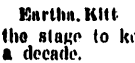


City Chiefs Rate Assist For Eartha

By BOB THOMAS

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (AP)—Six years ago, a frightened little dancer played in a night club as one of the Katherine Dunham troupe. Today Eartha Kitt is the headliner at the same spot—and still frightened.

The Eartha Kitt show at El Rancho Vegas is the top ticket in this fabulous town, meaning reservations are the toughest to get. The sultry songstress' records are selling in the millions. She is the star of a current movie hit, "New Faces." She has enough offers from TV, movies, niteries and the stage to keep her busy for a decade.



But she's scared.

"It wasn't so bad in the theater in New York, because I was accustomed to the theater," she remarked between shows. "But when I played the Moccambo (where she scored her first big hit), I was terrified. And when I opened here, I was so frightened I didn't think I would be able to go on. I was in a trance during most of the show."

It may be some consolation for her to know that George M. Cohan once said a performer couldn't be good unless he's a little scared before going onstage. And Eartha is good.

She's no beauty, resembling a dusky Spike Jones. But she has a fascinating, alive face, which can range from a savage look to one of tenderness. She prowls around the stage with a feline grace. Her songs are as intimate as a wire-tapped hound.

For much of her success, she can thank the Los Angeles City Council. Certain councillors objected to her material at a banquet here for the King and Queen of Greece last November. The mayor also chimed in that the songs seemed too racy for royal ears. The King, on the other hand, said he and his wife were delighted with the evening's entertainment.

"There is no doubt that the council gave my career the big push," said Eartha, who was nevertheless abused by the whole affair. "People began buying my records to see if this girl was as bad as they said."

This is probably the first time in legislative history that city fathers have established a star.

Hollywood Day by Day

By LOUELLA O. PARSONS

HOLLYWOOD—Tala Birell writes from Berlin, "I read your column of March 15 in the New York Journal American. It's true that I am behind the Iron Curtain, 104 miles to be exact, but I am well protected by the British, French and American troops.

"I am in Berlin working for the United States Army as a command entertainment director. The unique situation here provides us with a new and enthusiastic audience—the thousands of refugees seeking asylum in our sector. It never occurred to me that my silence might make anyone think that I had disappeared behind the Iron Curtain, because I am an American citizen and have been for some years."

Tala, pretty as ever, sends pictures of herself taken with Gary Cooper entertaining the U. S. Army Hospital in Berlin, and one with Broderick Crawford, Rita Gam and Gregory Peck in a Berlin service club.

CAN YOU IMAGINE Marilyn Monroe saying in her quiet little voice, "come up and see me sometime?" Well, you may hear just that if Marilyn does "The Life Story of Mae West," which is under consideration for her at 20th Century-Fox.

I'm told the only drawback is the money. Mae wants plenty of moola and the film companies aren't paying fabulous prices these days.

HEPBURN — And I mean Katharine — is going to make a picture in Italy called "The Window."



Katharine Hepburn

It's so long since we've heard about Katie I didn't know whether she was still acting or not, but she goes to Rome this summer to star in this Mario Soldati story (originally called "Dinner With the Commendatore"). Soldati may have trouble with the title "The Window," which is the name of a picture made by RKO.

He will direct his own screenplay, and he says he already has two Italian actors lined up.

ALL THOSE thrilling tales of wild animals in South Africa were knocked in the head by George Marshall, the director. He says in a park near Johannesburg there are all sorts of wild animals roaming around. The lions just sleep, they are so well fed, and look lazily at the tourists who drive up in cars.

"Of course," said George, "I couldn't say what would happen if anyone stepped out of the cars, but I have never seen the king of the jungle act so bored."

George spent considerable time directing "Duel in the Jungle," and he says Johannesburg and the big cities of Africa have everything we have in the U. S.

MARY PICKFORD is minus a very valuable diamond cluster with large stones forming the top of a bracelet. She was dancing at a farewell party given the Martin Von Dehna by Mary and Charlie Morrison at the Moccambo. Later the entire party went to Duke Ellington's house in the hills.

As Mary was getting out of the car at Ellington's home, she discovered that she had lost the diamonds from her bracelet. No trace was found, even though several members of the party returned to the Moccambo to search for it.

The Ellington party was in

Tala Birell Entertaining Refugees

WHILE I was at the Sands, in Las Vegas, Marlene Dietrich telephoned Jack Entratter to say au revoir. She goes to Spain to make that picture with Orson Welles, and then comes back to record some songs with Frankie Laine. Then she's off for London for a singing engagement.

Today Marlene has more offers than she can accept. Always does my heart good to see women who have worked as hard as she keep at the top.

That's all today. See you to-morrow.

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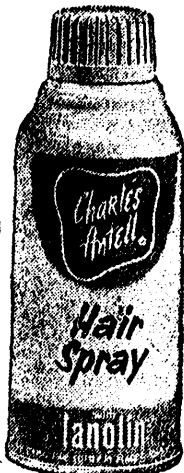
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