

**Smithsonian Institution** 

National Museum of African American History and Culture

## The Show-Down vol. 1 no. 9

Extracted on Apr-19-2024 10:17:45

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"The Green Pastures" --- Sensational AUDIENCE ENTRANCED WITH BEAUTY OF FILM By Maurice Dancer (Associate Editor)

No production on earth was ever quite so dramatic, so tense, so emotional, so colossal as "The Green Pastures." I was a courageous move and an expensive one on the part of Warner Brothers. They must have been fully aware that the Christian world contains an untold number of quaintly pious folk, who might regar das blasphemy any alien (to them) interpretation, however sympathetic, of the celestial hypothesis, even that conceived by one of the most fundamentally Godabiding people on earth.

Greatly missed in the screen version of the Marc Connelly play, is the suave and dignified manner of the late Richard Berry Harrison, whose portrayal of God for 1657 performances during the run of the stage play, received so much publicity that the words "de lawd" established him in an equally popular vein as that of the title "The Green Pastures." I don't mean to take away from Rex Ingram, but after witnessing his superb performance as the robust "Blacksnake" in the production "Stevedore", you just can not place him as the smooth character of "De Lawd". In the cinema version of "The Green Pastures" he was originally cast for the role of Adam. Rex Ingram speaks with more vigor but no less dignity than his predecessor, doubles ably as Adam and the Prophet Hezdrel.

"The Green Pastures: was first created in the mind of Roark Bradford, whose stories of "OI' Man Adam in 'His Chillun' ", supplied the manner, mood and diolog. Roark Bradford's connection with "The Green Pastures" has since been overshadowed by that of Marc Connelly, who caused Warner Brothers to go to great expense in filming the play. It was agreed that he should be privileged to utilize all the broad seep of the cameral lens in bringing to the screen the elements of the Roark Bradford folk-tale that the limitations of the legitimate stage had previously prevented him from producing.

As everyone knows, "The Green Pastures" is a projection of the dreamy imaginations aroused in the minds of the listeners by an aged preacher telling Old Testament stories to a Sunday school class. One of the strong features of the play was the poverty stricken bareness of the Heaven it portrayed. One of the principal danger of the cinema was that Heaven would either be improve beyond anyone's dream or else that the artfulness of its simplicity might seem condescending. The producers have avoided both these pitfalls. Heaven has been improved, but only slightly.

De Lawd Lookin' Out On His World

[[image: artist's drawing of bearded man and a crowd of worshippers]]

Scenes only mentioned in the original stage production are shown in all their magnificent simplicity in the screen version of "The Green Pastures" so elaborately filmed by Warner Bros.

In it, to be sure, angels cruise on little clouds. From the clouds, they dangle lines for cat-fish. God is still a shabby preacher, calm, elderly

THE DESIGNATION OF "The Green Pastures" --- Sensation De Lawd Lookin' Out On His World AUDIENCE ENTRANCED WITH BEAUTY OF FILM By Marrier Dawer (Assault Edited) By Marrye Davier (Assault Edited) No speakation on anth site curr quick so draw an an anni so contordin. The order of the theory for a parameter on the pays is consequent more and the parameters of the pays of the source of the source transmission of the pays of the source of the source transmission of the pays of the Hapfeeter 217 shift pays device on the pays of the Hapfeeter 217 shift pays device on the pays of the Hapfeeter 217 shift pays device of the test backments for our shift pays of the test backments for the shift pays of the test backment of the first pays of the test backment of the first pays of the test backment of the first pays of the test backment of the test pays of the test pays of the test test pays of the test pays of the test test pays of the test pays of the test test pays of the test pays of the test test pays of the test pays of the test test pays of the test pays of the test test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test. The test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test pays of the test of the test pays the test pays of the test of the test the Bropher Hendrel. The Correspondence on the second in the model of Energic Biochicals, where stores of "10" Bios Adam on Min Chilling", supplied the score rest words and deduce. Rank Beacherle conser-tions with "The Groon Paramet" has since here workshowed by first of Marc Grandle, who cauced Winters Bodrey to go a grant agreement in timing the photors to go a grant agreement in granting the moder of Marc Grandle, who cauced Winters Induces the bread succept of the agreement limit in hereight is due some the domestic for hypithtic stores had previously prevented has free readeding. Somes only mentioned in the original mass production are we is all their magnificent simplicity in the street version of "The Green Pastores" at elaborately filened by Warney Box. In it, to be note, angle rente on links double. From the double, they double loss for satisfiel. Gui to still a stably periods, calm, shiftly and not too composite fronts young district association for distribution as po-tots, for to be sharped contrasted above too any per-ton-form to sense the contrast. The source link dist. More in replaced by the barring bade. Note, describ-tions large of advacing the main base and balancing the Adv. In Hanness, bands angeb also will be considered that in the Hanness bands angeb also will be considered through the state of the state of the state of the through the Hanness bands are barried to the state of the Pathers Hereich address in these states are statement over write adqual for the series when its statement over write adqual for the series when its statement over write adqual for the series with its statement over the adqual for the Walk of the Pathers in a mather statement is a grand job and a matchild array gendantees. producing. 11,7 As reverses houses. The Green Forance's is a pre-position of the denser magnetisms around in the mixed of the bottime by an appl provides using DM Terms must dense for the star of the proventy densities because of the Hensen in perturbation. One of the provide damper of the dense may the provide damper because of the Hensen in perturbation. One of the provide damper of the dense may find the set of the former of the Hensen in perturbation. The production of the theorem in the set of the dense may define the composition for the set of the dense may be applied with the provide the set of the dense may be applied. Hensen has been improved, but only dealed.

and not too competent. Brash young Gabriel announces him officiously at picnics, has to be sharply cautioned about tooting prematurely on his trumpet. On earth, Cain kills Abel. Moses is frightened by the burning bush and balancing the Ark. In Heaven, female angels dust off the wooden chairs in Jehovah's office. Abraham's grandson rubs liniment on his wings. God supervises these and a thousand more lively happenings.

Hall Johnson's Heavenly choir, in the unique choral arrangement especially adapted for the screen version of the Pulitzer Prize play, moves the audience with its stirring enchantments, until you think the Walls of Jericho are about to tumble around you. The screen version of "The Green Pastures" is a grand job and a masterful screen production.

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