

COMMENTS ON THE PAMPHLET PRECEDING MAUD'S DEBUT IN LONDON.

The Pelican: It is a fact that Miss Allan is pretty and has a nice figure, which she doesn't take any special pains to conceal, and of course she can dance in her own remarkable fashion.

The Glasgow Herald March 7 1908

There is no kind of indecency in her appearance, but unfortunately her press agent has distributed a luridly written pamphlet which may create a succes de scandale. Miss Allan falls into beautiful poses, any one of which would make the name of a painter or sculptor. Indeed I could not help thinking that with such a gifted pantomimist (for Miss Allan acts as well as dances) a modern composer might hit off a new form of art work. The Vision of Salome itself was much marred by the use of a property head of John the Baptist. It was not even shocking but simply ludicrous. The imaginative nature/quality of Miss Allan's work made the crude realism an artistic error. The town will talk of her dancing and perhaps misrepresent its aim.

Pall Mall Gazette March 7 1908 See xerox

Daily Telegraph March 7 1908

[of the publicity sheet "she has attracted poets, musicians and.].
This is pretty tall talk as our American cousins would say, and we confess to a certain amount of difficulty in understanding how Miss Allan has contrived to educate her 'shapely feet' to the arduous task of breathing. Some little measure of hyperbole is, however, permissible in the case of so accomplished a dancer, for accomplished Miss Allan most certainly is. The word on reflection is perhaps too cold and formal to apply to a performer whose work is essentially of a supple and voluptuous character.

Daily News March 7 1908

It is a pity that a dancer who does such beautiful work should be heralded by an absurd pamphlet which claims ridiculous things for her in the language of American picturesque reporting. To read those lurid sentences one would imagine that Miss Allan's dancing is intended to appeal to a low sensuousness, and to draw a public by sheer audacity. The dancing itself a poem, and none but the most prurient could see the slightest appeal to any sense but that of beauty of motion and pose. Miss Allan should discard that lurid pamphlet, just as she should discard the foolish property head of St. John the Baptist in the Vision of Salome.

The Clarion March 13 1908

Miss Allan dances to- or rather she she expresses through her body's medium, the motion of music. Who does not feel when listening to the works of any great composer, the sense of waving, moving rhthym in tæ Music.....

So insistent and real is this sensation at times, that one's hands and arms - nay, one's whole body involuntaily moves in sympathy.

Thus it is with Miss Allan, she is the living, breathing, seeab;e representative of that quality which all true Music possesses. And as this musical quality is exquisitively graceful and pure, so too are Miss Allan's movements. I am more than sorry that her performance should be given in, of all places, a London Music Hall, of all places. It is the most unsuitable frame that cou d have bee hosen to encircle her dainty person. And as I looked around, too, upon these many faces, I could not repress a shudder of shame and disgust, which feeling has since been justified by at least one newspaper criticism. For the human face is but a mirror of the soul reflecting openlt, the inward thoughts we express not in words.

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Truth March 18 1908

Much as I admire her performance, I feel that I can hardly hope to rival in print the ecstasy of the little booklet in which her charms are advertised. How is this for her eyes?

"The velvety pupils are set etc etc ...
Personally I think this illustrated booklet rather takes the wind out of a poor critic's sails. What more is there to be said? I saw Miss Allan in a Greek dance, in which she looks like the living embodiment of a figure from Alma Tadema picture, and also in the Vision of Salome. In the latter she merely wears merely a gauze skirt and some beads, and the effect is rather startling. The dance itself is less barbaric than wonderfully studied, but the weird Egyptian setting and the extraordinary way in which the dancer can express emotion with every movement make the performance a thing not to miss. To quote again "Her naked feet, slender and arched....."

Abolish the Censor indeed!!! Why not have a Censor for dancing? Miss Allan's arms are really her strong point and she makes wonderful use of them, they wave and undulate in a fashion most fascinating to watch, and even if the dancer does not quite realise the poster-I mean the booklet - she is a born artist from the tips of her fingers to the points of those pretty toes which are the embodiment of feigned thought [to quote the booklet] .

The Star March 14 1908

Miss Allan has been acclaimed with a chorus of praise, ungrudgingly given, for her dainty and most artistic rendering of a most difficult 'turn'. In other hands the display might easily have been repulsive; but Miss Allan is an artist first and a performer second. Her delicate movements are all the more remarkable when it is understood that she has never received any dancing lessons.

The Sunday Chronicle Date: Pre Debut

Miss Marie Dressler's engagement at the Palace having come to an end she is off to monte Carlo for a rest; she declares that she will no more appear in what she calls vaudeville/. She will however reappear in London in due course. Meanwhile Mr. Butt has another sensation for us at the Palace Theatre. Here on Monday Miss Maud Allan will be added to the program, with a wonderful series of dances. On the Continent she made the flesh creep with a weird representation of Salome. It may be that the grim horror of the head may be removed from the London version..

Of Salome we read that 'with her hot mouth... to a Mask of Misery
And yet we are to assume that this horrible orgy will be allowed to pass without interdict!!

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The Music Hall March 13 1908

A Dancer of rare charm has arrived at the Palace, Miss Maud Allan, She has been described as an American, but she was actually born in Toronto. The statement that Miss Allan has had no training in the art of the dance is incredible. Miss Allan give a strikingly dramatic illustration of the story of Salome dancing for the head of the Baptist and then recoiling before the horror of her work. None but the vulgar could see vulgarity in this unique, impressive performance.

The Jewish World March 20 1908

Miss Maud Allan has created a great sensation at the Palace Theatre with her series of classical dances. In Salome especially she realises by a series of sinuous movements almost weird in their effect, the passionate character of the subject. Miss Allan's dances are in fact plays without words, and their effect is wonderful!!

The Tatler March 25 1908

What's in a Name?

As was natural, Miss Maud Allan and her celebrated Salome dance have caused a tremendous sensation. Many persons are shocked that a biblical story (and such a nice story, too) should be allowed on the English stage. There is a great deal of talk about the 'thin edge of the wedge' and all that kind of thing. Could it be renamed Mary's Minuet or Le Danse de l'abbatoir it would make all the difference in the world. Then they might go and see it for themselves and even tell their next door neighbour to go see it.

The Daily Mail March 14 1908

It has become a fashionable craze to see the dance of Miss Maud Allan in The Vision of Salome at the Palace Theatre. Some of the well known people who have seen Miss Allan during the past few days; the Duke of Westminster, Earl Carrington, Lord and Lady Essex, Lord Mount Edgemoor, Lord Michelham, Sir Squire Bancroft, the hon. Sidney Greville and Mr. Alfred Rothschild. There were no fewer than a score of MP's in the theatre on Thursday. Last night a wedding party, including six bridesmaids and the best man, went to the Palace Theatre. Lady----- requests the pleasure of -----company to dinner at the Savoy Hotel, afterwards Palace (Salome Dance) was the wording on an invitation recently sent out.

Liverpool Daily Post "From a London Window".

It is pre-eminently my mission in this column to re-echo the social topic of the day. Thereafter, apart from political circles, it is no exaggeration to say that nothing is talked about Miss Maud Allan. She is the Canadian posture dancer at the Palace and all London is going to see her. The opera on a Melba night is not smarter than the stalls at the Music Hall. Why? Because here is one of the most wonderful things of our time.

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The Sketch March 18th 1908

If Maud Allan - who last week stepped off a Greek vase straight into the hearts of a fastidious audience at the Palace Theatre- intends to perform in private houses and at the banquets of the great - as a Hellenic girl should - we shall have a new kind of entertainment for the London season.

It is of a new kind which will not only epater le bourgeois but afford Mr. and Mrs. Grundy with a curiously novel sensation. There are many great mansions in London that would make great background for this artiste [talented] while a curtain is all that is needed in the way of a mise en scene for her most characteristic dances. A clever hostess will arrange her drawing room so that Miss Allan's slender swaying arms and curiously expressive hands are seen against a drapery of Wedgewood blue or pale Celadon green. Then the illusion will be complete, and a Flax an figure will certainly come to ~~light~~.life.

Vanity Fair April 1 1908

The special matinee of Miss Maud Allan at the Palace might, as someone quaintly remarked, have been a charity performance, so packed was the house, so representative was the audience. Not only every box and stall was full but five minutes aftervt the opening f the doors there was no sta ding room. Whether Miss Allan has to thank the Archdeacon of London for his splenddly controversial advertisement [Ref & identify] or whether the fact that the King was greatly interested in the Salome dance when he saw it in Mariembad made people anxxious to see it, it is difficult to say, but there is no doubt that Miss Allan has scored one of those huge successes which do not ~~begin~~ appear to have any special reason except that aything in the shape of a novelty is a blessing.

The Academy "All we like sheep"----- see xerox.

The Drama March 26th 1908

But the dancer has reserved her master stroke for the last. This Vision of Salome has not only made her famous, but has so haunting a fascination that, to our knowledge, many people cannot keep away from it and return night after night to the Palace to see it.

.....FILL IN

It is the essence of Eastern dancing to show rhythmic movements of the body round itself, so to speak, as a pivot which means that it may become, as in the notorious case of the 'dance du ventre' something lascivious and positively ugly. Now it is obvious that this dancer could make no movement or posture that is not beautiful and, in fact, her dancing as Salome, though Eastern in spirit through and through, is absolutely without the slightest suggestion of the vulgarities so familiar to the tourist in ^ZTnagier. She achieves the distinction - we admit it risks being a nice distinction - between the voluptuous and the lascivious.....FILL IN

And so Maud Allan gives you beautiful drama, and we do not wonder that all the dreamers in London and all the lovers of beauty for beauty's sake are crowding to see her, and return to see her again and again.

The World March 25 1908

It is all beautiful with a rare beauty, an art that is a true paraphrase of real, sensuous life. If some phases of it are tolerated here, it is because their meaning is not understood. Those who understand all take a secret joy in their knowledge, fearful lest it should become general: Thus, our Puritan fathers might imagine this lovely thing 'immoral' - and another beauty banished from the world.

J.E. Crawford Fitch, Modern Dancers and Dancing;

Apart from her instinct for music, she has profited by a musical training such as no other dancer has been equipped with. Her steps ate to the eye the exact equivalent of the notes which reach the ear. One of the most felicitous of her accomplishments is her ability to pass with the music from the major to the minor key, or vice versa. When a phrase occurs first in one key and then in another, it is repeated in her dancing with just that modification of aspect and accent which expresses ~~the~~ the change of mood. Some of the movements in Grieg's first Peer Gynt Suite gave her admirable scope for this beautiful art of transposition. The faith with which her movements follow the moods of composers is probably only fully realised by those who are ~~musicians~~ musicians as well as connoisseurs of the dance. Her translation of music as of seldom that rare quality of translations, of being finer than the originals!"

The Commonwealth July 1 1908

We have a new debt of gratitude to pay; a new experience, a new delight, a new inspiration has been brought to us, for which we must render thanks. And it is to a dancer we owe them. The fact seems to us, but freshly awakened from a deep ignorance, a strange one. If one had said that to a new poet, or a new musician, great and special thanks were due, ~~the world would immediately~~ the words would carry an immediate appeal; but to a dancer, ~~something~~ thing must have happened.

And indeed something has happened. Suddenly, amid the deadness of the prescribed, ~~conventional~~ conventional system of movement that have been all we have had, hitherto, to call dances, there has arisen all the glory and ~~the~~ dignity of a great art. It is an art that comes to us fresh and wonderful, yet hardly familiar, rather in virtue of the dim sense we have had ~~we have had~~ of its presence in the past ages of human life; coming with a sense of renewal, of something that we have far too long gone without. We can hardly doubt as we see Miss Allan dance, that we are looking upon something at least allied to the old and, one had thought, lost and forgotten choric art. And Miss Allan brings that art back to us through another, an art which we possess in a perfected form such as the people of old time never knew; there is a fitness in the fact that the re-evolution of perhaps the oldest form of artistic expression comes through music, so especially the art of our own era, which raises thoughts of a possibility that the art that we welcome with such gratitude today may be more than a splendid isolated phenomenon; a pioneer, one almost dares hope, of a revival, bringing promise of an ultimate recovery of what the dance meant to such people as the Greeks- a great and unique power of expression by means of idealised motion.

One can at least be sure of the appeal this art makes to present-day people; from the eminent philosopher in the stalls to the coster in the gallery the house is held by one intensity of feeling, whether it be the spirit of comedy or tragedy, of pensive grace or of sheer exuberant happiness that Miss Allan evokes - portrays, rather, so entirely does her whole personality become merged, transparent to the light of her inspiration. There are exceptions of course, like the poor blind man of Manchester who came, destitute of the faith by which their sight might have been regained, and passed their judgement with the filmover their yes. But more eloquent is the attitude of the prodigal who goes seeking the husks that the music hall performances want to provide, and stays hushed and almost reverent before the gleam that is given him of the living purity of nature, reflected in the clear mirror of a true and wonderful art. Beyond doubt, this modern world of ours has great need that the truth and the joy and the wonder of this art should make its abode among us.

The Free Lance May 20 1908;

One of the most remarkable points in regard to Miss Allan's presentation of dancing is a peculiar coinciding in it with the spirit and feeling of classical Greece. The modern and Teutonic mode of dancing elects for its theme almost exclusively the gaiety and pleasurable of life.

The Greek form, however, aspired to embrace a more extended gamut of emotions. It followed indeed into the darkest recesses of Greek tragedy, and traced even those dark imaginings in which the Greek fancied some altogether untoward elements always present in life, even in the fairest imaginings [Sense?]

And there is a close parallel to this, very apparent in Miss Allan's rendering of Salome. Nothing could be more indicative of the sense of the underlying horror of things, nothing could be more expressive of the macabre, the gruesome, than the wonderful moments when Salome stops low, vibrant with the ecstasy of fascination, over the repellent lifeless head of the prophet.

It is therefore in no way extravagant to claim that Miss Allan has given us something that is expressive of the spirit of the purest ideals of Art.

The New Age (xerox)