Radio City Music Hall Opens With Gala Ceremonies

THE new Radio City Music Hall, the largest and most opulent in the world, was opened last evening as the first active unit in the Rockefeller Centre development. The vast auditorium with its 6,200 seats filled by the season's most resplendent audience, was opened under the personal direction of the one and only Roxy, the man who conceived tnd carried through to completion this imposing project. His dream of theatre perfection becomes a reality with this distinctive playhouse, and no expense has been spared to make it an enterprise that is awe-inspiring. In design and technical equipment it far surpasses anything that New York has seen before. Ultra-modern ideas have been worked into a novel but definitely practical scheme of things in this musical hall that is qualified to present with the utmost ease any sort of entertainment that is desired at the moment. Opera, impressive ballets, huge spectacles, vaudeville and concert numbers—all these diversified forms of amusement are superbly offered at Mr. Rothafel's bidding, and they were all presented on the inaugural program last night.

It was a long and versatile bill that heralded the opening of this greatest of all Roxy achievements, one that was rich in color, rhythm and melody. Stars from many fields of endeavor have been assembled to test and prove the production wonders of the new music hall. The one criticism that one might make regarding this tremendous outlay of talent is that the program is a trifle too heavy to suit the popular taste. There are, I think, more sombre dance interludes than are necessary and a few too many variety acts at the beginning. These are, of course, staged to perfection, but they slow up the proceedings quite a bit. It was not until the brilliant dance number by the ballet corps and Patricia Bowman, in the first act, that the program hit its proper pace, it seemed to me.

Among those who scored rounding on the bill with their contributions were Ray Bolger, the agile dancing comedian; Vera Schwarz, the noted soprano from Berlin, and the magnificent Tuskegee Choir from Alabama which was heard in three glorious spirituals. These dusky singers from the South provided one of the highlights on the program with their subtle harmonies.

Harald Kreutzberg, conceded to be the finest male expressionistic dancer in the world, presented one of his macabre spectacles, "The Angel of Fate," and, later on the program, Martha Graham and her Group exhibited their stylized wares in an interesting but overlong interlude. From the vaudeville stage and radio came Doctor Rockwell, the nimble monologist, and Eddie and Ralph of Skillet fame, and others on the program included Jeanie Lang, the Berry Brothers, Joan Abbott, The Waltons, Otto Fassell, Dorothy Fields and Jimmy McHugh, taking part in the modern numbers and night club episodes.

In the tabloid presentation of Bizet's opera, "Carmen," the chief singers were Titta Ruffo, Coe Glade and Arnoldo Lindi. This musical specialty was well sung but was not especially impressive due to its length and some rather questionable scenery. The final number of the program, which ran 'till past midnight, was an elaborate Minstrel spectacle in which De Wolf Hopper, Weber and Fields, Taylor Holmes, Ray Bolger, the Tuskegee singers and many others appeared.

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