly in favor of presenting a revue, the show will probably not be a success. A large undertaking of this sort must have the enthusiastic cooperation and support of most of the members. If this is available, then the club can proceed to the job of forming an organization for the show.

**Organization**

In producing an amateur musical revue, there are four principal elements to be considered: the material, the performers, the stage, and the audience. Therefore, the work of the show's organization falls into four divisions: (1) composing a format and writing or obtaining the material; (2) casting and rehearsing the performers; (3) preparing the audio-visual elements of the stage (the costumes, scenery, properties, lighting, sound, and makeup); and (4) attracting and caring for an audience. Under the overall guidance of the top executive, the producer, these four divisions may
be headed by a chief writer, a director, a designer, and a business manager. Figure 3 on page 136 is a chart showing the suggested organization for an amateur musical revue.

The sponsoring club should make efficient use of the people within the group. Most adult organizations have good businessmen or women who can handle the jobs of producer and business manager. They have people who can get publicity, write a program, usher, be the house manager, and sell tickets, advertising, and refreshments. They probably have people available who can, with direction, help to write the show, be a stage manager, work as stagehands, make costumes, build scenery, obtain properties, apply makeup, and work on sound and lights. They undoubtedly have people who want to perform on a stage or they would not decide to produce a musical revue. But most clubs might have difficulty finding within the group those who can direct the artistic aspects of the enterprise: a chief writer, director, choreographer, musical director, musical arranger, rehearsal pianist, designer, and technical director. If the show is to be a success, all of these people should be experts in their fields.

The goal of the producer should be to get the best person available for each of these eight important artistic jobs. There may be excellent amateurs in the community—perhaps even in the club—who have had a great deal of
Fig. 3.—Suggested organization for an amateur musical revue
experience in directing, designing, dancing, and so forth, and who can handle these assignments brilliantly. More likely, though, the best person available for each job will be found among those who do the same type of work or similar work for a living. The producer might select a good choreographer from local dancing teachers; a musical director from private singing teachers, choir directors, or music teachers in a university, college, or high school; a chief writer from advertising, radio-television, or newspaper writers or teachers of writing; a musical arranger and rehearsal pianist from local orchestras or music teachers; a director, designer, and technical director from teachers of dramatic art or speech in a university, college, or high school or the production staff of a community theatre or a television station. People such as these who are professionals in their specialties (that is, they are accustomed to receiving remuneration for performing their particular services) will probably expect to be paid for working on the revue; however, it is cheaper to pay them than to use inexperienced people. Expert help should mean better shows, larger audiences, and more income because amateur performers look much better when guided by experienced professionals than by inexpert amateurs.

It should also be cheaper to pay eight local experts than to call in a packager. If it is a charity show, local
people will probably not demand high fees. In all likelihood, the total amount expended for eight local experts will be far less than that demanded by a packager; yet the club will get eight people who are experienced in their specialties, not just one person (as in the packaged shows) who has a general knowledge of many areas. However, if experienced people are not available in the locality to handle these important artistic duties, the club would undoubtedly do better by calling in a professional producing company than by entrusting these jobs to those with no experience in the theatre.

It is important that an adequate organization be established early—at least four months before performances. Experienced people to handle the chief artistic jobs and popular performers are often in demand and should be notified far in advance that their services are wanted. Also, some people in the organization, such as the writers and the publicity and program committees should start their work on the revue early.

The following is a brief description of the duties of the important people in the organization, exclusive of performers and members of the orchestra. These persons should be assisted by the various crews and committees shown in Figure 3.
Producer

The first person to be elected or appointed by the sponsoring club is the producer or general chairman. Since producer is the term used in the professional theatre for the chief executive, it will be the name given in this chapter to the person with the most authority, although some clubs may prefer to use general chairman.

The prime qualifications for the producer are that he be a good businessman and that he be able to inspire others to work together in harmony. He must coordinate all work on the production—artistic and business; but while he watches closely the artistic work, his main concern is usually the business side of the enterprise.

He should form an organization for the revue; obtain a theatre and rehearsal and construction rooms; get funds to pay the initial expenses; prepare a budget; be the liaison between the show and the sponsoring club; get permission to use copyrighted material; and oversee all work on the revue. In general, any major decision involving finances should be referred to the producer. Artistic decisions are usually made by the director; but when an artistic decision also involves the expenditure of money, the director and the producer should make a decision satisfactory to both.
Chief writer and assistants

The chief writer and his assistants are responsible for deciding on the theme of the show, drawing up a format, and writing or obtaining the music, sketches, monologues, and other material which is needed.

One clever, imaginative person who has had experience with musicals could write the format and the special material, but the probability is that the chief writer will want to have some assistance. When one looks at the credits for some modern Broadway revues, one may find ten or more composers and lyricists with, perhaps, another ten or more writers of sketches and other comedy material. Nowadays there are few Ed Wynns and George M. Cohans around who can write the music, lyrics, and dialogue, stage, and star in revues as Wynn and Cohan used to do.

The musical revue is the ideal form to allow local authors, composers, and lyricists to exhibit their work. John S. Wilson pointed out how original college musicals gave Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart, Oscar Hammerstein, Alan Jay Lerner, and Stephen Sondheim the opportunity to see their works performed. He noted that there are few places left for amateur writers to show their wares, but he added, "Remaining, as training grounds where the amateur can still have his first, all-important brush with theatrical reality,
are the college musicals and the more sporadic church and private-club musicals."¹

The producer will probably find that it is easier to get local songwriters than comedy writers. Writing or finding good comedy material will usually be a problem. Of course, it is not necessary to have all original material in an amateur revue. By getting permission to use copyrighted material, old and new music, sketches, and monologues written by the top professionals in show business can be used.

**Director**

In a show involving a large cast, the most efficient method of operation is to have a director, a choreographer, and a musical director; however, when the director can also direct the music or the dancing, the number of directors is often cut to two. In addition, each director may need an assistant or two.

The three directors, working together, should cast the show with the advice and consent of the producer. The three directors should also be consulted on the writing of the revue and the designing of costumes, scenery, and lighting.

¹Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
The director should be the artistic head of the show. He should determine the responsibilities of the choreographer and the musical director; schedule all rehearsals; stage the entire show; coach actors, comedians, and anyone else who speaks; and coordinate the technical work.

The director should be an imaginative person who has had experience in directing musicals and who has some knowledge of music, dancing, writing, designing, lighting, and sound equipment. Above all, he must be a person of good taste who can make a shrewd guess as to what local audiences will and will not enjoy. He must be an organizer, a diplomat, and a settler of disputes. He must have the ability to make rehearsals lively and interesting. He must have a sure sense of timing and the ability to get amateurs to hurry. He must see that the show has pace and flow of production. He must have the patience to repeat over and over again: (1) "Smile!" (2) "Pronounce your words more distinctly!" and (3) "Put more energy into your performance!"

Choreographer

The choreographer is responsible for designing the dances for the show and training the dancers. He may also be asked by the director to direct the movements of singers and to stage all musical numbers.

The choreographer should be a creative person who is experienced in making amateur dancers look like
professionals. He must be blessed with an extraordinary amount of patience in order to drill the dancers over and over again on steps until they can perform them competently.

**Musical director and musical arranger**

The musical director usually conducts the orchestra and vocalists, rehearses the singers, and perhaps does the musical arrangements. If a musical arranger is obtained, the musical director or, in the case of an original song, the composer may direct his work. The musical director should be consulted in casting singers, in forming or employing an orchestra, in obtaining rehearsal pianists, and in selecting a musical arranger.

Both the musical director and arranger should be experienced, accomplished musicians.

**Rehearsal pianist**

An expert rehearsal pianist can be of tremendous help to the musical director by rehearsing soloists or choruses when the musical director is busy elsewhere, by assisting singers to learn the music, by prompting vocalists, by composing supplemental music when needed, and by helping the musical director keep the orchestra informed of cuts and changes. Although several pianists may be needed during rehearsals, the principal rehearsal pianist should
learn the music for all numbers and play for performances.

The rehearsal pianist should be an experienced musician who can sight-read all types of music, who can transpose easily, and who has an excellent sense of rhythm.

Stage manager

The stage manager is concerned with both the cast and the crews which work backstage; therefore, he should follow instructions from both the director and the designer.

During rehearsals, he functions as the chief assistant to the director, being responsible for getting the cast to rehearsals at the proper time, maintaining order, preparing a prompt script, marking rehearsal floors as to where the scenery will be, and timing the show. He performs any duties assigned by the director, such as conducting extra rehearsals, rehearsing cast replacements, or checking on the technical work. If it is necessary to do a great amount of telephoning to get the cast to rehearsals, the stage manager will need several assistants to perform this duty.

He assigns dressing rooms at the theatre, checks in performers as they arrive for dress rehearsals and performances, and makes sure that they get onstage at the right time in the correct costumes and makeup. But in addition to managing the cast, the stage manager is responsible for
seeing that the stagehands function correctly in changing the scenery and properties, running lights and sound, and pulling curtains. The stage manager gives all light, sound, and curtain cues and prompts the show.

During performances, the stage manager is in charge backstage. His duties are so many that he will probably wish to have several assistants: an assistant stage manager, one or two callers, a prompter, and perhaps others.

**Designer**

In order to achieve a unification of the technical work, it would be wise to have one person in charge of the designing of the costumes, scenery, properties, lighting, sound, and makeup. It may be, though, that one person cannot be found who can handle such a big job. In this case, it may be necessary to find a set designer, a costume designer, a lighting designer, and perhaps even a sound designer. To achieve a harmonious result, however, it would be well to make one person the chief designer and have him supervise the work of the other designers.

If one person is the designer for all of these elements, he will probably wish to be assisted by a technical director to supervise the set construction, property, light, sound, and stage crews. If costumes are to be made, the designer will need the assistance of a large group of
people for this project; if costumes are to be rented, he will need a wardrobe mistress and several assistants to distribute, care for, and return the costumes. The designer will also need several people to supervise the application of makeup.

The designer should be an accomplished artist who is experienced in designing for the stage.

**Technical director**

The technical director should usually be in charge of the set construction, property, light, sound, and stage crews. He should direct the construction and painting of scenery; the building, borrowing, or buying of properties; and the obtaining and placing of light and sound equipment. He should also organize the shifting of scenery, properties, and microphones and assist with the preparation of cues for lights, sound, and curtains.

**Business manager**

The essential qualification for the business manager is that he be a good businessman since he should direct the work of the box-office manager, ticket, patrons, program, concession, and publicity committees, the house manager, ticket-taker, and ushers. The business manager should be in charge of publicizing the revue, making and spending
money, directing the work in the "front of the house," and keeping accurate business records.

**Box-office manager**

The box-office manager supervises all ticket-selling. He organizes the ticket and patrons committees, has tickets printed, checks them to be certain that they are correct, plans a schedule for committee members to work in the box offices, takes care of unsold tickets and receipts until turned over to the business manager, and prepares financial reports (as required by the business manager) on the sale of tickets.

**House manager**

The house manager is in charge of collecting tickets at the door, seating the customers, and seeing to their comfort and safety while they are in the theatre. He is assisted by ushers and a ticket-taker. If the theatre is rented, the theatre owner will probably provide custodians to clean the theatre and attend to the heating or air-conditioning equipment; but if not, the house manager should supervise those who perform these jobs.

He takes care of lost-and-found articles, makes sure that the fire department's regulations are obeyed, quiets or ejects noisy spectators, and acts in case of emergencies in the audience. He also counts the tickets
collected at the door and reports the number of each price
of ticket to the box-office manager.

Procedure

This section presents a suggested procedure for the
local production of an amateur musical revue.

The producer should begin work on the revue at least
four months before performances, and he may wish to start
earlier. The first duties which he must attend to are
establishing an organization for the revue, engaging a
theatre and rehearsal and construction rooms, obtaining
money to pay beginning expenses, and getting the writers
and the publicity and program committees started on their
work for the revue.

Obtaining a theatre, rehearsal
and construction rooms

As early as is feasible, the producer should engage
a theatre for dress rehearsals and performances and arrange
for a theatre or rooms in which to rehearse and build
scenery and properties. Some groups may have a suitable
auditorium and rooms available in their clubhouses, lodge
halls, schools, or churches; but many clubs will have to
rent or persuade someone to donate a theatre and rooms.

The dates of performances must be carefully selected
by the producer so that they will be convenient for most
participants and spectators (Thanksgiving, Labor Day, and other holidays should probably be avoided), will not conflict with other community events, will be on days of the week when local people prefer to go to shows (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday are the best days in most communities), will avoid the seasons of Christmas and Lent when theatre business is usually bad, and will allow sufficient time for the rehearsals and technical work.

Before deciding on a theatre, the producer may wish to investigate the facilities, rental prices, and availabilities of high school or municipal auditoriums, college or university theatres, community theatres, motion picture theatres (if they have facilities for presenting stage shows), and legitimate theatres. He should select one in a good location which is large enough to accommodate the expected audience, which has adequate stage facilities, which is not too expensive for the show's budget, and which is available on desirable dates.

The producer must find out from the theatre owner exactly what is included in the rental fee. It is important that he pass along to his subordinates information concerning the size of the stage, available lighting and sound equipment, cycloramas, curtains, drops, teasers, tormentors, borders, wings, offstage space, lines for flying scenery, traps, revolving stages, elevator stages,
dressing rooms, communication systems, orchestra pit, availability of piano and/or organ, musicians' stands, lights, and chairs, use of the box office and concession stand, seating capacity, custodians for cleaning and controlling the ventilation and heating or air-conditioning equipment, and union stagehands and electricians. After the theatre is booked, the writers, director, choreographer, musical director, designer, technical director, stage manager, and business manager should familiarize themselves with the theatre before beginning work on the revue.

If it is not possible to rehearse in the theatre, the producer must find rehearsal rooms. At least one of these rooms should be larger than the theatre's stage so that the exact dimensions of the stage can be marked on the floor of the rehearsal room. This is important so that performers can become accustomed to playing in the same amount of space as they will have in the theatre. Dancers, also, usually like to rehearse in a room which has large mirrors on one wall; therefore, dancing studios make good rehearsal rooms for the dancers.

If the director, choreographer, and musical director wish to have separate rehearsals with their groups at the same hours on the same days of the week, three rehearsal rooms will be needed. However, if the producer cannot obtain three rooms, the directors will have to rehearse on
different days of the week or at different hours. It should be the director's responsibility to work out a satisfactory rehearsal schedule.

Space is also needed in which to build and paint scenery and properties. If the technical director and the set construction and property crews can work at different times than rehearsal hours, they can use one of the rehearsal rooms; but if not, an additional area will be needed for them.

The producer should try to arrange for the final rehearsals to be held in the theatre. Ideally, one technical rehearsal and two or three full dress rehearsals will be held in the theatre on the days immediately preceding performances.

**Obtaining expense money**

If the club has no funds on hand from a previous show to pay beginning expenses, the producer is faced with the problem of obtaining money to pay expenses which are incurred before income from the sale of program advertising, tickets, and refreshments is received. The club may agree to pay these expenses from money in the treasury; but if there is not enough money in the treasury, members may have to be assessed a certain amount with the understanding that they will be paid back from the show's profits, if any.
Another way to raise money is to ask each member to purchase a certain number of tickets in advance which he may sell or give away as he wishes. After one show has been given by an organization, the members should put aside a certain portion of the profits to pay the initial expenses for the next show, if they intend to give another, because money often has to be expended for costumes, scenery, properties, music, scripts, royalties, tickets, posters, and other necessities before any revenue is received.

Preparing a budget

The producer should be responsible for preparing a budget for the show; but he may wish to be assisted by the business manager in estimating the income from the sale of tickets, program advertising, and refreshments and the probable amounts of employees' fees, rental of theatre and rehearsal and construction rooms, royalties, music, scripts, costumes, scenery, properties, lighting, sound, makeup, tickets, programs, posters, throwaways, other publicity items, the billing of customers for advertising and tickets, typing, and other expenditures.

After the budget is decided upon by the producer, it should be circulated among buyers and sellers so that all concerned will know what is expected of them.
Writing the revue

The writers should start as early as possible on their work for the revue. Leonard Sillman stated that for his professional revues he works on collecting the material for one or two years. He noted that "like a bouillabaisse, a revue must be mulled over and brewed until finally the taste is right."²

The writers should realize that most good revues have a theme or a unifying idea or a point of view. The numbers of Call Me Mister were concerned with various aspects of postwar adjustment; the units of As Thousands Cheer were inspired by different sections of a newspaper; At Home Abroad used the around-the-world format; and Inside U.S.A. employed the around-the-United-States formula. (Both of the last two themes are frequently used in amateur revues.) As Lehman Engel pointed out, "A general theme can help the over-all effect considerably by keeping the material from sprawling in too many different directions."³

Other themes which could be used in amateur revues are the following: particular time periods or years (the 1890's, 1920's, 1940, 1950); holidays; the works of certain composers or authors; special locales (New York, New Orleans, ²Sillman, loc. cit.
the South, Paris, Spain); historical events (the Civil War, the Gold Rush, World War I); the months of the year; any subject which has had or can have music and comedy material written about it (love, girls, the seashore, college life); or any subject which can hold units together (a nightclub, a showboat, a magazine, a circus, an amusement park, a county fair).

To give one example, using the first theme mentioned above, a revue could be built on a time sequence. Numbers appropriate for the 1890's, 1900's, 1910's, 1920's, 1930's, 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's could be planned. With eight different settings and appropriate costumes, a beautiful, gay, and funny revue could be fashioned which might have good nostalgic values for an adult audience. An original opening song could tell the spectators that the revue will take them through the years from the Gay Nineties to the present, and the finale could repeat the theme. A "frame" of this sort for the units is often written for musical revues--professional as well as amateur. John Gassner recommended using a frame and noted that one was used for the highly successful Pins and Needles, which posed the idea that the workers of the garment industry were expressing their views on the world and were sticking "pins and needles" into it. Gassner continued:

The frame will be established by the opening and
closing numbers, and generally with the entire cast appearing in the two numbers. (In the closing one, the performers may go through a small portion of their routine, to remind the audience of their contribution to the show, and to receive some parting applause.) The music of the overture and of the close can also complete the frame by being identical. The director should be aware of the necessity of at least some factitious unity in the revue, and should be ingenious in establishing it.\(^4\)

Sometimes a revue can be given unity by a running gag. A common one of these is the "show-within-a-show" situation in which a harried director is trying to get through a dress rehearsal or a performance despite many annoyances.

After determining the theme, the writers should next write a format for the revue. To do this, the writers need to know the following: (1) the probable capabilities and number of available performers, (2) the budget, (3) the facilities of the theatre, (4) the capabilities of the directors, designer, and technical crews, (5) the likes and dislikes of the prospective audience, and (6) the purpose of a revue which is to provide entertainment for an audience. With this knowledge, the writers should decide on the nature of each unit, its place in the program, the music to be used, the number of people to take part (with some suggestions as to the principal performers), their actions, the type of set and costumes needed, and (if unusual)

\(^4\)Gassner, op. cit., p. 468.
the properties, lighting, makeup, and sound effects required.

The ingredients for an amateur musical revue today are about the same as they were in the days of Ziegfeld. Still needed are good comedians; beautiful girls; fine solo singers and dancers; a few specialty acts; funny sketches, blackouts, and other comedy material; tuneful music; and gorgeous costumes, sets, and lighting. Today's audiences are not interested in seeing show girls parade or pose in exotic costumes as they did in the Ziegfeld Follies, but they can still be entertained by pretty girls who dance well. Leonard Sillman wrote:

A successful revue must be like a bouilla-baisse; it's a matter of ingredients. You must have a little salt, a little pepper, a little sugar—and you must have sufficient variety to appeal to everybody in the audience. Of four people, two will love one number, and the other two will not like it. But the next number will be liked by the ones who didn't like the first one, and so it goes with a successful show of this sort.5

The range of possible units for a musical revue is extensive. The following list indicates some of the different types of numbers which may be used; but the writers should try to be ingenious in combining songs, dances, comedy, instrumental numbers, and specialty acts to obtain unusual and novel units.

5Sillman, loc. cit.
Songs:
Popular (ballads, blues, jazz, rock-and-roll, rhythm, etc.)
Standards
Musical comedy
Light opera
Folk
Country music
Western
Spirituals
Carols
Patriotic
Foreign
Parodies
Humorous

Dances:
Ballroom (tango, waltz, twist, Bossa Nova, etc.)
Period (Charleston, Big Apple, Bunny Hop, Castle Walk, minuet, etc.)
Ballet
Toe
Tap
Soft-shoe
Modern jazz
Acrobatic
Folk
Square
Foreign (Spanish, French cancan, Russian, Balinese, Irish, etc.)
Precision line
Interpretative
Parodies
Humorous
Eccentric
Men dressed as girls
Any type done in ultra-violet blacklight

Song-and-dance numbers:
Solo dancer with singing group
Solo singer with dancing group
Any unit in which performers both sing and dance

Comedy:
Monologue
Duologue
Blackout
Sketch
Jokes inserted between numbers
Running gag
Pantomime
Imitations
Frame

Instrumental:
Overture, entr'acte, and exit music by orchestra
Solo or duet on piano, violin, accordion, banjo, trumpet, xylophone, etc.
Small combination

Song-and-instrumental numbers:
Singer who accompanies himself on the piano
Folk singers who accompany themselves with guitars and bass viol

Specialty acts:
Magician
Mind reader
Jugglers
Trained animals
Baton twirlers
Acrobats
Trampoline performers

Audience-participation numbers:
A unit in which a pianist, banjo player, or other musicians ask the audience to sing with them
A unit in which the performers come from the audience, go into the audience, or throw souvenirs to the audience

The number of people to participate in any one unit may range from one to as many as the stage will hold. If good singers, dancers, musicians, and comedians are available, the writers should plan to use them more than once in the revue in solo, duet, trio, and small-group numbers and in front of the choruses. If the club wants many of its members and their wives or husbands and friends to be in the show, the writers should plan for several large singing and (slightly) dancing choruses. Even if they have little
talent, they cannot harm the show much if one or two good singers or dancers are spotlighted in front of them.

The length of each unit should be short: most should be under four minutes, except in the case of sketches which may run to about fifteen minutes. This statement does not mean that the scenery has to be changed every few minutes since several units or more may use the same setting. The writers should take into consideration the sets needed for the units and, to avoid having too many sets, plan sequences of units which may use the same scenery.

While most numbers should be gay or funny or sentimental, a few serious numbers can be scheduled: a fine soloist singing a well-known operatic aria or a brilliant instrumentalist playing a famous selection or an excellent dancer in a beautiful toe dance can be included if the number is short and the music is tuneful. For variety, though, if the writers want the artist to do a second number, they should probably turn from serious to popular music.

While deciding on the types of numbers to be used, the writers must also consider the order of the units. Getting the numbers into the best arrangement possible is vital to the success of the revue. Sillman said that the routining of a revue is the most important factor.\(^6\)

\(^6\)Ibid.
Gassner wrote that it is a mistake to assume that the order can be haphazard. He stated:

> An effort should be made to create some relation between the parts; thus, a skit or little scene may well lead into an ensemble number which amplifies in dance or song the idea or content of the scene. ...  

The overture by the orchestra should be lively, cheerful, and melodious. It may be a separate unit, or it may lead into the opening stage number. The latter is usually a large production number which is thrilling, fast, and funny and is designed to get the show off to a good start by capturing the audience's interest. Sometimes the unit can begin slowly with only a few people onstage—perhaps doing a pantomime—but the action must be attention-getting, and the pace should probably pick up rapidly as more enter to do a large-group number.

From there on, contrast and variety are necessary. For that reason, the large production number is often followed by a solo or small group; the beautiful by the ridiculous; and a non-musical unit by a musical one. The staging of the units must be considered, and numbers "in one" or "crossover bits" must be planned to give the stage crew time to change the full-stage sets. Costume changes are sometimes another problem for the writers since

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7 Gassner, loc. cit.
performers must be given enough time between their numbers to change their costumes.

In order to bring down the curtain to great applause at the end of Act I, the last unit of this act should be climactic. After the intermission, brief entr'acte music may be used to quiet the audience as the lights are being lowered. This may be a separate unit or it may lead into the opening number of Act II. To provide a grand climax, the best number in the show should probably be placed immediately before the closing unit of Act II. Then, a spectacular finale which includes all of the performers may conclude the revue satisfactorily. After curtain calls, as the audience is leaving, the orchestra can repeat one of the best tunes from the show or, perhaps, the overture.

Before the production format is written, the producer, director, choreographer, musical director, and designer should have an opportunity to offer suggestions; and the business manager should be consulted to determine if the planned show is financially possible. Then the production format (which could be similar in form to that which was prepared for the *Gay Capers of '61* and is given on pages 98 to 101) should be written.

After approval of this format by the producer, copies should be made for all who need it; and the writers should proceed to the preparation of a script by writing
the original material needed: a frame for the revue (if wanted), songs, special lyrics, parodies, running gags, monologues, duologues, blackouts, sketches, pantomimes, crossover bits, or other material. The producer should approve the script before work on the production is started, but neither the format nor the script should be considered to be unchangeable. During tryouts, unexpected talent may appear which should be featured in the show; and during rehearsals, other changes in the format or script may become necessary. The writers should be available during tryouts and the rehearsal period to discuss and make changes as needed.

In writing comedy, the writers can get some assistance from the many examples on television, humorous records, joke collections, "how-to" books on comedy writing, and suggestions from leading humorists which are now available.

According to the comedian Jackie Gleason, audiences want to laugh, but "they don't want cerebral humor."

Talking about comedy for his television revue, "The American Scene Magazine," he said, "Right now they want comedy that's clean and wholesome and simple--and blatant." His opinion is that "sophisticated comedians don't have a chance." He continued, "A sophisticated comedian can't
stay on for five minutes—even when they do political jokes."\(^8\)

Some authorities say that there are only seven basic jokes to which all humor is related, but opinions differ as to what these are. In 1935, David Freedman, one of the first great radio comedy writers, offered these seven:

1. Literal English (puns) . . . .
2. Insult. True wit is essentially of this type. . . .
3. Sex. Infidelity is the most widely used topic. . . .
4. Domestic. . . . The mother-in-law joke is included in this pigeon-hole. . . .
5. Underdog. (Or children and weaklings). . . .
6. Incongruity. . . .
7. Topical. Any type joke brought up-to-date. . . .\(^9\)

Sydney Reznick listed fifteen from which all contemporary gags are supposed to stem:

1. Marriage or married life.
2. The Excuse.
3. Old Maids.
4. Liquor and Its Effects.
5. Whiskers.
7. Death.
8. The Boarding House.
10. The Fat Man.
11. Cute Kids (Their Sayings and Doings).


\(^9\)Benn Hall, "Want a Good Job?—Write Jokes!" Review of Reviews, XCII (October, 1935), 30.
15. Talkativeness (Especially Feminine).  

But both Reznick and Steve Allen have pointed out that, rather than knowing the basic jokes, it is more useful to know that there are certain formulas for the construction of jokes: the literalization formula, the reverse formula, the exaggeration formula, and so forth.

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to go into how to write comedy material since this is a broad subject which has already been the topic of many books; but it should be noted that, whenever possible, the writers should adapt standard jokes so that they are about local events and people, since these will invariably get the biggest laughs from the audience. It might be well for the writers to remember, too, that the word revue comes from the French word which means "to look over" and that most good revues look over events and make satirical comments about them.

For assistance in writing comedy, the reader is


referred to the following books which contain information on this subject:


Fun with Skits, Stunts, and Stories by Helen and Larry Eisenberg (New York: Association Press, 1955)

The Handbook of Skits and Stunts by Helen and Larry Eisenberg (New York: Association Press, 1953)

How to Write Television Comedy, edited by Irving Settel (Boston: The Writer, Inc., 1958)

The Master Stunt Book, compiled by Lawrence M. Erings (Minneapolis: T. S. Dennison and Company, 1956)

Thesaurus of Humor by Mildred Meiers and Jack Knapp (New York: Crown Publishers, 1940)

For assistance in finding published comedy material, the reader is referred to An Index to Skits and Stunts by Norma Olin Ireland (Boston: The F. W. Faxon Company, Inc., 1958).

Unfortunately, few sketches from Broadway revues are available to amateur groups. Publishers are reluctant to print sketches because they are often built around topical events which go out-of-date quickly. What was funny ten or twenty years ago is not funny today. Only a few old revue sketches, such as "If Men Played Cards as Women Do," which was written by George S. Kaufman for a Music Box Revue in the twenties, can still get laughs. Some sketches,
blackouts, and monologues, however, are available from play
publishers, the largest list being in the catalogue of:

Samuel French, Inc.
25 West 45th Street
New York 36, N. Y.

As to the length of the show, the writers should plan for a revue which lasts about two hours including the intermission. Since a fifteen-minute intermission will be wanted if refreshments are to be sold, the writers should try for a one-hour first act and a forty-five-minute second act. Although this is not as long as most professional Broadway revues, it is long enough so that the club can exhibit its best performers and short enough so that the audience will not become tired of watching amateur performers.

Before going into production, the producer or business manager should obtain permission to perform any copyrighted material in the revue by writing to the publisher or the copyright owner of the material and paying any required royalties. According to the United States Copyright Act, the purchase of sheet music or phonograph records or scripts does not permit the buyer to perform the material in public for profit. Herman Finkelstein, general attorney for the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, stated: "A public performance for profit constitutes the exercise of a separate right
and requires separate permission from the copyright owner."\textsuperscript{12}

**Selecting the cast and orchestra**

Casting should be done by the director, choreographer, and musical director with the advice and consent of the producer. If the directors are hired and do not know the club members and their abilities, the producer may wish to appoint a talent committee, composed of older club members, to assist in casting. In most situations, the director should cast featured performers and actors; the choreographer should select the dancers; and the musical director, the singers. In case of disagreement, the director and producer should try to work out a compromise. The writers should also be present at casting to look over the available talent because it is possible that someone exceptional may come to tryouts unexpectedly whom the directors think should be featured in the revue. This may cause the writers to do some rearranging and rewriting.

One way to select the cast is to hold tryouts which are open to club members, their husbands or wives, and those whom the club wishes to invite to try out. There is one factor to be considered, though, in dealing with adult 

amateurs who are not accustomed to performing in public, and that is their shyness at tryouts. Unless they are used to being in front of audiences, they are hesitant about getting up in front of their friends to display their singing, dancing, and acting abilities. The Cargill Producing Organization counteracts this fear of tryouts by holding a "talent party." All of the members and their husbands or wives and friends who are interested in being in the show are invited to a large party. There, in an atmosphere of conviviality, some gather around the piano to sing, couples dance, and all have an opportunity to talk with the director about what they would like to do in the revue. The director notes who are the best performers and casts accordingly.13

If a "talent party" is not wanted, holding private auditions is another method of casting which can be used. The directors and producer can learn a great deal about the candidates through talking with them, listening to them sing a few bars, or watching them dance a step or two.

An important factor in casting is the candidate's past experience in performing. If the directors and producer know the club members and have seen them perform, they may be able to cast the show satisfactorily without

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13Healy, op. cit., pp. 52-55.
holding auditions; but when they do not know of the theatrical experience of the candidates, they will need to have open tryouts or a "talent party" or private auditions and, in addition, have help from a talent committee to inform them of the abilities of some of the people who may be too modest to speak for themselves.

Probably most organizations can provide enough members plus their wives or husbands and friends to fill the singing and dancing ensembles. It is not necessary for chorus members to have a great amount of singing or dancing talent so long as they are reasonably nice looking, know their left foot from the right, and can carry a tune. However, those who are to be featured as singers, dancers, actors, or comedians should be the best that the community has to offer. If this means going outside the club for performers, it should be done for the good of the show. As for those club members who have no talent for performing, the producer should see that they are put on business committees or technical crews and not on the stage.

In any event, all casting should be tentative until several rehearsals have been held.

The hiring or forming of an orchestra is another casting problem which is usually handled by the musical director. If the producer and business manager insist that the club cannot afford to hire professional musicians, the
musical director should be responsible for making up an orchestra of the best players available. Many revues can be accompanied effectively by only two pianists and a drummer or a pianist, organist, and drummer. The addition of a bass viol provides a small, but good, combination. Other instruments can be added to this basic combination depending on the money and/or players available. The problem of instrumental balance is one to be solved by the musical director, who must also determine the desired loudness of the orchestra in order to get the best balance of voices from the stage and orchestral accompaniment.

**Planning the units**

The producer or business manager should purchase or have prepared the needed music and scripts or sides to go into rehearsal. The director, choreographer, and musical director should make plans for the sections of the revue for which they are responsible, as determined by the director. Before starting rehearsals, the director should have an idea as to the staging of each unit; the choreographer should have many of the steps worked out for the dance numbers; and the musical director should see that choral arrangements are obtained or made so that he can go into rehearsal with the singing choruses.

In this way, time will not be wasted getting started
at rehearsals. Also, in doing their pre-rehearsal planning, the directors may discover a need for a large amount of space for a number or a certain type of costume or a particular prop which may affect the designing of the costumes, scenery, and properties. For this reason, it is well for most of the general staging and choreography to be done before the designer goes to work.

Arranging the music

If suitable choral arrangements cannot be purchased, the musical director or arranger should get to work on making arrangements as soon as permission is obtained from the copyright owners of the music. Most of the choral arrangements should be finished by the first rehearsal of the singing ensemble.

As soon as the key, the tempo, the length, and the arrangement of verses and choruses are determined for each number, the musical director or arranger can do the orchestrations, which should be completed before the first rehearsal with the orchestra.

Rehearsing the revue

The rehearsal schedule must depend to a great extent on the wishes of the performers, the contracts with the club's employees, and the availability of rehearsal rooms. When the Cargill Producing Organization does a
revue, the customary rehearsal period is about two-and-a-half weeks; however, some clubs will prefer not to rehearse as intensively as this. The total number of rehearsal hours needed will vary according to the demands of the material, the capabilities of the performers, orchestra, and directors, and the efficiency of the directors in conducting rehearsals without wasting time. In most situations, about 90-to-120 hours of rehearsal will be needed. In order not to tire the performers, the best plan is probably to schedule rehearsals over four-to-seven weeks.

Generally, the rehearsal period will consist of beginning separate rehearsals (in which the musical director rehearses privately with those who sing, the choreographer with those who dance, and the director with those who speak), unit rehearsals (in which those numbers which have singing and/or dancing and/or speaking are rehearsed to combine these elements), run-throughs (in which one act or the entire show is put together), polishing separate rehearsals (in which the musical director again works privately with those who sing, the choreographer with those who dance, and the director with those who speak and featured performers to get each unit as perfect as possible), a technical rehearsal (in which scenery, properties, lighting, and sound are added to the show), and two or three full dress rehearsals.

The number of hours spent on each phase will vary to
a great extent from revue to revue. In general, though, about three-quarters of the total rehearsal time should be devoted to the beginning, unit, and polishing rehearsals and one-quarter to run-throughs (which may start early) and technical and dress rehearsals. The director should schedule all rehearsals with the approval of the producer and the advice of the choreographer and musical director.

All rehearsals should begin promptly at the time scheduled, should be conducted efficiently, and should end at the time specified. Every performer should be provided with a copy of the rehearsal schedule and should be promptly notified of any changes in it. If a person misses a rehearsal, the stage manager or talent committee should investigate immediately; and if the reason for the absence indicates a lack of interest, he should be promptly replaced.

Rehearsals should be lively, interesting, and fun. The typical adult amateur performer is interested in being in a show only so long as he is having a good time; therefore, rehearsals should be scheduled so that performers do not have to sit around waiting for a long period and so that they are finished at a reasonable hour.

For the beginning rehearsals, the musical director should work privately with the singers until songs have been memorized; the choreographer should work with the dancers until the steps have been learned; and the director
should work with the actors until lines, blocking, and business have been memorized and characterizations are being attempted. If these rehearsals are scheduled at the same hours, it will be necessary to have three separate rehearsal rooms and, perhaps, two or three pianists so that all musical numbers may have accompaniment.

In directing comedy sketches, the director should work for the early establishment of a comedy mood. The audience should learn as soon as the scene begins that laughs are expected and wanted. The pace of the sketch should be fast yet have variety, and it should gather momentum as the climax is reached. Above all, the actors should strive for spontaneity. Alfred de Liagre, Jr., wrote, "It is a basic fact that every comedy must be played with this quality of effervescence in order to inspire laughter in an audience."1

In directing singing ensembles, Lehman Engel advised grouping the members of each voice range together and seating all in a circle for the first rehearsals. After the notes are learned, he changes the seating so that no two singers of the same part sit next to one another. He

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noted, "This procedure accustoms the individual to the various conditions he may encounter in his movement about the stage." Engel also stated that the chorus "should be taught to look at the conductor at the crucial moments—beginnings, retards, tempo changes, endings—and to be self-sufficient without him when singing in strict tempo."  

As soon as the singers have learned the music, the director or choreographer should teach the singers the movement to accompany their singing. This may involve gesturing, walking, pantomiming, swaying, or dancing—in unison or individually. It is not enough for singers just to be able to sing nowadays; they must be able to move gracefully, too. A fast-paced revue usually does not have chorus members who stand on risers with their hands behind their backs in glee club fashion.

Sometimes solo singers can command attention by little movement—by just standing at a microphone or sitting on a stool; however, the soloist must be an excellent performer who knows how to hold an audience. Usually, duets, trios, quartets, and small groups need some hand gestures and dance steps to make their numbers more interesting. The amount of action depends on the music, the space, and whether they must stay within the range of a particular microphone.

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15Engel, op. cit., p. 142.
In choreographing the dancing, the choreographer must be guided by the music, the mood of the scene, the theme of the revue, the abilities of the performers, the amount of space available, the costumes, and the general staging devised by the director.

Like the singers, some of the dancers and actors may have to do more than their specialty. The choreographer may also have to teach actors to dance; the musical director may have to coach dancers and actors on songs; and the director may have to direct dancers and singers on lines to be spoken.

In order to get the singers, dancers, and actors (who have been rehearsing separately) together for those units which require two or three of these groups, unit rehearsals should be held by the director with the other two directors in attendance. Then, the director may wish to try a run-through of Act I. As scheduled by the director of the Gay Capers, this comes at the end of the third week of rehearsals with a run-through of Act II the following week. (See the Gay Capers rehearsal schedule on page 113.) Scheduling early run-throughs has this desirable effect: if performers know that on a certain date they will have to get up in front of the other performers to do their number, they will be inspired to work harder to get their unit into good shape.

Although run-throughs may be held periodically,
singing, dancing, and acting rehearsals should continue privately with the individual directors until the units are polished.

The proficiency of the musicians in the orchestra will determine how many rehearsals are necessary for them. If it is an orchestra composed of amateurs, the musical director may wish to schedule private rehearsals with them before attempting to put the orchestra with the show. If it is an orchestra composed of professional musicians who must be paid for rehearsals, the musical director will probably have the orchestra accompany a run-through without previous rehearsals. In any event, the orchestra should accompany at least two and preferably three or more rehearsals of the complete show before playing for performances.

At least one technical rehearsal with scenery, properties, sound, and lighting and two or three full dress rehearsals with orchestra, costumes, makeup, scenery, properties, sound, and lighting should be scheduled.

During the last run-throughs and dress rehearsals, the directors should work for speed, vitality, and perfection. Numbers may have to be shortened or cut out; "stage waits" for the changing of scenery must be eliminated or covered by the addition of comedy material; precision dance routines must be made precise; and all units must be played with enthusiasm and energy.
The directors might remind the performers that they must be good because they are in competition with professionals. Audiences can see fine entertainment at home on television for nothing; so if they come out of the comfort of their homes and pay money to see an amateur show, they expect to be entertained. The directors might also tell the performers that, while they may not be as polished as professionals, they can make up for their lack of proficiency to a great extent by high spirits and an eagerness to please.

Gilbert Seldes pointed out that at one point, and only one point, the revue touches upon art and that is in its "mania for perfection." He continued, "The revue is the most notable place in which this great American dislike of bungling, the real pleasure in a thing perfectly done, apply even vaguely to the arts."16 All of the elements of the revue—singing, dancing, acting, comedy, scenery, costumes, lighting, and all others—must be fused into a fast, vital, and perfect production.

**Doing the technical work**

The designer should be in charge of the technical work on costumes, scenery, properties, lighting, sound, and

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16 Seldes, *The 7 Lively Arts*, p. 133.
makeup. In his work, he will be guided by the material, by the suggestions of the directors and producer, by the facilities of the theatre, by the budget for the revue, by the abilities of the technical director and crews to carry out his ideas, and by the tastes of the audience.

The designer should be assisted by a technical director and crews, each of which should be headed by a "chief," a "head," a "master," or a "mistress," as he or she may wish to be called.

It was not the purpose of this dissertation to present detailed information on designing or other technical aspects of the production since many excellent books, such as the following, are available to guide those who need assistance:


The New Scene Technician's Handbook by Philip Barber, which is a part of Producing the Play by John Gassner (revised edition; New York: The Dryden Press, Publishers, 1953)


Costumes

The question of whether to make or to rent costumes must be carefully considered. There are excellent costume companies which can provide good costumes quickly for amateur revues, but the rental of costumes for a large cast can be expensive.

If the sponsoring club has a good costume designer and members who can sew, a large number of costumes can be made cheaply. The record of the Gay Capers proves this. Consistently, year after year, the wardrobe committees for these revues have produced 150-to-200 beautiful costumes for each show at a cost which has ranged from $340 to $750. But it must be remembered that most of the young ladies in this organization are good seamstresses who know a great deal about attractive styles, colors, and how to save money in making clothes. When they are guided, as they have been, by someone who knows how to design for the stage, they can produce fantastic costumes at an inexpensive price.

If, however, the sponsoring club is not blessed with good seamstresses, it would be wise to rent the costumes. In this situation, if expenses must be held down, the writers should plan units which will require a minimum amount of rented costumes. A good effect can often be obtained in a modern scene by having the girls wear their own (or borrowed) evening gowns, cocktail dresses, sports clothing, and other
garments which are colorful. Men's tuxedos, white dinner jackets, full-dress suits, and service uniforms make fine costumes for appropriate scenes. Sometimes only the addition of an inexpensive trimming, such as sequins or glitter or a brilliant cummerbund, can change ordinary clothing into a theatrical costume. If the members do not own what is wanted, local merchants may lend clothing and furs for a show in exchange for program credit.

In any event, the costumes for a musical revue should be spectacular. They should also be appropriate for the period, place, and mood of the unit; indicate types of characters; let dancers move freely; and attract attention to the principal performers. For a musical revue, it is possible to ignore authenticity for theatricality.

The line, style, and color of costumes must be carefully considered. Each costume must be in harmony with the line, style, and color of the set and the other costumes in the scene. Color is particularly important to a musical revue. To give the audience a feeling of gaiety or beauty or excitement, a great deal of vibrant, exquisite color must be onstage. This color can only come from the set, properties, lights, or costumes; and usually, in a revue, it is primarily from the costumes.

In planning colors for costumes, though, the effect of the lighting must be carefully studied since the color
of the lights can enhance or change the color of fabrics; for example, a blue light may make yellow material appear to be blue-green or it may make orange fabric appear to be red or black.

Also, in designing costumes for amateur performers, it is important to plan clothing which the performers will enjoy wearing, in which they are comfortable, which conceals the unshapely parts of their figures, and which is easy to make. It should be remembered, too, that when chorus girls wear the same or similar costumes, the hems of their skirts should be the same height from the floor.

The designer should design the costumes which are to be made by the members, or he should order the costumes which are to be rented. He should have the designs checked by the three directors and the producer before making or ordering them. If any performers are asked to wear their own clothing, the designer should check the apparel carefully to be sure that it has the right color, line, and style.

The designer will need the assistance of a costume crew to make or supervise the making of the costumes or, in the case of rented costumes, to unpack, distribute, iron, make adjustments in, and repack the clothing. The members of this crew should also obtain or ask the performers to get suitable shoes, hats, jewelry, wigs, and other costume accessories. They should see that the stage floor is clean.
so that the costumes will not get dirty from contact with the floor and that costumes are ironed and cleaned when necessary. To avoid unnecessary ironing, they should instruct the performers not to sit down offstage in costumes which wrinkle easily. During performances, members of the costume crew should be backstage to assist in dressing performers and making needed repairs to costumes.

If the members of the sponsoring club decide to make the costumes, if they plan to produce more revues, and if they have a place to store costumes, they could save money in the following years by storing and reusing the clothing which they make. In this case, the costume crew should be responsible for cleaning and storing the costumes.

Ready-made dancing costumes and fabrics for costumes may be bought from:

Dazian's
142 West 44th Street
New York 36, N. Y.

Leo's Advance Theatrical Co.
32 West Randolph Street
Chicago 1, Illinois

Maharam Fabric Corporation
130 West 46th Street
New York 36, N. Y.

Fabrics and accessories, such as umbrellas, canes, hats, tambourines, crowns, and wigs, may be purchased from:

Southern Importers and Exporters
1809 Louisiana
Houston 1, Texas
The best-known maker of fine dancing shoes is:

Capezio
1612 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

Three of the largest costume rental companies are:

Brooks-Van Horn Costume Company
232 North 11th Street
Philadelphia 7, Pa.

Eaves Costume Company, Inc.
151 West 46th Street
New York 19, N. Y.

Western Costume Company
5335 Melrose Avenue
Hollywood 38, Calif.

Scenery and Properties

Scenery is the background against which the unit is played and is constructed and painted by the set construction crew. Anything within the set, such as furniture or pictures or trees, is a property. Also, articles handled by performers are properties and are obtained by the property crew. Sometimes there is disagreement over what is a costume accessory and what is a property. In such a case, the designer should decide which crew should obtain the item.

In discussing stage settings for musicals, Gassner wrote:

*It is important to remember that an ounce of suggestion is worth a pound of realism, and that suggestion can achieve maneuverability without*
sacrificing anything worth retaining in a revue or musical comedy.  

Since any waiting for scene changes must be eliminated, the designer should plan scenery and properties which can be easily moved. The following are suggestions:
(1) simple set-pieces, fragmentary sets, screens, or skeleton scaffolding in front of a cyclorama, curtain, or drop; (2) drop-wing-border sets; (3) unit sets which can be varied by changing "plugs" in arches, windows, and doors; (4) sets which may be broken up and parts of them used in several scenes; and (5) projections on drops, curtains, or flats. When available, revolving, elevator, and wagon stages and treadmills are useful devices for the rapid shifting of scenery. It should be remembered that audiences often delight in watching the scenery being changed.

Howard Bay expressed his opinion of appropriate scenery for musicals as follows:

Whatever the necessary weight or complexity, scenery in the musical theatre must above all appear light and spontaneous and airily mobile.  

Realism is usually not desired in the amateur musical revue, but theatricality is; therefore, most of the time

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17Gassner, op. cit., p. 471.

the sets and properties may be frankly make-believe, artificial, and decorative—something which would be found nowhere but in a theatre. But the sets and properties should add color, gaiety, glamour, and spectacle to the production, harmonize with the line, style, and color of the costumes, suggest the period and locale of the scene, enhance the mood, provide sufficient entrances and exits, consider the audience’s sight lines, and give enough space for the desired staging. When a large number of people are to be onstage, the designer should consider using levels, ramps, or steps so that more people can be easily seen. He must also determine the effect of lighting on the scenery and properties before deciding on colors to be used.

After the designer has prepared the designs for the scenery and properties, they should be checked by the three directors and the producer. Then they can be given to the technical director who supervises the set construction crew which builds and paints the scenery and the stage crew which hangs the scenery, shifts it, and pulls curtains on cues from the stage manager. Whether the stage crew is composed of amateurs or union stagehands, the technical director and the stage manager should supervise their work. After the final performance, the technical director should see to the striking and storing of the scenery for future use.

In addition, the technical director should supervise
the work of the property crew as it borrows, buys, or builds props and makes a property plot. During performances, he and the stage manager superintend the work of this crew in handling properties and keeping the stage clean. After the show is over, the technical director should see that this crew returns borrowed props and stores the others for future use.

If the members of the sponsoring club think that they cannot make or borrow the needed scenery and properties, it is possible to rent or buy theatrical equipment and supplies of all sorts from local or national suppliers. One of the largest companies in this business is:

Theatre Production Service, Inc.
52 West 46th Street
New York 36, N. Y.

Lighting

Since proper lighting is very important, the designer and the director should be consulted about the placement of lighting equipment, the selection of colored gelatins, the preparation of a light plot, and the running of lights. The technical director may supervise the light crew unless a special lighting designer is appointed to this job. During performances, the stage manager gives light cues to the crew.

The lighting equipment to be used for a musical revue can depend to a great extent on what is available
in the chosen theatre. Usually an amateur musical revue will not require complicated lighting. Most revues can be lighted if there is adequate lighting onstage (footlights, striplights, borderlights, floodlights, and cyclorama lights) and, at least, one follow spot in the balcony. It is not even necessary to have all of the lights mentioned above, except for the follow spot. If the theatre cannot provide a good follow spot—and two would be better than one—the sponsoring club should make arrangements to borrow, rent, or buy one or two. Two good follow spots can make up for the inadequacies of the lighting onstage to a great extent. On this subject, Howard Bay wrote:

Unlike electrics in the drama, in a musical the arc-follow spots supplant the majority of "specials" (lamps focused on a specific area for a specific action). A show's sparkle isn't a result of a blaze of wattage aimed at the stage, but arises from the color contrast of strong back lighting and cross lighting cutting through the general illumination, haloing the people and hazing the background.  

Large group numbers will require lighting which is bright enough so that the audience can easily see all of the performers. If the stage lighting is not sufficient, the follow spots can help by covering the entire stage. When soloists appear, the follow spots can be adjusted to cover

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19 Ibid., p. 59.
only the principal performers. At the same time, the stage lighting can be dimmed to give greater emphasis to the soloists, if this is desired. If only slight emphasis is wanted for a soloist while still retaining bright light on a group, the stage lighting can remain up with one follow spot covering the stage and the other focusing on the soloist.

Soloists, small groups, monologuists, and stand-up comedians will usually perform in follow spotlighting with little or no stage lighting. As for sketches, the lighting will depend on the demands of the script. As a general rule, comedy is played in bright light and needs both stage and follow spotlighting. The follow spots can cover the entire set or call attention to a particular comedian by following him. Follow spotlighting is also needed for picking out comedians in running gags. Without this emphasis on their activities, they could be lost in a crowd scene.

As for the colors of the lights, these will depend on the colors used in the scenery and costumes and the mood of the scene. Since color is extremely important to a musical revue, the designer must carefully consider the use of all colors in the scenery, properties, costumes, and lighting.
Lighting equipment may be rented or purchased from:

Century Lighting, Inc.
521 West 43rd Street
New York 36, N. Y.

Other large companies which sell lighting equipment are:

Ariel Davis Manufacturing Co.
3687 South State Street
Salt Lake City 15, Utah

Kliegl Bros.
32-32 48th Avenue
Long Island City 2, N. Y.

Strong Electric Corporation
94 City Park Avenue
Toledo 1, Ohio

If the writers should wish to have a number in blacklight, fluorescent fabrics, paint, and makeup and equipment for ultra-violet lighting may be purchased from:

Stroblite Company
75 West 45th Street
New York 36, N. Y.

Sound

The need for sound equipment and effects will depend on the requirements of the script and the acoustics of the chosen theatre. It is possible that some revues may need no sound effects or equipment; on the other hand, some revues may need live and recorded sound effects, many microphones, and equipment for playing both phonograph records and tapes. Also, the sound crew should take care of intercom systems for communication between the director, stage
manager, and follow-spot operators or between the stage manager and the dressing rooms or any system which is desired.

If sound amplification or effects are important to the show, the director and the designer may wish to be consulted about the placement of microphones and loudspeakers and the cues for sound effects. The technical director usually supervises the sound crew unless a special sound director is appointed. During performances, the stage manager gives sound cues to the crew.

When playing in large theatres, it is important that the acoustics be checked before performances. If necessary, sound equipment should be rented or purchased so that audiences can hear every syllable, whether spoken or sung. It may be that hanging microphones, microphones in the footlight troughs, standing microphones, table microphones, lavalier microphones, and microphones concealed in properties may have to be used. When necessary, appearances should be sacrificed for audibility.

All types of sound equipment may be rented or purchased from:

Masque Sound & Recording Corporation
331 West 51st Street
New York 19, N. Y.
The makeup crew is responsible for obtaining appropriate colors of bases, rouges, eye shadows, eyebrow pencils, powders, lipsticks, and mascaras plus leg makeup, cold cream, tissues, hair spray, false hair, spirit gum, liquid latex, nose putty, powder brushes, hair coloring, and so forth. This crew is responsible for making up the performers or supervising the application of makeup, for seeing that well-lighted mirrors are available, and for cleaning up the mess which invariably results. This crew may also be in charge of hair styles if special hairdressers are not brought in to attend to this job.

The director and designer will probably wish to be consulted about makeup for performers and will certainly demand changes at dress rehearsals if any makeup appears to be unsuitable.

Most women are accustomed to applying makeup and will need only guidance from the makeup crew to put on stage makeup. With inexperienced male performers, however, it will be necessary for the crew to apply the makeup or closely supervise the application.

The makeup crew must determine what is desired for each number and then see that performers are made up accordingly. Too much makeup and too little makeup must both be avoided. The stage manager should check all
performers before their entrances to be sure that they are properly made up.

Most towns and cities have cosmetic studios or cosmetic departments in stores which may donate makeup for amateur revues in exchange for program credit. Most of the needed makeup can probably be obtained in local cosmetic studios or ten-cent, drug, or department stores; however, if an item cannot be found, it may be purchased from:

Max Factor's Makeup Studio
Los Angeles
California

**Doing the business work**

The business manager should supervise the business work for the production. He should direct the box-office manager, the house manager, and the business committees, each of which should be headed by a chairman.

Since the business manager should take care of receipts obtained by his committees and pay all bills for the revue, he will probably wish to establish a bank account just for the show. This will help him to prepare accurate financial records after the final performance for the producer and the sponsoring club. These records are needed so that they can be studied in the following years to determine where expenses can be cut and income increased.

The business manager may help the producer to prepare
the budget; but, regardless of who writes the budget, the business manager should be responsible for seeing that all buyers of materials and services stay within their allotments. He is the person who must hold the checkrein on expenditures while spurring the sellers of tickets, advertising, and refreshments to greater efforts.

Tickets

The club as a whole or the producer in consultation with the business manager may determine the prices of tickets, whether there should be general-admission and reserved seats or all one or the other, whether there should be patrons or not, and whether tickets should be sold at box offices or by members or both.

One factor influencing the prices of tickets is the amount of federal, state, and city taxes which will be due on them. The current United States Internal Revenue Code exempts the following from the payment of taxes on tickets: churches and church associations, educational institutions, hospitals and clinics, veterans organizations, organizations which produce shows for charities, police and fire departments which produce shows for their own benefit, and others. Not exempt are private clubs and organizations, such as the Elks Club, the Junior League, and the Pilot Club, which may produce shows for their own benefit. If, however, they
donate the proceeds to charities, they will probably be exempt.

The current federal tax on tickets is one cent for every ten cents or major fraction thereof on any amount over $1.00; for example, if a non-exempt organization wants to receive for itself $1.50 for each ticket, the club will have to charge an additional five cents to pay the federal tax on the ticket plus an additional amount if any state or city taxes must be paid.

It should be kept in mind that even though the federal government may exempt certain organizations from the payment of taxes on tickets, state and city governments may not exempt them. The safest procedure, therefore, is for the business manager to contact the nearest office of the United States Treasury Department's Internal Revenue Service and state and city tax departments to determine if taxes must be paid on the tickets and to get the proper forms for returning the amounts owed. The federal government requires that box-office records and unsold tickets be kept for three years from the date the tax return is due.

After determining the prices to be charged for tickets—and to make it easy for sellers, the prices should be round numbers—the business manager or the box-office manager should have the tickets printed. Information which should be on every ticket is the name of the sponsoring
club, the name of the revue, the name of the theatre, the
date and time of the performance, the location of the seat,
and the price of the ticket, including federal, state, and
city taxes, if any. It is a help to ticket-sellers, the
ticket-taker, and ushers if tickets are printed in different
colors to indicate the various prices and performances.

After receiving the tickets from the printer, the
box-office manager must check them carefully to be sure
that they are in accordance with the theatre's seats before
selling them.

If only general-admission tickets are to be sold, the
box-office manager and the ticket committee should dis­
tribute these tickets to all club members and, perhaps,
offer a prize to the one who sells the most. In addition,
they should sell tickets at one or two central box offices
and at the theatre, if this is possible.

If only reserved-seat tickets are to be sold, the
box-office manager and the ticket committee should handle
these at one or two convenient box offices. Club members
can sell general-admission tickets, but it is best to have
as few people as possible involved in selling reserved seats.
When a customer purchases a reserved seat, he may want a
definite location or he may wish to be sure that he is
getting the best seat available. Since it is impractical
for club members to carry a large assortment of tickets,
the best policy is to have one or two box offices to handle reserved seats. It is possible, though, to have club members sell preliminary tickets or coupons which may be exchanged at the box office for reserved-seat tickets.

If both general-admission and reserved-seat tickets are to be sold, club members can sell general-admission tickets and preliminary coupons for reserved seats; and the box offices can handle both types of tickets.

If the club wishes to make a special rate to groups (clubs, schools, organizations, and businesses) which will purchase a specified number of tickets, the ticket committee should see that this information gets to prospective groups and handle the special arrangements for these people who may want to sit together.

If the club wishes to have patrons, a small separate committee should be appointed to sell these high-priced reserved-seat tickets. This committee will have to telephone or see prospective customers, mail or deliver tickets, sometimes bill the patrons for money due, and see that the names of patrons are printed correctly in newspaper stories and in the program. This work warrants forming an additional patrons committee.

If the club's aim is to make money, as few complimentary tickets as possible should be given out. Some to newspaper reviewers will be necessary and, perhaps, several
to those who have donated costly items; but otherwise the box-office manager should not issue complimentary tickets, unless "papering" the house is necessary.

The box-office manager should supervise the ticket and patrons committees and the work in the box offices. During the rehearsal period, the business manager may ask the box-office manager to make periodic reports on the sale of tickets. After the final performance—after all money and unsold tickets have been collected from sellers—the box-office manager should prepare a comprehensive report on the number of each price of tickets sold for each performance, the number of each price of tickets collected at the door, the number of complimentary tickets issued and collected, the number of unsold tickets, the amount of money received, the amount of taxes owed on tickets (if any), and a description of the weather at the time of each performance. A report of this kind can help the club greatly in planning for future revues.

Program

A program committee should be appointed to prepare an attractive program for the revue. A good choice to be the chairman of this committee would be a person who is experienced in the advertising business, especially if the club wishes to sell advertisements.
Items which should be included in the program are the name of the revue and sponsoring club; the titles of acts, scenes, and units; the names of performers, authors, composers, lyricists, musicians in the orchestra, and those on the production and business staffs; and credits for the lending of costumes, furs, properties, and other items and for the donation of makeup, publicity, materials, and other gifts. Care should be taken to include in the program any stipulation made by copyright owners in connection with the use of copyrighted material in the revue. The program may also include a list of the officers of the sponsoring club and, if the revue is for charity, a statement of what will be done with the profits. If the club has patrons, their names should also be printed in the program.

The question of whether to have advertising in the program is one which the club as a whole or the producer and the business manager should decide. Some groups may think that a program without advertisements is more attractive and dignified than one with ads; however, these clubs should remember that selling advertising is an easy way to make money. About one-fourth of the gross receipts of the Gay Capers comes from selling advertising for the program. If a club puts a large number of its most aggressive members on the program committee and if they go to work early--several months before performances--a great amount can be
earned. A club, therefore, which is interested in making money should certainly consider having advertisements in the program.

If the sponsoring club wishes merely to list the names of advertisers under such headings as "Boosters" or "Sponsors" in the program, as the Gay Capers does, the producer or business manager should decide on the amounts which the advertisers must give to warrant being put in these classifications.

If, instead of simply listing names, the club wishes to have regular advertisements, the producer or business manager should decide on the prices for different sizes and locations of ads. This system is more complicated than just listing the names of advertisers since each page must be carefully laid out with copy, pictures, and designs. The editor of the program must know how to distribute the revue's copy among the advertisements in order to keep advertisers happy.

In either case, the members of the program committee should be responsible for contacting prospective advertisers, collecting money, billing advertisers (if necessary), making arrangements with a printer, seeing that the programs are printed correctly, and distributing them to the ushers at performances.
Concession

Another way that a club can make money on a show is through selling refreshments at performances. If the members of a concession committee can persuade club members or manufacturers to donate or sell to them at a discount candy, popcorn, and soft drinks which they can sell to the audience before and after the show and at intermission, they can make a good sum of money for the sponsoring group. The concession committee must be certain, however, that their activities in the lobby are not distracting to the audience while the show is on.

Publicity

The publicity committee is one of the most important ones in the entire organization because if there is no publicity there will not be large audiences.

The goal of the publicity committee should be to get as much free publicity as possible. If the revue is being given for charities, the committee will probably find that newspapers, radio and television stations, printers, and outdoor advertising companies will be generous in giving publicity.

This committee should start early by preparing news releases on the organization of the staff for the revue, the members of different committees, the performers, and
the patrons. If possible, pictures should accompany these stories.

If the show is for charities, newspaper editors may, if asked, write editorials explaining what is done with the proceeds. If the net profits from previous shows have been donated to charities, several stories should appear giving the amounts and the charities. The committee should try to arrange for reviewers to be present on opening night, if more than one performance is to be given.

This committee should contact all radio and television stations in the area. There are usually locally-produced programs on which performers can sing or dance or talk. Local television news programs may show pictures taken at dress rehearsals, if asked to do so. Some stations may also make free announcements advertising the show.

This committee should also arrange for the appearance of soloists or small groups at meetings of other clubs or assemblies in schools. These performers should be accompanied by someone who can make a short speech giving the name of the show and sponsoring organization, the dates and place of performances, and information about tickets.

Posters of various sizes should be printed or made by hand. Those including pictures of numbers from the show attract the most attention. The text should state the name of the sponsoring club, the name of the revue, the dates,
time, and place of performances, the prices of tickets, and the locations where they may be purchased.

Bumper cards placed on the automobiles of all club members are a good form of advertisement. Taxi companies may also be willing to have bumper cards or larger posters placed on their vehicles. Throwaways put in hotel rooms on the days of performances may draw transients who want some entertainment. Throwaways may also be inserted in the programs of other events, left in piles in public places with the hope that passers-by may pick them up, or mailed to prospective customers. Special postal cards may also be printed for mailing to possible ticket-buyers. Billboards and large banners are eye-catching, and small badges worn by all club members also attract attention. Local store owners may cooperate by donating window displays during the week of performances and, if asked, they may put a mention of the show into their newspaper advertisements. The publicity committee should also prepare attractive advertising for the theatre's houseboards.

If the revue is not being given for charities and newspaper, radio, and television companies are, therefore, not generous with free publicity, paid advertising should be used. Advertisements on the theatre pages of newspapers for one or two weeks before performances should
be bought plus announcements on radio and television, if the club can afford them.

An enterprising publicity committee can probably think up other ways to arouse interest in the revue. Any opportunity that may come up in the locality to attract attention to the show should be taken, provided that it is in good taste and will result in favorable publicity.

The publicity committee should arrange for pictures to be taken at a dress rehearsal which can be used in newspaper publicity, on the theatre's houseboards, and on posters and which can be kept to provide a pictorial record of the revue.

The publicity committee should keep a scrapbook of the newspaper publicity, the pictures, the reviews, the paid advertisements, the program, and a sample of the throwaways, posters, badges, bumper cards, postal cards, and other publicity items used. In order to have a complete record of the show's publicity, the committee might include in the scrapbook a list of appearances of performers on radio and television and at meetings or assemblies and copies of radio and television announcements. Besides being a big help to following publicity committees, a publicity scrapbook can provide a record of the revue which will become more valuable to the club as the years pass by.
House management

The house manager organizes the staff which will take care of the audience after they arrive at the theatre. He instructs the ushers and the ticket-taker in their duties. He has seating plans prepared for the ushers so that they can study them in advance of performances. He arranges for the ushers to dress alike or to wear some distinguishing item, such as a white carnation, so that customers can identify them as ushers. He places the ushers so that they can get a large crowd to the seats efficiently. He reminds them to be polite and pleasant and to give a program to each adult. He sees that flashlights are available for seating latecomers.

The house manager should be certain that the auditorium, the rest rooms, and the dressing rooms are clean, that the temperature and ventilation are comfortable, and that the water fountains are working. Both he and the ushers should be prepared to handle noisy children and adults and to take action in case of illness, accident, fire, or other misfortune.

Performing the revue

Backstage, the stage manager should be in command. He or his assistants should check on the presence of performers, give thirty-minute, fifteen-minute, five-minute,
"overture," and "places" calls; get performers to the stage for their units; check performers to see that they are properly costumed and made up; work with the technical director in supervising the stage, properties, light, and sound crews; give cues for curtains, lights, and sound; prompt; and keep order. The stage manager should send the orchestra into the pit at five minutes before time for the overture, which should begin promptly at the time advertised unless large crowds in the lobby would warrant a slight delay.

In the dressing rooms, the makeup and costume crews should assist the performers. In the pit should be the musicians and the musical director as conductor of the orchestra. In the balcony should be the follow-spot operators. In the lobby should be the house manager, ticket-taker, ushers, and the concession committee. In the box office should be the box-office manager and his assistants. The business manager should be available to supervise generally the work in the front of the house.

In the audience should be the producer, the director, the choreographer, the writers, and the designer, watching audience reaction, making notes as to changes which should be made before the next performance, and hoping that their revue comes up to the description written by Gilbert Seldes of the good musical revue:

The good revue pleases the eye, the ear, and the
pulse; the very good revue does this so well that it pleases the mind. It operates in that equivocal zone where a thing does not have to be funny—it need only sound funny; nor be beautiful if it can for a fleeting moment appear beautiful. It does not have to send them away laughing or even whistling; all it needs to do is to keep the perceptions of the audience fully engaged all the time, and the evaporation of its pleasures will bring the audience back again and again.20

Summary

The purpose of this dissertation was to design an organization and a procedure for the local production of an amateur musical revue which would be suitable for most groups which wish to present this type of show.

The following are the principal suggestions contained in this dissertation: (1) set up an adequate organization early—at least four months before performances—with a producer in charge of four divisions which are headed by a chief writer, a director, a designer, and a business manager; (2) obtain experienced business people to be the producer and business manager; (3) obtain experienced people to direct the artistic side of the production (a chief writer, director, choreographer, musical director, musical arranger, rehearsal pianist, designer, and technical director); (4) prepare a budget and adhere to it; (5) publicize the

20Seldes, The 7 Lively Arts, p. 134.
revue well; (6) obtain patrons and sell tickets, program advertising, and refreshments; (7) be sure that the revue contains a theme, tuneful music, good comedy, pretty girls, fine solo singers and dancers, funny comedians, entertaining specialty acts, and beautiful costumes, scenery, and lighting; (8) arrange the units in the best order possible to get variety and contrast throughout the show and to have an attention-getting opening number, a climactic first-act curtain, a strong next-to-closing unit in Act II for a grand climax, and a spectacular finale; (9) get the finest performers available to feature in the revue; and (10) rehearse the performers, orchestra, and backstage workers until all elements are blended into a smooth technically-perfect production which has pace, vitality, variety, novelty, gaiety, fun, humor, beauty, and glamour.
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I, Elaine Adams Novak, was born in West Milton, Ohio, on July 3, 1922. I attended the public schools of Huntington, West Virginia, and did my undergraduate work at Marshall University in Huntington, which granted me the Bachelor of Arts degree summa cum laude in 1943. While on active duty in the United States Naval Reserve from 1943 to 1946 in Washington, D. C., I did graduate work in night classes at American University and Catholic University. While employed in several positions connected with the professional theatre in New York, I was a student in 1946-1947 at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, in 1948 at the American Theatre Wing, and in 1949-1950 at Columbia University, which granted me the Master of Arts degree. In 1956, I accepted a position as instructor in speech at Marshall University; and in 1960, I became an assistant professor of speech at the same institution. I attended The Ohio State University during the summer of 1961 to begin work for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. Marshall University granted me a sabbatical leave for the school year of 1962-1963 so that I might continue with my studies; and The Ohio State University provided me with a Simon Lazarus
Memorial Scholarship for the same purpose. I plan to return to teaching and directing at Marshall University in September, 1963.

I first became interested in musical revues when I directed one and did the choreography for another while I was a senior in high school. Although I performed in some others, I directed no more revues until I was employed to be the director of the Gay Capers of 1958, 1959, 1960, and 1961.