

WORKERS

THEATRE

**MAY-JUNE
1933**



SINGING JAILBIRDS

1933 and 1932
TWO WORKERS
THEATRE SPARTAKIADES
TO ALL ARTISTS, ACTORS AND
STAGE WORKERS
THEATRE WORK WITH
CHILDREN
A CALL TO DANCERS
DIRECTING THE AGITPROP
PLAY
DR KRUPP, SPECIALIST (PLAY)
CLEVELAND-ARTEF-NEU
DANCE GROUP RECITAL
NEWS

REVIEWS

CORRESPONDENCE

10 cents



workers theatre

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ORGAN OF THE LEAGUE OF WORKERS THEATRES OF THE U.S.A.
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NATIONAL UNION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY THEATRE

U.S.A. in the international workers theatre olympiad

The first International Workers Theatre Olympiad takes place in Moscow, U. S. S. R. from May 24 to 30. Some fifteen countries will be represented. The entire week will be devoted to performances and discussions on the work of the theatres of the various countries. The Olympiad will be followed by a Creative Conference on artistic methods in the theatre. In connection with the Olympiad and Conference, there will also take place an International Music Conference, an International conference of painters and artists, and an International Cinema Conference. Almost the entire front of revolutionary art will pass through Moscow. Some of the participants of the Olympiad and Conference will be invited to the Theatre Festival which takes place from May 15 to June 10, 1933.

It should be reported for the records, that the National Executive Committee, acting upon very short notice that two troupes might be sent, nominated the Workers Laboratory Theatre of the U. S. S. R., New York and the Rebel Players, Los Angeles to represent the American workers theatre at the Olympiad. The Prolet-Bühne, New York German language agitprop troupe, was named alternate.

For a short time it seemed that the League of Workers Theatres of the U. S. A. would be represented at the International Olympiad by five delegates and two troupes totalling fifteen members. This possibility did not materialize, and financial difficulties made it impossible for us to send more than just one delegate.

Grade John E. Bonn was elected as delegate to the National Executive Committee of L.W.T. He will join Comrades Nathaniel Buchwald and Bert Reznikov in Moscow as L.W.T. delegates. If it happened, no U. S. troupe will take the place at this Olympiad. This fact is a reflection of weakness on our part; we have not been in a position to develop a mass campaign for the Olympiad among workers and artists. This weakness we believe, is now a thing of the past. A draft plan for the coming year's work is being formulated by the National Executive Committee. It may be expected to include socialist competition from coast to coast, local workers theatre Spartakiades in every possible regional center, and culminating in another National Workers Theatre Spartakiade and Conference next April, possibly at Chicago. The plan may include sending a small delegation possibly a playing troupe--selected for the work during the coming year--to the Soviet

May is the month of the first International Workers Theatre Olympiad. Latest developments are reported in this issue. Future issues will contain detailed reviews, articles, photographs, etc. on the material, by first-hand observers. WORKERS THEATRE will cover the Theatre Olympiad more thoroughly than any other American magazine.

Two sectional Workers Theatre Spartakiades have already been held this spring - in Cleveland and in New York. Both are reported on in this issue. A detailed critical review of the New York Spartakiade by Joseph Freeman, chairman of the judges committee, will be reported in the next issue.

Our Workers-Who-Write department, meant to stimulate workers dramatic criticism and workers correspondence, is not being taken with sufficient seriousness by those interested in the workers theatre, judging by the fact that no systematic contributions to this department are coming in. How about it, comrades?

Important draft plans for the coming year's work of the L.W.T. will be announced soon. Send in your proposals and suggestions.

We need plays. Not a single play has been received this past month. The world stage is big with events, yet the workers theatre movement must scrape and scratch to get material. Where are our playwrights?

The Japanese imperialist government has forbidden the delegates of PROT (Proletarian Theatre Union of Japan), selected by the working class of Japan to come to Moscow for the Olympiad and Conference, to leave Japan. Thus the representatives of the Japanese working class were even robbed of the freedom of going abroad. Persecutions and arrests of PROT theatre workers take place daily, along with severe censorship. The aim is, of course, to weaken the revolutionary movement of the working class and to make imperialist war plans easier to realize. The IURT has lodged a further protest.

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1933 and 1932 workers theatre spartakiades

Harry Elion, natl. sec. I.O.W.T.

...competition between Workers Theatres who present themselves in their best work serves a review of the achievements of the Workers Theatre movement, and what is more important, indicates the next steps to be taken in order to raise the artistic level of the Theatre. The competition itself usually carries within its folds the germs of the new direction. It is necessary only to separate and bring clearly forward these phases of theatre that were not present at previous competitions and to evaluate them in the light of our future perspective.

Comrade Buchwald, chairman of the judges committee of the first Spartakiade stated in his report that ---

"The judges were considerably handicapped by the rules of the contest which did not really permit the various groups to be seen at their best, the rule being that each group must present a new play, never given before, and confine itself to the time-limit of 15 minutes. If the groups had been permitted to show the best plays in their repertory, the Spartakiade would undoubtedly have achieved a higher level."
(W. T. 5/32, P. 10)

This is no doubt was true. But it must be remembered that during the first Spartakiade, the test was not so much the highest artistic achievement of a group, but its ability to mobilize its apparatus within a short time for a production. The groups were given six weeks and within this short time, they had to produce a new play and in some cases write the script. Naturally a group had to be strong organizationally like the Prolet-Buhne or as fortunate in selecting a script as the Jack London Club in order to produce an outstanding work. In spite of these rules and handicaps, the level of artistic achievement was pretty high.

The aim of this years Spartakiade (April 1933) was, in the main, to establish a higher level of artistic production, and the groups were asked to perform what they thought was their best play. The only limitations imposed upon them were the twenty-five minutes time limit and the adherence to the constitution of the League of Workers Theatres.

The results are gratifying. In spite of the fact that this was only a New York Spartakiade the artistic level of production was much higher and the future trend brighter than ever.

The participating groups fell distinctly into three categories from the point of view of theatrical style:

1) Naturalism

Greek Workers Club - Barricades
Brighton Beach Workers Club - Candidates
Maxim Gorky Union - Yellow Devil

2) Militant Symbolism

Prolet-Buhne
Nature-Friends
Bronx Workers Club
Theatre of the Workers Club

3) Symbolic Review

Workers Laboratory Theatre - Sell-Out
International Workers Order - 5 Flying Misleaders

The winning groups came out of the last two groups, Workers Laboratory Theatre, first; Bronx Workers Club, second; and Nature Friends, third.

The naturalistic group, no doubt, suffers from the judges decision. It might be inferred that the judges were prejudiced in favor of militant symbolism and the symbolic review. However, such was not the case. The selection was made rather on the basis of the most effective production and for that reason this group did not range high. The judges argued that all the three productions in naturalistic group showed no elements of anything new in art. The Maxim Gorky Union, however, gave an excellent performance and from every point of view naturalistic plays should be included in the repertory of Workers Theatre.

The second group, Militant Symbolism, showed on the whole no striking advance from last year, although the artistic level on the average was higher. The evaluation given by Comrade Buchwald of the Prolet Buhne in true of the whole group, with the possible exception of the Bronx Workers Club production. He said ---

"In general the work of the Prolet-Buhne, though outstanding in the field of agit-prop theatre, leans too heavily on direction of delivery of lines and too little on the literary and dramaturgical shaping of its plays. The Prolet-Buhne players speak their lines with a ringing, galvanic forcefulness, and the director marshals them upon the stage in perfect rhythm and in a variety of group patterns, with changing tempi building up to a spectacular dynamic climax. But the plays themselves are frequently devoid of effective theatrical form and the vocabulary leans to the conventional propagandist jargon."
(W. T. 6-7/32, P. 20)

The Bronx Workers Club had a recitation that had a great deal of artistic merit and the delivery, the coordination of their voices was on a par with the Scandinavian Workers Club production of last year.

cont'd p.17.

directing the agitprop play

by alfred saxe

If we are to accomplish our results in much less time than the usual drama, if we want maximum of results within our limitations, if we wish to create versatile actors, directors, playwrights, technicians, we must learn our weapons even more thoroughly than the ordinary actor and director. It is a conviction which has been strengthened with the continuance of the work, that to do agit-prop-actors, director, playwright, technician must be highly developed. Some comrade once said that it was nothing to get up and shout a few slogans--anyone can do that. Quite correct. But shouting a few slogans is not agit-prop. This false idea has created a gulf between the agit-prop groups and our capable left wing playwrights--an idea which has manifested itself in all fields of the work and accounted to a great extent for the slowness with which professional technicians have been drawn to our theatre. Where agit-prop groups have gone beyond slogans into a developed theatrical range taking in realism, stylization, symbolism, vaudeville, mass chant, etc., it has succeeded in drawing in professional technicians and in fact has been responsible for the organization of our stationary theatres. I go into this analysis for the simple reason that there are many directly in the work still basking under the illusion that agit-prop must consist of either slogans or mass recitations. In no sense must agit-prop be considered a theatre of slogans. Agit-prop must strive to be as creative as the best of the art theatres. We must not underestimate the training necessary for agit-prop. If we do, we will find ourselves stagnating after the first two or three plays.

To those in the work, the immediate step is training in all fields of the theatre--a conscious research, analysis, study. In accordance with this training a series of articles dealing specifically with the problems confronting a director and constant discussion of these questions in this magazine is one of the foremost tasks for the development of our work.

DIRECTING denotes a knowledge of various technical problems such as contrast, design, unity, tempo, voice, movement, emotion, pantomime, etc. In the workers theatre directing not only has these technical problems to consider but is also faced with the problem of developing a unified collective group of comrades able not only to conquer problems but also to assist them towards a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the world they live in. This means that the director himself must be conscious of his technical development, his political development as a guide to the others. Working together with others, he must learn to analyze the weaknesses of all comrades, including himself--and work to remedy them. Working on this collective basis, we have found that the best plan

of action in direction is through the organization of a directing committee, consisting of two, three, or four comrades in the group who are interested in this phase of the work, or a director in case there is no committee, who plan the production before coming to rehearsals. This is an extremely important part of the work. It is necessary to stress the planning of rehearsals. It is necessary to watch the rehearsals and analyze results very carefully. Just as planless production under capitalism leads to chaos, so planless production under a director will lead to chaos.

One of the members of this committee is chosen as the chief director. He is to conduct all rehearsals without interference from the directing committee or the acting group. It must be understood that during a rehearsal the director is in complete charge. The actors are to follow his directions with thorough discipline. Following every rehearsal, it is best to have a short meeting with the entire group to discuss the errors made by the director, the weaknesses of the play, individual problems, etc.

As the first of a series of articles taking up technique from the directors angle, I present a general plan of action, step by step, an outline of a production. This is hardly a baking recipe--we are not as scientific as that yet. And it should be understood that such an outline will have to be varied from group to group. Our basis of work is experimental and our theory will reflect this. As our work broadens so the theory will take in new and larger fields.

OUTLINE FOR DIRECTING

We divide the directing into two large sections:

1. Planning of the production - Working with the directing committee, in advance of the rehearsal.
2. Work with the group - Rehearsals.

A. PLANNING - First meeting with Committee.

1. Reading with a view to revising.
In most plays it is necessary to make some changes. One of the first tasks of the directing comm. is to see that the obvious weak points in script are strengthened. That points about changes that were raised at first meeting should here be considered for revision--strengthening dialogue--building of climaxes--unity.
2. Discussion of Theatrical Potentialities.
 - a. Contrasts - for example - voice and action
High --- low
lyric -- staccato
fast --- slow
heavy -- light
tempo.

- b. Design: pictures formed by various positions - for example - circles, squares, triangles, diagonals, verticles, parallels.
Use of levels -
use of lights-color -
unity of design.

3. Dividing the Play into Scenes.

The director will find it much easier to work if he divides the play into small sections. Instead of spreading your problem over the entire play, you concentrate your work and narrow it down to a scene at a time. This division into scenes may be made at points where there is an abrupt change in action, entrance of new character or set of characters, bringing in a new set of ideas, etc. This is in the hands of the directing Comm. and should offer very little trouble. Nevertheless for beginners especially it is extremely important that this division be made.

4. Now that the play has been broken up into scenes the next step is to begin all over again. Work over scene by scene going into the scene more minutely until you have a thorough picture of what the scene will look like - at least in the raw. This means recreating the entire play before you take it to rehearsal. Think over the characters very thoroughly becoming so familiar with the scene that you do not find it necessary to use the script but you work with a mental image of the scene always in front of you.

5. If possible the directing Comm. should meet before every rehearsal to plan the evenings work and to discuss the progress of the play.

A half hour spent in laying out the plan of action before a rehearsal will make up for much indecision and stammering during the rehearsal. The question of planning cannot be underestimated. The committee should keep its eyes and ears open for suggestions from the group during the group discussion.

B. WORKING WITH GROUP - Rehearsals.

1. First Rehearsal - Reading and discussion.

The second reading with the group should be very thorough--discussing the background of the play; its history--background of the characters, etc., giving every one a thorough picture of the entire play. Strive to provoke discussion from the group. If there is time left, the next problem is casting.

CASTING - It is best to try out several members for one role. The directing Comm. then submits a tentative cast which of course may be changed as the play progresses.

2. Second Rehearsal

It is the task of the director to allow for gradual development, getting acquainted with the characters or lines, establishing contact with each other. Let the characters establish a natural contact - don't throw yourself into the thing without first letting the ideas, the thoughts, sink in very thoroughly.

3. Third Rehearsal

Get rid of scripts. Take off your coat and set to work in earnest on shading, tempo, design, unity, etc.

4. Fourth Rehearsal - fifth - sixth - etc.

As the play develops from rehearsal to rehearsal, from scene to scene, stop it less and less -- jotting down your criticism on paper. Thus you allow the play to gain continuity, unity, polish. Spend time on the weak scenes.

5. Last Rehearsals.

Do not criticize during the rehearsal at all. Only at the end after complete rehearsal. Watch especially for tempo. It is important at the last rehearsals that the attitude of the director be positive. That is encouraging regardless of how poor the work is. The psychology of the actor who knows that the director already has set his doom as far as his job is concerned means - a mental state which is hard to overcome and balks all possibility of development.

As has been stated before, this general outline is the first of a series of articles on directing and is assuredly not the last word. We urge all who have other ideas on directing to write in for only \$ through a thorough thrashing out of these ideas can we arrive at the knowledge and theory (or points to add to this outline and the following articles) necessary to build workers theatre into a mass movement. The next article will deal with the problem of design and action, concretely explaining how to put action into a play that lacks it and how and what we mean by design and its problems.

Directors should send in articles dealing with their methods of work. We must build on our collective experience. We need technique!

Correction

The Rebel Players send word that the play "Adventures of a Telephone Booth" is an adaptation from a story appearing in the Western Worker written by R. Cooley. The comrade who did the adapting had a minimum of work to do because the story was so clearly written; she simply added a character at the end to make a strong finish: "So all the credit for the play belongs to the author of the story and not to our adapter."

The first American Workers Music Olympiad takes place Sunday, May 21st, 1933 in the auditorium of City College of New York, 23rd Street and Lexington Ave. This Music Olympiad under the auspices of the Workers Music League, which is the U. S. section of the International Music Bureau, is a counter-demonstration to the bourgeois "National Music Week."

the moscow theatre of the revolution

by zultsov, director

During the past five years our theatre staged five big plays which serve as milestones in the development of the Theatre of the Revolution. These plays were: "The First Cavalry" by Vishnevsky, a play that reflects the heroism of the Red Army during the Civil War; "Nopla, That's the Life" by Ernst Toller, and "Joy Street" by Zarkhy. are plays dealing with international subjects and reflecting the crisis and the growing intensity of the class struggle in the West. Besides: "Poem about the Axe" and "My Friend" by Fogodin, - - plays dealing with the questions of socialist construction in the USSR and with the heroism of the working class on the front of this construction.

At the present time the Theatre of the Revolution is setting itself three main tasks; political saturation, sharpness and actuality of the repertory; the struggle for the further improvement of the artistic production of the theatre, and the clarification and perfection of the creative method of our theatre.

In 1933 our theatre will stage: a play by Vishnevsky entitled "Battle in the West" -- portraying the effects of the crisis and the class struggle in the west; "Solitude" -- a play by Fogodin about the new women, and another play by Zarkhy (author of Joy Street) about the proletarian technical intelligentsia and its place in the socialist construction of the USSR. Outside of this plan, the theatre will work on the staging of one of Shakespeare's plays.

The Theatre is carrying on serious work for the raising of the qualifications of the players and for the training of new forces. For this purpose a Technicum has been organized at the theatre. A group of players have been put forward for stage setting work; these players are called stage-managing laborants who work under the guidance of experienced stage managers.

The theatre also has an experimental-methodical laboratory that works up questions relating to the creative method of the theatre. The theatre has also organized its own university whose task it is to raise the general cultural level of the theatrical workers who are striving to master the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

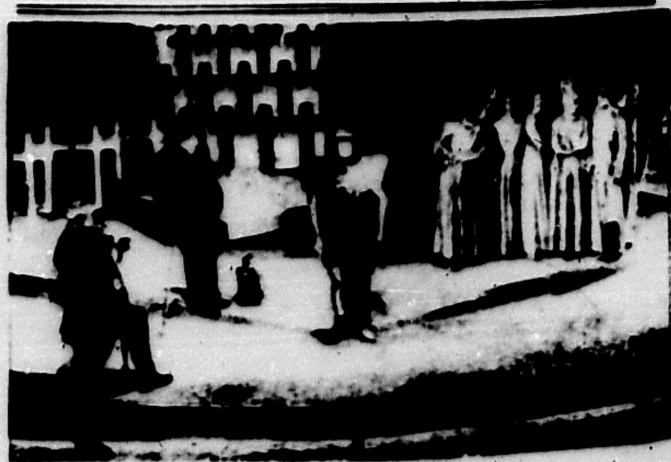
The Theatre of the Revolution is closely connected with its spectators. It has taken over the patronage of the large factory "Electrosvet", whose representative is a member of the art-political council of the theatre. Every new play is discussed

directly in the factory. The play is read before the workers, and then the stage manager who stages the play makes a report about his plans and work.

Most of the performances of the Revolutionary Theatre are bought out by the various shops and factories. At such special performances the theatre organizes discussions or disputes with the spectators during entre-acts or after the performances. Quite often after a certain play is seen by the workers of a given factory, the theatrical troupe visits the factory or shop in question and there discusses the play with the workers on the spot.

Great work has been accomplished by the Theatre of the Revolution in a matter of catering to the provinces. During the past five years the theatre has visited: The Republics of Central Asia and the Transcaucasian Federation. In 1931 the theatre gave performances directly in the factories and in the mines of the Donetz Basin; it played in the "Home of Culture" in Leningrad; it toured Kharkov, Nikolayev, Kiev, Odessa, Ivanovo-Voznessensk (the center of the textile industry). In 1932 a group of our theatrical workers gave performances on the Northern Railway Line. Twice the theatre toured the villages with special programmes during the Spring sowing and harvest campaigns.

In connection with the 10th Anniversary of the Theatre of the Revolution there were organized meetings in the large shops and factories of Moscow, with reports on the 10 years' work of the theatre.



*Théâtre d'Action Internationale — Hans Schlumberg — The Miracle of Verdun
Producer — Leon Moussinac*

To all artists, actors, stage directors dramatists, painters, composers and stage workers of all countries

In these memorable, historic days, when we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the great October Revolution, we—the representatives of the revolutionary theatre of the U.S.S.R., Germany, France, the U. S. A., Japan, Mongolia, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Spain, England, Czeckoslovakia—appeal to you once again to examine the path along which your creative life is travelling. The line between the two worlds is drawn distinctly and clearly—the world of growing, conquering, constructive socialism, and the world of decaying, exploiting capitalism which has been crumbling under the heavy blows of the general economic crisis.

In the country of the proletarian dictatorship, in the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, under the well-tryed and firm guidance of Lenin's Bolshevik Party, on the basis of an exceptionally quick growth of productive forces and socialist productive relations—creative culture, socialist in content and national in form, is blossoming forth and continues to grow. The theatre, this graphic and effective art, a most essential element in the culture of the Soviet Union, is growing both quantitatively and qualitatively from month to month, from year to year. New gigantic theatres are being constructed in Moscow, Sverdlovsk, Kharkov, Rostov, Novosibirsk and in numerous cities where there were no theatres heretofore. The theatres of the nationalities previously devoid of any culture under the stress of autocracy grow with unusual rapidity and clearness of purpose.

Our actors perform in forty languages. All the old pre-revolutionary theatres are being reconstructed and are developing creatively with the Soviet Government. Youth is given every opportunity to test its creative mettle. New talents appear from the depth of the emancipated people. The Soviet theatre workers do not know the horrors of unemployment. Such promoters of the theatre of the U.S.S.R., as Stanislavsky, Nemirovich-Danchenko, Meyerhold, Tairov, Les Kurbas, Achmetelly, Mardgeanov, Rafalsky, etc. are afforded every facility for the full development of their creative genius and for the fulfillment of their creative endeavours. Soviet dramaturgy grows and gets stronger, creating highly artistic works true to the ideas of our country. And there, where the dictatorship of capitalism is enthroned, where all the forces of the old world are united for the vicious oppression of the revolutionary proletariat which brings freedom to mankind and to its culture and art—there, where the horrors of the Middle Ages are being revived, where huge unemployment brings appalling impoverishment and degradation to the masses, there in connection with the crisis of culture the theatre disintegrates and decays. Theatres are being closed; the creative forces of the theatre—dramatists, actors, painters—are being

thrown on to the street and are doomed to degenerate. The theatres that are still at work are given over completely to the service of perishing capitalism, the propagation of misanthropic ideas, gloomy obscuratism, sexuality and of degenerate bourgeois ideology.

Facts are facts! They speak clearly. One cannot escape from them. With whom are you? Which path do you choose?

The path of creation and of life with the revolutionary proletariat and its fight against capitalism for the triumph of the proletarian revolution—or the path of death and decay of creative powers traversed by capitalism and its fellow-travellers, the social-fascists—the base traitors of the working class.

The iron course of historical reality is asking you this severe and unavoidable question. One cannot long remain secluded in the shell of indifference to politics, of neutrality in the class struggle. All those possessed of courage, honesty and talent in the ranks of the workers must follow such worthy representatives of the intelligentsia as Romain Rolland, Henri Barbusse, Bernard Shaw, Theodore Dreiser, Upton Sinclair, Sherwood Anderson, Andre Gide. Their struggle on behalf of the Soviet Union against interventions and imperialistic wars, their brave defense of the cultural construction in the Soviet country is a shining example for all those working in the domain of art.

We appeal to you who have come to our Plenum of the Presidium of the International Union of Revolutionary Theatre, we hold out our hands to all the theatre workers who wish to join us in our struggle for a theatrical art that will help mankind in its liberating fight against the capitalist yoke with its wars, crises and terrible poverty of the working masses and intelligentsia. We appeal to your courage, to your talents, to your knowledge, and say to you:

Only the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat against capitalism, the annihilation of all the loathsomeness and horrors of capitalist exploitation, can create the proper conditions for the true development of Art, and the exceptional growth of the theatre.

By fighting hand in hand with the proletariat for its ideas, the most progressive conceived by humanity, all artists will battle for true art, for the possibility to create, to work and to live.

Once you realize this you will join us!

Join our ranks!

Create a united revolutionary battle front

With us!

CONFERENCE OF THE ENLARGED
etc.

dr. krupps, specialist

translated and adapted from the Russian
by **OLGA SIEGEL** and **JACK MARTIN**
WORKERS LABORATORY THEATRE • N.Y.



Cast: Radianova - woman
Annusa - woman
Dr. Krupps
Vanya - man

Rad: (looking thru reports) The eighth district is ahead. 18 wagons--marvellous tempo--if only the other districts could match it--could gather all the harvest before the planned date--

Ann: (coming in) What a fine crop of wheat, Comrade Radianova--

Rad: Ah, Comrade Annusa, and how is the 3rd district?

Ann: We expect to surpass the eighth today-- My, my, you have added this years crop to the chart--30% increase over last year!

Rad: It is an increase in the crop, but it must be gathered. Your third and also the fifth district now approach the eight, but---

Ann: Oh, Comrade Radianova, everyone is talking this morning about some American specialist coming to teach us more effective ways to gather the harvest--How is that?

Rad: Its that loose tongued Vanya again. See this telegram from America. Vanya received it yesterday morning but forgot to deliver it till this morning. Now Vanya's going about telling all kinds of things.

Ann: A telegram--from the American specialist? May I read it?

Rad: If you wish. I wonder if the Dachenko collective can spare a shock brigade.

Ann: (reading) "Stop. Hold everything till I arrive. Heard about your big harvest stop. Am taking aeroplane in U. S.-- will make non-stop flight direct to your locality. stop. Will take care of your harvest. signed Dr. Krupps, specialist extraordinary in harvests." Oh, an American specialist like they had at the tractor factory.

Rad: Yes, they had a very good specialist at the tractor factory. He was a real wor-

ker. I'm going to call up the Dachenko collective for some shock brigaders. We'll get this wheat harvested on schedule.

Ann: But with an American specialist - our harvesting technique should improve. We would not need a shock brigade.

Rad: Then you think we should wait for this specialist?

Ann: Yes--with more technique and our Soviet tempo--

Rad: They had some kind of specialist on the Dachenko collective last spring--

Ann: Why not call up and see if it is the same one?

Rad: (at telephone) Hello, please have the director of the Dachenko collective come to the telephone.

Ann: One hears so much about the huge crops in American--maybe the specialist can teach us how to increase our wheat crop over this year,--say about 50% increase next year.

Rad: Hello, Comrade Banush--this is Radianova, Ha, one director chasing another--What? The harvest gathering? That is why I called you. We have a harvest specialist coming--Yes, an American (to Ann) They had a tractor specialist. (in phone) He was a good worker? Americans are clever, Oh yes, our harvest is estimated to increase 30% over last year. Your collective also! That's fine. The whole region has a marvellous harvest. All our grain elevators will be filled.(hangs up)

(offstage is heard a loud crash---then the voice of Dr. Krupps) Is this the Soviet Union--Who runs this place?

Ann: Look, it must be the specialist.

Rad: What a funny looking hat--just like a capitalist.

Dr. K: (coming in) Who runs this place? Did you receive my telegram? Is this the locality with all the big harvests? My card--(hands her a card) I've done marvellous work in the United States and in South American. A marvellous thing this depression--ah, me, I've decided to expand to try some European countries--never been here before--don't know anything about you foreigners.

Ann: (reading card) Dr. Krupps, a-b-c-d-e-f-g and b-u-n-k, specialist in big harvests.

Dr. K: That's me, Dr. Krupps. No harvest is too big for Dr. Krupps. You have heard of

the big coffee crop in Brazil? Dr. Krupps.
Ann: You American technicians are marvelous.
Dr. K: Technician? I am no technician. I am
an artist. I put the soul in my work.
You have heard of the wheat crop in the
U. S.?--Dr. Krupps.
Rad: We have a very large wheat crop this
year.
Dr. K: That is too bad--but let Dr. Krupps
worry about that.
Ann: (whispers to Rad.) How is that--"Too bad"
and "worry"?
Rad: Keep quiet, he did not understand,--a
little weak on Russian. (to Krupps) As
I was saying, we will have a very large
harvest this season. Wheat is very plen-
tiful.
Dr. K: Yes, yes, I understand--you can depend
on Dr. Krupps to do a work of art--I'd
like to go to work at once, if you don't
mind, as the mood strikes me, you know.
Where are your estimates, your reports,
your charts, please?
Ann: (to Rad.) See, we won't need the shock
brigade.
Rad: This is our chart of the wheat harvest
on this collective.
Ann: An increase of 30% this year.
Dr. K: (studies chart for moment) Bad! very
bad!
Rad: (to Ann) 30% increase--bad?
Dr. K: This chart reminds me of the cotton
chart in U. S. before I was called in,
it was like this--but after Dr. Krupps
was consulted their chart is like this
(makes a motion up and down with hand)
Rad: Tsk--tsk--a perpendicular rise!
Ann: What a marvelous specialist!
Dr. K: Have you more specific information. What
is the acreage here?
Rad: Here. Here are reports of wheat harves-
ted to date. This is still on the fields.
Here are the plans for the next sowing.
Dr. K: (Picks up papers and walks back and forth,
studying them) Is there a river near here?
Rad: Yes.
Ann: Irrigation! I thought of that myself.
Dr. K: (ignores remark, stops again) This is
next years sowing?
Rad: Yes.
Krupps: But essentially I am an artist. I work
to satisfy my soul. My fee will be 5%
of the value of the crop. Will you pay
this?
Ann: (to Rad) 5%. If he can do what he promises?
Rad: We couldn't decide by ourselves. We will
have to call a meeting of the collective
union.
Dr. K: A union meeting? Is there a strike going
on here? I have a cousin back in the
U. S. A. who is a big leader in the
A. F. of L.--he knows how to break
strikes.
Rad: No--no--the workers run the collective--
Dr. K: You foreigners are peculiar. Oh, yes,
I nearly forgot. Will I have to work at
night? Will that be taken up also at
your meeting.
Rad: Work at night? What for?
Ann: He means we ought to have a night shift
on the collective. What a specialist!

Dr. K: Of course your harvest is insured?
Rad: Insured?
Ann: He means that the workers have social
insurance. Oh, yes, the specialist
thinks of everything.
Dr. K: Fine. I like this job. It's going to
be a great pleasure to destroy your
wheat crop. (Ann and Rad. look at each
other)
Rad: You don't mean destroy, you mean reap.
Dr. K: No, No, destroy, of course.
Ann: Phew--this specialist is crazy.
Rad: What? Destroy our wheat crop? You try.
Dr. K: I'll try when I get my check and not
before.
Rad: (Rad and Ann rolling up sleeves) You
will get a check to your plans right
now. Why do you want to destroy cur
wheat?
Dr. K: Why everybody knows that--to make
prices go up--say, the price of bread
is too low - Dr. Krupps destroys the
harvest and up goes the price of bread.
Ann: The crazy capitalist parasite--he thinks
the Soviet Union is run for profit.
Rad: The price of bread isn't going up in
the Soviet Union. Our aim is cheap bread
and plenty for all.
Dr. K: Why, you're twisted--that's very unprof-
itable in this depression--why the mil-
lionaires who own this place won't stand
for it. They won't make money,
Rad: We don't work for any millionaires in
the Soviet Union--the workers don't need
millionaires--they can run their own
industries and government.
Dr. K: No Millionaires! But who's going to buy
all that harvest? The unemployed haven't
any money--the others are working part
time, nobody buys.
Rad: You forget this is the Soviet Union--
don't you understand? The workers are
running the country for themselves. How
can there be anybody unemployed? Every-
body has a job here.
Dr. K: This is terrible. How am I going to
practice my art? I tell you, this
isn't practical--How about me? How did
happen?
Rad: The workers did it by militant action.
The workers organized their Communist
Party, formed militant unions, went on
strikes against wage cuts, demonstrated,
went on hunger marches and finally took
over the property from the capitalists.
Dr. K: That's terrible. The workers run the
country. You went on strikes? Demon-
strations--Hunger marches, -- where have
I been hearing about these things? where?
Oh, my God, that's what the workers are
doing in the U. S. My God, that's terr-
ible--This is awful. What am I going
to do when capitalism is gone?
Rad: The workers aren't interested in para-
sites.
Ann: He can go jump in the river.
Dr. K: That's it--the river--I'll drown myself!
Ann: Here comes Vanya running.
Vanya: (waving a paper) Phew! Comrade director,
a new decree--the village Soviet forbids
the throwing of garbage into the river.

theatre work with children

last summers experience

by preva qlusman

Necessity for children's dramatics:

At the entrance to the Workers International Relief Pioneer Camp stands an old apple tree. It was against the rules of the camp to climb the tree; but the apples were a constant temptation and the rules were constantly broken. One day Bill, one of the Pioneers, while crawling out after an apple, lost his hold and fell. There was great excitement at camp that day, for Bill was hurt pretty badly. From then on there was no more tree-climbing; the accident to Bill had dramatized the consequence of breaking the rules. With children especially, things that are actually seen and participated in, leave a deeper impression than mere verbal instruction.

We must have children's dramatic groups to oppose the children's theatres sponsored by the public school system and by other capitalist enterprises. The type of dramatics carried on with the children at the public schools, is one that poisons the mind of the child and leads him far away from reality. Most of these plays deal with a far-fetched story and supernatural figures. They have no clarification to offer to the inquisitive mind of a child. When the plays venture to deal with current reality, they are inspired with reverence for the wealthy man "who has worked hard since childhood", and point the moral that any child who tries enough can become a J. P. Morgan.

Our theatre must expose these evasions and lies. We must devote ourselves to the education of the workers child, bringing him to the realization that he will not become a J. P. Morgan but will remain a worker in the factory, the mine and the mill, slaving to accumulate profits for the very few J. P. Morgans, and taking his chances on the headlines in times of business crisis. We must give our attention also to the specific problems of the worker's child as a pupil in a capitalist school, as a child laborer, and as a member of the exploited working class.

Dram work at the W. I. R. Pioneer Camp:

This summer for the first time, the New York Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W. I. R. sent one of its members to conduct dramatics with the children of the W. I. R. Pioneer Camp. The experiment proved highly successful, both in planning entertainment and in drawing workers' children into the Pioneer movement. Members of the dramatic group met for an hour each day. This hour was spent in rehearsing plays and in acquainting children with the history of the theatre from the primitive stage to the present revolutionary theatre and agitprop brigades.

The children learned of the workers' theatres now existing in capitalist countries (Japan, China, Germany, England, America), the conditions under

which these theatres function and the role they play in the everyday life and struggles of the workers. They were informed about the workers theatres of the Soviet Union. They learned how to approach a play analytically as well as emotionally, from the point of view of content and technique. They read and discussed plays, pageants and recitations, were taught how to write collectively, each contributing to a given theme.--a splendid, natural means of developing the thought and initiative of children.

At one of the camp fires a pageant on child-labor was presented, the ideas for the pageant being put together by the leaders and the Pioneers. A bookblack, a newsboy, and a young cotton-picker from the South, who were at the camp at that time took part; what they played in was no fairy tale but a true picture of their lives. The pageant had as its theme: There are many child laborers in the United States. They work under intolerable conditions. The Pioneers must organize these children in order to win better conditions for them, to enable them to grow into rational and healthy men and women. Especially emphasized was the necessity for organization, and the role of the "New Pioneer" magazine in such organization. The show proved to be very interesting entertainment for both the children and the adults present.

The acting out of a strike-struggle was a very stimulating experience. The "strike", which lasted an entire day, was not prepared or rehearsed; the children taking the various parts were merely given a certain situation and left to react to circumstances. A group of children, supposed to be workers on a dam, were given a ten percent wage cut; they decided to go out on strike. Around this evolved the entire day's activity. A court scene took place. Red Pepper, a schoolboy, was tried because he played hockey in order to go on the picket line with his parents. Here was a Pioneer acting the part of a judge, another the part of a prosecuting attorney, and Red Pepper defending himself, the rest spontaneously shouting and cheering at the militancy of the young Pioneer. When the National Guard attacked the strikers on the picket line, an actual fight took place. The children went at it so earnestly that many were hurt. The strike ended in victory for the workers. Thus, in their play, the children came to understand by imitation the strike-struggles their parents carry on.

As far as possible the educational work of the camp was carried out in dramatic form. A shadow-graph illustrated the life and struggles of the Ohio miners. The dram circle produced a short

Facts and Figures on the New York Competition

by Anne Howe, Org. Sec'y, L.O.W.T.

A few facts and figures of the N. Y. Workers Theatre Spartakiade, held on April 29th, by Anne Howe, Org. Sec'y, L.O.W.T.

Groups Participating (not in competition)
Yugoslav Pioneers in Pantomime: "Surplus Value" and skit with music: "We are the builders"
Lithuanian Sextette in 3 songs in English, accompanied by movements.

Groups Participating (in competition)
I. W. O. Blue Blouses (English) "The Five Flying Misleaders"
Spartacus Players (Greek) "On the Barricades"
Naturefriends (German) "Tracts Alliedem"
Brighton Dram Group (Jewish) "Biro Bidjan"
Maxin Gorky Players (Russian) "The Yellow Devil"
Bronx Dram Group (Jewish) "Eviction"
Prolet-Buehne (German) "Masquerade of the Republic" and "The Red Firezen"
Workers Laboratory Theatre (English) "Sell-Out"

Prize Winners: 1st Place - Workers Laboratory Theatre
 2nd Place - Bronx Dram Group
 3rd Place - Naturefriends

Although this year's Spartakiade showed an artistic and political development of the groups, the organizational preparations were not what it had been last year.

Sketch depicting how Harry Sims was murdered by Kentucky thugs and how the Pioneers pledged themselves to carry on the fight for which Harry Sims died. Lives of revolutionary leaders - Sacco, Vanzetti, Lenin, Karl Liebknecht, Joe York, Harry Heman, Foster - were presented in plays, sketches and pantomimes. "On The Belt" was one of the best presentations of the dram group, from an artistic point of view. Other presentations - "The Backward Worker", "Revolt of the Child Laborers", "Fight Against Starvation", "Scottsboro", the reading of poems from the New Pioneer, and of the letter to Sacco's son from Vanzetti - found an important place in the educational program of the camp.

How to Start a Childrens Dram Circle:

Until now very little dram work has been done among children. We have underestimated the tremendous field for such work that exists at the present time. What are we to do about it?

Ticket Sale: Except for the 3 groups: Workers Lab. Theatre of the Workers School and Yorkville Youth Players, all groups did not cooperate enough. Hundreds of tickets were not given out to groups but remained in the offices of "Ligart", Council of Workers Clubs, etc.

Preliminary Competitions: Neither the Council of Workers Clubs (English) nor the "Ligart" made proper arrangements for preliminaries.
Results: Although 2 groups were invited from the CWC none participated in the Spartakiade. The "Ligart" sent two groups to the Spartakiade but preliminaries had a very small number of audiences, in one place, preliminaries were not held on account of no audience. At final preliminary no committee of judges was organized, not even a representative of "Ligart" was present.


Financial Preparations: No loans from any group to meet advance expenses. No contributions to Spartakiade Fund except from: Theatre of the Workers School, Workers Laboratory Theatre, Naturefriends, Spartacus Players, Maxin Gorky Players and Prolet-Buehne.

Result: Financial success of Spartakiade endangered. And with it the regular appearance of WORKERS THEATRE, functioning of L.O.W.T. office.

The N. Y. groups will have to draw their own conclusions. Keep these facts in mind when you prepare the 1934 Spartakiade so that none of these mistakes will be repeated and the U. S. A. will have a Spartakiade that not only lives up to the artistic and political level of the groups but that will serve as an example in the development of the whole workers theatre movement.

1. Assign a member of your dramatic group to be responsible for a children's dramatic group.
2. Let each member of your group bring at least one child for the formation of such a group.
3. Select a play and work on it with the children.
4. Present it at a performance.
5. Make out a plan of activity for this childrens dramatic group.


What we need most now are plays suitable for children. We must draw in comrades who are capable of writing such plays and who are capable of leading children. We want to hear from the various theatre groups with reference to what they are doing in this field. For a long time, we have heard nothing from the already existing groups, especially those of Philadelphia, and New York. If we realize fully the importance of this work we should have in a short while many stable dramatic circles for children, under the leadership of the adult theatre groups.



TOWARDS THE REVOLUTIONARY DANCE

THE NEW DANCE GROUP HOLDS
ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY RECITAL

A REVIEW
by A. Prontiss



It is dialectically obvious that a dance recital, any theatrical performance, is a social act and that the audience being the recipients cooperate with the performers in their intentions of conveying certain ideas. If these ideas have been effectively conveyed to the audience and had the desired result, then the performance had been an effective one and vice versa. Hence, these ideas must be conveyed to the audience in a manner that the audience will understand, otherwise the performance is wasted. In the case of the revolutionary dance, these ideas must be simply stated the symbols used must be absolutely obvious, the movements direct and slightly exaggerated, the sound and color functional to the extreme. All mysticism, all mood for mood's sake must be done away with. Did the New Dance Group recital accomplish this?

First as to its program; There was "Awakening", showing an intertwined mass of humanity which after a certain amount of wriggling, separates and "awakes"; there were folk dances; there were "War" dances--jingoism, gas and aerial attacks, fraternization; there were breadlines, charity, parasites; and they were produced in a manner that left much to be desired.

The moment the curtain went up one began to make mental comparison between the revolutionary, the primitive and current bourgeois dancing. Automatically one began to question the plan and intent of the New Dance Group as exemplified in the recital, with the intents of the primitive and the bourgeois dances, and the New Dance Group plan and intent suffered.

The primitive dance, as exemplified in its "war" dances, in its agricultural and fertility dances, was training, training for struggle with the enemy, training and projection of the collective will towards socially desirable and necessary ends. The bourgeois dance, a projection of the will of the governing class with its meaningless and decadent moods and contemplation aims at escape from reality and the class struggle. The revolutionary dance must face reality and train for the class struggle--it must therefore hark to the intent of the primitive communal dance rather than to the bourgeois decadent, as was evident in the recital. Besides, the bourgeois dance has little to offer--what do the Duncan's with their flowing lines have to offer in a world of sharp class conflict; what can be learned from the grotesques of the Labans or the mystic wandering of the Wigman's? Granted that the straight lines of the Wigman school is necessary for the revolutionary dance, their content must be absolutely discarded. Add to this that the straight lines must be regrouped for mass patterns, then what is left? Clearly the New Dance Group, basing themselves on their revolutionary content, must learn to design their patterns and dances along purely functional lines and try to free themselves from the heritage of the bourgeois dancers as soon as possible. That they haven't done so is evident from their "Awakening" which is mystic and abstruse the interesting, from "parasites" and various bits in jingoisms and the "war" dances. While their "Charity" and the folk dances were the best of the lot, there was something sluggish in the rhythm, a lack

CONTD P. 17.

a call to dancers organize the revolutionary dance

nell anyon

The rapid development of workers' dance groups in New York indicates the growing interest in the dance and the vital necessity of using the dance as an organizer.

Within the past year we have seen the growth

and development of dance groups in the revolutionary trade unions and workers' clubs; we have witnessed the appearance of the New Dance Group, a mass organization; several groups under the leadership of the Red Dancers have formed a Dance Collective; and now, we receive letters from various cities throughout the country requesting information on how to form such groups.

Bourgeois dance schools are hard at work in leading their students into sweet oblivion thru a series of gymnastic and dance movements suggestive of prayer, of mysticism, of a super-sophistication that is completely divorced from the harsh reality of our actual lives. While they mincingly speak of common ideas and group feeling, they deliberately avoid reference to the common hardships and struggles of the workers.

Artef - Jewish workers theatre conference plans important work for coming season

The Artef Conference held Sunday, May 9th at Irving Plaza, was revolutionary in character and earnest in its discussion of plans for its future work.

Present at the conference were 110 delegates from 75 organizations with a total membership of 26,000. There were also a number of credentials presented from organizations whose delegates were not present. The report of Comrade Friedman, Secretary of the Artef, very ably brought forth the accomplishments and the shortcomings of the Artef in its past season. The financial report was made by Comrade Fishman. Following the reports an interesting discussion developed, in which a large number of delegates and members of the Artef Players Collective discussed the tasks of the Artef for the next season.

The reports of the majority of the delegates established the fact that the chief shortcomings of the Artef were, first, that the Artef failed in developing a repertory depicting the life of the American worker; second, that the Artef did not take part in the struggle of the workers through its strong propaganda weapon--the theatre. Comrade M. Epstein who spoke during the morning session, on the tasks of a proletarian theatre, and the specified tasks of the Artef, brought to light in a brilliant manner the development of the Artef in its past and also showed that the shortcomings of the Artef are partly due to the lack of aid from the workers' organizations in building and strengthening their weapon, the Artef, as a means of drawing thousands of workers to us and at the same time strengthening our own ranks. He also mentioned that the situation in the Artef is partly due to the fact that it has no permanent location where it can perform, judging from the financial report which shows that

throughout the theatre season the rent expenditures were over \$6,000. The Artef, with such a large sum, and the aid of workers' organizations, could maintain a theatre and in that way increase greatly the activities of the Artef.

Comrade M. Katz, who greeted the conference, received a tremendous ovation. In his greeting he compared the two systems in the world,--the Soviet system, from where he had just come, and the American system in which we find ourselves. He also spoke of the tremendous role that theatre plays in the Soviet Union, and which the Artef should play here as a proletarian theatre.

Comrade Kramer, the former president of the Artef and one of its founders, greeted the conference, and spoke of the perspective of the founders of the Artef, and their hopes which are little by little coming true. Comrade H. Shapiro brought greetings from the League of Workers Theatres, congratulated the Artef on its aid to the Jewish agitprop workers' groups, and pointed out the importance of developing the agitprop troupes, both as a weapon in the class struggle and as an aid to the Artef. He urged cooperation with the other workers' stationary theatres in New York today.

A number of resolutions were accepted, demanding the freedom of Tom Mooney, the Scottsboro boys, for the Defense of the Soviet Union, and for the support of the Morning Freiheit and the Workers Theatre Magazine.

After the election of 25 delegates as an executive body, the conference called for 5,000 subscribers and builders for the Artef. The conference closed with the signing of the International

Shall we permit these boosters of the capitalist class to screen the minds of unorganized workers and students with their talk of the "beauties of dance"? or will we recognize that this art can be made a useful medium for raising the cultural and political level of class-consciousness among them.

The Workers Dance League has now made it possible for dance groups to be formed in trade unions and in workers' clubs. Here is a splendid opportunity to establish a close and comradely spirit within your club thru recreational and stimulating classes. This does not exclude unaffiliated individuals who are interested in dancing. You can join the League and dance in one of its groups or you can help organize a group if there is not one already in your city.

Dancers! Dance Students! If you are truly dance conscious, the Workers Dance League presents a vital and broad field for work. There are no limitations as to technique and style. Whether your medium is tap, ballet, Duncan, or the modern dance, you can find full and free opportunity to organize and lead workers' dance groups. We need teachers and you are the ones who can fill that need. Take your lead from those who have already fought their way toward a beginning of a workers' dance movement. Join us in making the dance a powerful educator of thousands more workers for the class struggle. Organize revolutionary dance groups in your town! Join the Workers Dance League.

For further information please communicate with Mimi Gordon, Secretary of Workers Dance League, 63 East 11th Street, New York City.



REBEL PLAYERS
Los Angeles, Calif.

May 9, 1933.

Workers Laboratory Theatre
of the W. I. R.
New York, New York

Dear Comrades:

In the April issue of WORKERS THEATRE, which we received yesterday, we note the challenge issued to us to seel 100 copies of the WORKERS THEATRE to your 300 copies. At the meeting of our executive committee last night it was decided to accept your challenge on the above basis. So you can now consider your challenge officially accepted, and may both our organizations work for the development of the magazine.

Our usual bundle order of WORKERS THEATRE has been 50, but we are today ordering an additional 50, which we shall do our utmost to sell.

Comradely yours,
Paul Feinberg
Secretary.

Paul Feinberg succeeds Victor Cutler as secretary of the Rebel Players. Victor Cutler is now secretary of the Workers Dramatic Council in Los Angeles (section of the League of Workers Theatres)

MOLINE, ILL

Comrades:

Greetings from the Workers Dramatic Club of this city. We have organized a group of about 30 members here and are hard at work on the play "Dirt Farmer" which we plan to present on April 23.

Please send us a copy of your guidance bulletin as soon as it is published.

Comradely yours,
MAX ROTH, Sec'y.

Greetings to the new Workers Dramatic Group of Moline, Ill. We certainly will send you our magazine. And in order to spread the idea of the Workers Theatre Movement also among your audience it would be a good idea to sell copies of the WORKERS THEATRE after your performances. So, we are waiting for your bundle order, comrades.

And don't forget to send in news and a review of your performances for publication in the next issue.

Coast to Coast with the groups

LOS ANGELES

The Workers Dramatic Council here is taking steps to organize a Collective Theatre of professionals to put on full length revolutionary plays cooperatively at regular intervals.

rebel players

The Rebel Players report that the honor bestowed upon them by their being considered a group worthy of representing the LOWT at the International Olympiad (see elsewhere in this issue) has awakened their organization to its importance in the class struggle as a weapon in the hands of the workers, and has resulted in a growth of interest on the part of the members. They have resolved to increase their activities, which of late have been slackening.

In April the Rebel Players performed "Hands Off" for the Southern California Anti-War Conference and gave Tom Thomas' May Day Mass Recitation at the local May Day Celebration, with both their Blue Blouse Troupes taking part. The two Blue Blouse Troupes are undergoing a reorganization for greater efficiency.

Future bookings include performances at a cultural evening to be given by the National Youth Day Conference on May 28th, participation in the National Youth Day demonstration at San Diego, and a performance of an Anti-Criminal Syndicalism Law play for the Conference for the Repeal of the Criminal Syndicalism Law.

They are planning to do "Broadway 1933" soon, possibly at an evening of plays to be given by Rebel Players.

MADRID, SPAIN

"--Our group has worked very hard during the last months. We have built our own theatre, very modest, but this enables us to perform every week. Now we have finished this work and want to get in touch with you. Please send us plays and material. Some members of our group have written several plays. If you can read Spanish, we shall send them to you. One is a sketch, another a children's play, the third, a dressmakers (women) play.

"New Masses and Workers Theatre are of enormous help to us, so do send them to us. For the time being, we are very poor economically but as soon as we have funds, we shall pay the subscriptions. (Of course American money is terribly dear for us). We await your answer anxiously."

Grupo Teatral "Nosotros"
Teatro Proletario
Madrid, Spain.

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

And this time we actually have a bit of good news from Milwaukee though not received directly from the groups there. We are waiting for a more detailed report of the activities of the groups in that glorious socialist city of their.

John Reed Dram Group participated in the program of the May 1st affair where they performed before an audience of thousands of workers.

The Prolet-Buehne, Milwaukee, seems to have inherited not only the name but also the revolutionary spirit of its N. Y. sister-organization. In addition to performances at various affairs the group accepted the challenge of the Prolet-Buehne, N. Y., and raised their quota for new subscriptions for the "Arbeiter", German-language Communist weekly. And what is more: The Prolet-Buehne, Milwaukee, not only won this competition but is ahead of all German organizations in the campaign. That's real work for an agitprop group, and our older groups better take a lesson from this young group.

kansas city, mo.

KANSAS City has organized a Workers Modern Library, which uses books, lectures, moving pictures, and plays as instruments for the dissemination of knowledge concerning the class struggle and general conditions of the working class. Their dramatic group presents its first program, consisting of workers theatre plays, on May 27th. They gave three showings of the Soviet film, "A Fragment of an Empire" on April 30th.

chicago, ill.

The Workers Theatre of Chicago presented their first play, "Precedent" by I. J. Golden, in revised form and with the addition of a finale called the Camera Voice depicting the seventeen years of Mooney's incarceration. The Camera Voice was done with mass voices off stage over a public address system while projections from glass sides of the passage of time were shown on the domes of the stage.

The Chicago Blues have not replied to the challenge issued by the Red Players of N. Y. to Socialist competition in selling WORKERS THEATRE -- quota for each group, 75. The Chicago comrades are way behind Los Angeles in reacting to such important developments. Since then, the Red Players, have disbanded because of organizational weakness. The Chicago Blue Blues would find worthy revolutionary competitors in the John Reed Dram Group of Philadelphia. What do you say, Chi?

And where - an where - are the other groups?

DAVENPORT, IOWA

The recently organized Workers Theatre reports that it gave a performance of Paul Peters "Dirt Farmer" to an audience of 375 workers and farmers. More details about the group will be welcome: Method of work, future plans, etc.

detroit

Children's dramatic groups are being organized in the Pioneer troops of Detroit. They need children's plays, pantomimes, and other suitable material. All groups or playwrights who have such material should send in copies at once.

Louisville, Kentucky

The Pen and Hammer Club of this city has formed a Workers Dramatic Group in conjunction with the local Socialist group in an effort to put on revolutionary class-struggle plays. Material of the full-length type is wanted.

philadelphia

The John Reed Club Dram Group has performed on the average of once a week during the past year, at labor meetings, concerts, demonstrations, picnics, celebrations, Party mass meetings, and bazaars. They hold discussions once a week on political and technical matters pertaining to dramatic work; they are now having a course on the History of Drama. Most of their material now comes either from WORKERS THEATRE, which has been of tremendous assistance to them, or from the playwrights affiliated with the Philadelphia John Reed Club. They have performed in other cities within a radius of 80 miles. On National Youth Day, May 30, they are sending an agitprop brigade to perform at Allentown, Pa.

new york

The Finnish Youth Club of the Finnish Federation is beginning dramatic work along with its other activities. They have already produced "The Spark", and are planning to do "Broadway 1933" next. The group meets at 764 - 40th Street, Brooklyn. The Finnish youth are welcome to join.

Dram Group of the F. S. U. Reinhold Rolland Youth Branch, 600 Arnow Avenue, Bronx, N. Y. Composed of 8 comrades. Have performed "Dr. Krupps and individual recitations such as "And I'll Be Home Within a Year" by Anital Hidas" - "Good-bye Christ" by Langston Hughes. Now working on a mass chant which condemns imperialist war.

The Theatre of the Workers School, one of the youngest groups in the city, at the present date, has sold the greatest number of tickets for the N. Y. Spartakiade. They have turned in \$11.05 so far-with more coming. They are sending in the cash quickly, for they realize that we need the cash for the printer so that we can get the next issue of WORKERS THEATRE out in time. So, comrades, Rush all funds, money for dues, magazines, tickets, contributions, etc., to the office of the LOWT, 42 East 12th Street, N. Y. C.

the Megaphone Brigade on May 1st and organized the mass shouting at the Anti-Fascist demonstration on May 10th. The next performances will be given on May 30 at a unit affair and on May 21st

at the Y. C. L. district hike. The next Megaphone Brigade will be organized for the National Youth Day Parade on May 30th.

On Thursday, May 11th, a Russian Professional Actor's group was formed, under the name "Workers Theatre of the Audience." The group consists of 40 people: actors, singers, scenery artists, electricians, stage hands, etc. The group includes Russian actors: L. Luganoff, M. Lavrowsky, Nikulin, Less, Dagmarova, etc.

The purpose of this group is to produce once every week, beginning this coming September, performances of plays dealing with Soviet life. The repertoire will consist of the best plays staged in Soviet Union, also of plays from American life. Prices will be very low.

The Young Communist League, N. Y. in conjunction with the LOWT is organizing a city-wide agitprop group with delegates from the different units. The group will function for a while as a regular agitprop group, but in addition to the practical work, the participants will be instructed as to how to organize a group, how to write and direct plays, etc. These comrades will later go back to their respective units and organize all agitprop groups attached to the unit. The first practical work of this group will be the participation in the Megaphone Brigade on National Youth Day. All young boys and girls interested whether Y. C. L. members or not, should get in touch with Comrade Ann Howe, LOWT, 42 E. 12th or Y. C. L. District office, 35 E. 12th.

The Yorkville Youth Players, formerly known as the Dram Section of the Y. C. L. Yorkville Unit, gave their first 3 performances of "Charity" during 10 days, selling 15 copies of WORKERS THEATRE, March issue, 11 copies of WORKERS THEATRE, April issue (up-to-now) and \$11.00 worth of tickets for the N. Y. Spartakiade. Although the group had to call off participation in the Spartakiade because members of the cast got jobs for that day, the play written collectively was finished. Five members took part in

Workers Laboratory Theatre of the W. I. R., Agit-prop section. The Socialist Competition is on: Rebel Players of Los Angeles vs W. L. T. on sale of WORKERS THEATRE. W. L. T. must sell 3 to every 1 of Rebel Players. Come on Agit-Propers, Let's go! W. L. T. is preparing a Political Side Show for the summer (see WORKERS THEATRE August 1932). Working on a plan to play at amateur nights in bourgeois theatres - (going to the masses). During the month of April, we have performed 12 times - giving 21 plays and recitations. Took part in May 1st parade with Yorkville Y. C. L. Dram Group as a megaphone brigade that led the Downtown Section into Union Square. Working out a plan for the coming year to extend its activities; Last but not least, came out first in N. Y. Section of LOWT Spartakiade this year with our production of the "SELL-OUT."

The Theatre Collective (Section of the Workers Laboratory Theatre) is hard at work on the production of "1931", the play by Clair and Paul Sifton which had a Broadway presentation last season by the Group Theatre. The play has been revised for the T. C. by the authors. "1931" opens at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, 28th St. and Broadway, on May 20th, and will run for several days.

The Technical Department has its hands full preparing its end of the production. At the same time, the other activities of the Theatre Collective are continuing. The actor's class, which consists now of those not being used in the rehearsal, is working on scenes from "The Weavers" of Gerhard Hauptmann. The dancing class continues to move to the beat of a Chinese drum, and the Executive Committee meets - even in the hallway, when other space is not available.

An All-Eastern Conference of Workers Theatres will be held at the end of June, when Comrade J. E. Bonn, our delegate to the International Workers Theatre Olympiad in Moscow will return and give his report. Also, plans for a National W. T. Conference and Spartakiade to be held in 1934 will be completed. All groups in the Eastern region must send in recommendations, names and addresses of delegates elected, groups participating, etc. as soon as possible to LOWT, National Office.

New York to have Membership Meeting

Monday, May 29, at 8:30 P.M. a general membership meeting of all N. Y. workers theatre groups will be held at 42 East 12th Street. On the agenda will be such important points as: Discussion on N. Y. Spartakiade; International Workers Theatre Olympiad; All-Eastern Conference of W. T.; National Spartakiade 1934. No member of any group can afford to miss this meeting. Groups which have their rehearsals on Mondays, must shift them to another night for that week.

workers dance League

The Workers Dance League is holding its first Dance Spartakiade on June 4th, 1933, at the Shakespeare Theatre. Eleven dance groups in New York City and vicinity will compete, and possibly, groups from Boston, Philadelphia, Plainfield, N. J. and other cities.

The Groups will present dance compositions created and executed by their members, which will be judged on the basis of artistic merit, use of costumes, scenery, lighting, space, etc., musical setting, (or percussion), content and clarity, and appeal to workers' audiences.

Cleveland holds its first workers theatre spartakide by Dorothy Kraus

Cleveland, the youngest of the LOWT sections has had its Spartakide, and what a Spartakide as you can see from the report printed below. Sections like Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, will have to make up for the failure to organize Spartakides now, by preparing well and in time their preliminary Spartakides for the fall and winter at which respective groups will be chosen for the SECOND NATIONAL WORKERS THEATRE SPARTAKIDE to be held in April 1934. And now, let the comrades from Cleveland speak:

"The Spartakide, held last night, was quite a success: if not for two or three facts, it would have surpassed even our most sanguine anticipations. One of these was the small audience. We received little cooperation from Headquarters as to other programs going on, advertisement, etc. and discovered the last few days that there were no less than four major affairs taking place that night. This of course meant that our attendance was cut down tremendously. Altogether there were about 225 present. The Spartakide, however, was such a success from the entertainment and revolutionary standpoint, that many of those who came were ashamed for not having advertised it more, brought friends, etc. The groups themselves cooperated little in the disposal of tickets. They assumed little responsibility themselves for the success of the Spartakide. Hereafter we shall have to correct this. As a matter of fact, the affair has created such a stir, that this will be well taken care of next time. The fact is, as is natural, that the League of Workers Theatres was not taken too seriously by most. They had no hint of the strength of our talents and our potentialities of growth. However, now they know different.

There were six groups that competed. We made no specifications as to type of play, but nevertheless all plays were good proletarian material. Three were in English, one each in Finnish, Jewish and Hungarian. The Russian group decided to remain out this time because it hadn't had enough time to prepare.

How amazed the audience and players were when the Finnish Players gave their performance of "Lenin Calls" the story of a work-shop. No one had ever heard of them, and they were so strong, so simple yet clear cut in their depiction of the class antagonism between workers and boss! When they were awarded first choice by the judges, this also met with the approval of the audience, and answered once and for all the usual objection raised by foreign-language groups, that there was no use their coming into a contest, no one would understand them!

Second place went to the John Reed branch of the International Workers Order, the Kinsman Youth group, who though only in existence for a few months, gave a gratifying performance, smooth in technique and set-up and very fine in militant display. Their play was "Hands Off." The Jewish Dram ran them a close race, however, with their interpretation of "The Monkey Press." Their method especially of getting the audience itself involved in the play was praised.

We were very much disappointed when the shipment of WORKERS THEATRE did not arrive on time for the contest. We have not yet received them. We will keep them for a week or so and try to sell them through the different groups. We eagerly await news of the other Spartakides held in U. S. A., especially that of New York. We are certain that they will be a huge success. People everywhere are beginning to talk Workers Theatre.

Most of our groups are performing April 30th and May 1st (evening) in their neighborhoods. There are also exchanges. Other groups have been asked to perform for the next two weeks here and there. Two or three of our groups will go to Youngstown and Akron before May is over. We are going to get to work also in regard to giving outdoor performances. We wanted to have a group or two perform during the May Day demonstration at Public Square, but the Party could not provide a platform for us.

We have drawn up a list of subjects to touch upon in the class we're starting through the League of Workers Theatres. It will be a sort of Institute for 4 or 5 weeks. The subjects are:

1. Make up and Scenery
2. Plays and Programs
3. Acting
4. Voice and diction
5. Directing

Could you send us suitable material for the classes? Of course, we're starting right away. How about the Workers Laboratory Theatre? Could they help out with material on how to teach these courses from a revolutionary angle? We are making use of the enthusiasm of these groups to draw them into further work, that's the reason for this class or Institute.

Subscribe to the
"workers theatre" mag.

CONT'D FROM P. 11 - Towards Revolutionary Dance

of clearness and finish, also there were too many bare legs and supplicating arms. That the New Dance Group haven't freed themselves from the bourgeois heritage is also evident in their lack of attention to questions of contrast and rhythm in movement and color. Apparently they completely disregarded the fact that the patterns react upon the audience mainly thru visual channels, hence, dance patterns must stand out sharply necessitating a neutral background and definitely contrasting costumes and masses. The rhythm of the music should have been produced by factory whistles, by the riveting machine, by the pounding on the pavement, by the clapping of the hands, rather than by the tambourine and the piano, and should have a strong staccato tempo. Finally, the call "to organize" strikes a false and even a disagreeably jarring note, shows that it should have developed dialectically out of the dance and should have been brought out thru dance media rather than spoken.

Does all this mean that the dance recital was a flop? Quite the contrary. It means that the New Dance Group is to be taken seriously and must be judged and guided according to standards inherent in the art of the dance. For the recital with all its imperfections will be a landmark in the dance world, showing how workers can take a sterile art and breathe life into it; a vapid art and put meaning into it; an escape from reality and make it an effective weapon in the class struggle.

The editors welcome further discussion on the subject

Cont'd from P. 2 - 1931 and 1932

The last group, the Symbolic Review, deserves special attention, because it used a form that is more known to the American workers and its light and humorous effects make it more adaptable to mass work. The I. W. O. Blue Blouses contributed a great deal from the point of view of form. The vaudeville form was nothing new in itself, but it demonstrated clearly what can be done in the field of adapting popular bourgeois form to our content. This group also suggests to the Workers Theatre groups the next step in their work. It was very obvious thru-out the performances that very little use was made of music and dancing. The performance of the Aide Sextette, which gave a series of songs with movement only emphasized the lack of this type of work in the other performances. We must make every effort to overcome this shortcoming by including music, dance and sports in our work. The performances of the Workers Laboratory Theatre and the I. W. O. Blue Blouses would have been tremendously more effective with music.

We suggest to the more developed theatre groups, the establishment of music and dance groups and the drawing in of people who can develop this work. Artistically this should become our concentration point, so that at our next Spartakiade we can show a definite advance in this direction.

P-7-8

WORKERS WHO WRITE

workers theatre unites negro and white

Dear H----

The International Labor Defense organized a new branch in Corona, Long Island consisting mainly of colored members. One of the things that was instrumental in bringing about the formation of that branch was the Scottsboro recitation presented by the Workers Laboratory Theatre. As one member put it: "From that moment on the group stood firm."

The branch is now going strong and has organized a group of youngsters, black and white, who are eager to do the sort of work the W. L. I. is doing. As an immediate prospect, they have set themselves the task of learning the Scottsboro recitation and presenting it before Negro churches and other organizations. They need a competent instructor.

How about it? The thing is really important.

Yours,

W. D. D.

Comrade Saxe of the W. L. I. has undertaken to direct the group. An account of their work appears in the Coast-to-Coast-Section of this issue.

(When the Group Theatre Produced "1931.")

- by R.B. -

During the intermission everyone ran out with an opinion.

"Damn good play"

"Unreal, I say, things aren't quite like that?"
"No? Look around why don't you?"

"Lord, how depressing."

"I'll take you to a good show next time, honey."

I thought "1931" was powerful and revolutionary. Now something about defeatism is called to my attention. But I saw what I saw. Adam, man, worker, the strong, the confident being forced

to sink and sink and sink - physical deterioration, mental deterioration until "There ain't no more down to go." And all he wanted, all he needed was work. But when he goes out to smash - the audience is right with him; that is, I thought they were - at the Group Theatre's production.

Members of the cast said they'd never get over the thrill of having worked in this show. And I heard the story of P's bruised head. During rehearsal or improvisation of one of the mob scenes, P. being a striker and very much aroused, hit at C. who was a cop. C. Feeling very much the cop knocked her over the head with his club. She was laid up for two days.

The reviews amazed me. One critic feeling very depressed after the show, revived when he came out and saw people streaming out of the movies. He must have felt relieved to wake up and find it only a dream.

Another critic felt that after all the theatre has no place for propaganda. That was in the year 1931. The same critics know better in 1933.

The Theatre Collective (Section of the Workers Laboratory Theatre) is bringing the play to a working class audience, and this is a chance to see what part an audience takes in a play. How much I have seen of this audience, I know the show will run more than a week - which was all the production did run uptown.

The Theatre Collective's production of "1931" will be reviewed in the next issue of WORKERS THEATRE.

We have just received copies of The International Theatre, no. 3. It is 64 pages and contains articles and photos of the revolutionary theatre of many countries. The supply is limited. Single copies are 15c; in bundle orders to org's' tions, 10c.

PUBLICATIONS, PHOTOGRAPHS, ETC.

International Theatre, No. 3 (2 copies)
Student Review - April and May 1933
The Communist - May 1933
New Pioneer - April and May 1933
Bulletin of the Art Alliance, Phila -
April and May 1933.
Workers Theatre Movement of England -
Monthly Bulletin, Nos. 2 and 3.

ARTICLES, ETC.

Workers Theatre - A Poem, by Marvin Klein
Debauchery of Fascist Storm Troopers -
Cultural Reaction in Germany--Press
Bureau of IURT.

PLAYS AND RECITATIONS

None !!

Scottsboro Boy

Poem for recitation

by Madge Kay

"Why yo' wan'

Keep dem niggers

'Live so long?

Troublemakers!

Hang 'em quick!

Niggers gotta hang

'Po' dey gits

uncomfable strong.

We don' min' 'em when dey does dere work,

We don' min' 'em when dey keeps mouths shut,

We don' min' 'em when dey looks on de groun'.

But when dey gits so troublesome,

And lifts dere eyes

To de white man's skies,

Dat's de time to take 'em and to put 'em undergroun'."

Dat's de song I heard

Comin' from de south,

Dat's de song I heard

From de white man's mouth.

Dat's de song my brothers heard

Since dey wuz knee-high.

Dey expects to hear de same

'Til de day dey come to die.

We wuz clapped in jail;

We wuz banged and beat;

We wuz brought to court

Befo' dere judgment seat.

Dey said we'd 'tacked a white girl,

Her and another one,

And so dey suttinly would send

Us nine to kingdom come.

I wuz twelve year, 'Gene thuhteen,

Dat's not hard to figger,

But I guess it ain' importan'

Ef yo're bo'n a nigger.

But den I heard a different song,

a song made wid a white man's words -

I tho't at firs' my ears heard wrong

'Cose I ain' never heard sech befo'.

"Rise up, black man, rise up!

lift yo' head from de ground.

Strike off the burnin' shackles

wid which yo' limbs are bound.

"Worker, brother, comrade,

We've known and felt yo' pains -

De very same hated masters

Have loaded us wid chains.

"So rise up and fight wid us,

So's we can crush dem down,

And 'tablish our own way to

make de wheels go roun'!"

words ain' allays clear to un'erstan',

but deeds, dey's clear when dey say:

"We're gonna save

De Scottsboro boys, 'cose dey's innocent,

From de waitin' gallows and de grave.

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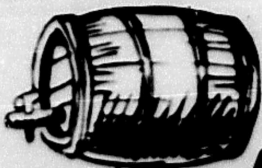
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