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" OH SING A NEW SONG "

A  
HISTORICAL PAGEANT

Depicting  
THE EVOLUTION OF NEGRO MUSIC

By  
NOBLE SISSLE



John Edwards \$1000  
Donaldson 250  
Van Tassel 750

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## PROLOGUE

In the beginning God created Man - and in the realm of nature made him king over all. Man was to conquer the perils of the desert, the pestilence of the jungles, the treacherness of the mighty mountains and the turbulence of the storm tossed seas. But man must fight if he would reign. He must defy the torrid scorching heat and cross the barren waste of the burning sands of the desert. He must with his strong right arm, fight his way, step by step, through the deep tangled wild wood infested with ferocious beast and poisonous reptiles and invade the seemingly impregnable barriers of the dark jungles. He must with courageous heart and steady tread, scale the heights, explore the deepest caverns with their bottomless pits and yawning chasms and from their wooded bases, climb to the snow capped peaks of the highest mountains. And when man hath crossed the deserts, invaded the jungles and scaled the highest mountains, then must he with the sands of the desert, the timber of the jungles and the ore of the mountains, fashion for himself a craft that will defy the treacherous currents, the terrific winds and dashing waves and sail across the seas to the shores of distant lands, that he might conquer and rule this whole world that is his.

EPISODE ONE

THE MAN FROM THE JUNGLES

Scene 1

THE SLAYING OF THE LION

(Tom Toms the strong heart beat of primitive man)

Scene 2

THE JUNGLE MAN WORSHIPS THE SUN

(The most powerful influence of  
his mysterious surroundings)

Scene 3

PRIMITIVE MAN HAS TWO MOODS

HAPPY - SAD

(Personified by dancers)



#### Scene 4

##### THE WITCH DOCTOR

(Primitive man not knowing the origin of the spiritual, uses his strange supernatural influences to play on the emotions of his fellow men. He hates the spirit of happiness. He rules with morbid ceremonies. He casts a spell on the spirit of dance. He manacles her.)

##### NOTE:

The characters depicting happiness and sadness and the Witch Doctor go through the pageant. The Witch Doctor becomes the Voodoo and in the last episode he becomes the Medical Doctor. The Minister is an offspring who on being acquainted to Miss Civilization, learns the difference between science and things spiritual. The two dancers become one Miss Jazz and the other Miss Blues. Here once more Miss Civilization keeps them balanced in the human mind.

#### Scene 5

The King of Krall calls his subjects and prepares for feast. He denounces the Witch Doctor for his manacled Miss Happiness, and orders Miss Sadness executed. He prepares with great gusto for the public demonstration. He calls for a feast. All the tribe assembles. The day is given over to revelry. There is an over indulgence in the spirit of happiness, riotous drinking and dancing. The Witch Doctor is furious. His wild protestation and demonstration of anger only brings laughs from the King and his drinking subjects. As the revelry reaches the climax, the outer guards of the village rush in and announce an attack of another tribe. The drums of war sound. The attack is on. In their drunken state the village is captured and the subjects are manacled and marched away to be sold to slave traders.

EPISODE TWO



## EPISODE TWO

### Scene 1

#### A SLAVE SHIP

(As the ship approaches the shores of America, the native African melody becomes flavored with the American Christian hymns.)

### Scene 2

#### A PLANTATION SCENE

(The entire tribe captured in Africa is brought on. The former King becomes the head servant at the big house. The Witch Doctor becomes the Voodoo man, adopting Christian religious teachings in his ceremonies. Both Miss Happiness and Miss Sadness are there, but Miss Happiness quite to the Voodoo Doctor's delight is subdued by the system of slavery.) The King who is at the big house learns by hearing the White Mistress of the house reading to her children about God and Christ and the salvation of a soul, and how those that believe in this God and Christ will be made free -- even as the children of Israel became free, some day a Moses would come and make them free. In the dark of the night he would take some of his trusted followers way down in the corner of the plantation and preach to them. He encouraged them to be patient be faithful - and work and pray and some day they would be free. He told them to trust in the God of Moses who delivered the children of Israel. He taught them to sing in symbols so that the overseers would not know what they were singing about. The lyrics were cleverly composed so they would carry a double meaning.

#### Example

(Steal Away To Jesus)



He encouraged the spirit of Happiness, but wished it only to be expressed in religious ceremony. Altho he winked at it in the form of folk dancing, he admonished his flock lest they should stray from his teaching of the scripture.

The Voodoo man knowing his enemy the captured and enslaved former King, dare not let the Master or overseers know the subject of his preaching, was thus left free to practice his deviltry. The preaching King however got too strong for the Voodoo man and in a jealous rage, the Voodoo Doctor betrays the preacher to his Master. On the auction block they are sold down the river and the tribe is broken up. But the Gospel is spread. His disciples carry the news from one plantation to another. The feud between the Voodoo and preachers goes on (happiness the spirit of one and sadness the spirit of the other) to Emancipation Day.

### Scene 3

#### EMANCIPATION CELEBRATION

(Cake walk and folk dances)



EPISODE THREE

EPISODE THREE

Scene 1

MINSTREL DAYS

(Parade through audience on to stage)  
open to

FULL STAGE MINSTREL

First part

(Introduce old songs of Jim Bland and  
other composers of that day)

MALE CHORUS

Scene 2

BIRTH OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

Hampton and Tuskegee Institute

Scene 3

INTRODUCTION OF NEGRO SPIRITUALS ON CONCERT STAGE

(Fisk University Jubilee Singers)



Scene 4

EXCERPTS FROM NEGRO SHOWS

(Williams and Walker, Cole and Johnson, Ernest Hogan, S.E. Dudley. This scene is to end with a selection from the Sho Fly Regiment of Cole and Johnson, introducing a different unit representing military activities of the Negro soldiers up to and including the Spanish-American war.)

Scene 5

THE BIRTH OF THE FOX TROT AND ONE STEP

(This will feature the instrumentation used by Jim Europe and his orchestra in their accompaniment to the creative dances of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Castle. It will also show how the rythms were introduced by Buddy Gilmore and Battle Axe McKinney. The selections to be featured are "Down Home Rag," "Castle Walk" and "At The Ball." Also "The Junk Man Rag" as played by Charles (Lucky) Roberts.)

*Shulton Brooks - Chris Smith - Maces Hubbard  
Crescent & Jayton  
New Orleans after June*

Scene 6

THE WORLD WAR

(Marching the soldiers, the blowing of brass bands, the hysterical cheer of the multitude and the victorious return of the troops ending with the original composition by Sissle and Europe, "On Patrol In No Man's Land." This action to be carried on by the 8th Illinois National Guard band and soldiers.)



Scene 7

THE MODERN SPIRITUALS

("Deep River" by Burleigh, "Listen To The Lambs" by Dett.  
Male chorus of spirituals arranged by Clarence Cameron  
White of Hampton and Dawson of Tuskegee.)

Scene 8

THE NEGRO'S ADVENT ON THE LEGITIMATE STAGE

(Charles Gilpin, Emperor Jones and Shuffle Along. Miller  
and Lyles, Sissle and Blake, introducing Florence Mills,  
Adelaide Hall, Bill Robinson, Paul Robeson, Mammie Smith  
with the "Crazy Blues" ending with the "Saint Louis Blues"  
with a suggestion of the "Rhapsody in Blues" as a finale.

Scene 9

JUNGLE RHYTHMS IN A MODERN SETTING

(Introducing the music of Duke Ellington's "Mood Indigo,"  
Fletcher Henderson's "Whiteman Stomp" Cab Calloway's  
"Hi-de-ho" and Louie Armstrong's Trumpet style.

Scene 10

A LOOK INTO THE FUTURE OF NEGRO MUSIC

By

WILLIAM STILL

(This will be instrumental with an interpreted ballet)

Scene 11

" OH SING A NEW SONG "

(By the entire assembly including the audience)



" OH SING A NEW SONG "

Forget all your troubles and sorrows  
Forget every worry and care  
Think of only happy tomorrows  
And the joys that are yours to share.

CHORUS

Oh Sing A New Song  
Oh sing a new song  
Sing a song of hope and cheer,  
Sing with gladness  
No more sadness  
Lift your voices loud and clear.  
Shout the story  
Filled with glory  
There's a God who'll right each wrong,  
Make the world feel  
There's a NEW DEAL  
As you sing a new true song.

"OH SING A NEW SONG"

Forget all your troubles and sorrows

Forget every worry and care

Think of only happy tomorrow

And the joys that are yours to share.

CHORUS

Oh Sing A New Song

Oh Sing a new song

Sing a song of hope and cheer,

Sing with gladness

No more sadness

Lift your voices loud and clear.

Shout the story

Filled with glory

There's a God who'll right each wrong.

Make the world feel

There's a NEW DEAL

As you sing a new true song.



