

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

To indicate the wide range of my research material and the interest my work on Maud Allan is arousing, I enclose:

1. Review of "Bohemia," Prague. The concluding paragraph on The Vision of Salome is of particular interest. Apart from the ambiguous review/impression of the debut performance in Vienna in 1906 (see Dance Chronicle, article 2) this is the earliest review of The Vision of Salome, and one of the most descriptive. Translation by Dr. Anna Wittmann.
2. Self explanatory letter from Maud Allan following her engagement in Budapest. The earliest- and one of the few explicit- statements recording Maud Allan's artistic attitudes, but in part designed, surely, to promote publicity.
3. Cartoon relating- and confusing- Maud Allan's "Salome" with Richard Strauss'. From a biography of Strauss.
4. Unquestionably a portrait of Maud Allan as Salome, one of three portraits known to have been painted by Franz von Stuck the 'painter-prince' of Munich. Hangs in pride of place in City of Munich Art Gallery.
5. A study of the foregoing.
6. Advertisement of Maud Allan concert in Berliner Tageblatt, April 2 1906. Notice, below, concert in which the young Artur Schnabel participated and in upper left corner Will Rogers, in a circus program. (From West Berlin City Archives.)
7. Draft "Introduction" to A Dishonoring Stain.
8. Letter from Dance Australia. I have sent the revised material.
9. Letter from Mrs. Doris Langley Moore. Please note reference to John Murray, Publishers. The draft mss. of A Dishonoring Stain will be completed by April 1987.
10. Letter from Robert Williams, Terpsichore Press. I have sent him the Dance Chronicle articles, expect to correspond further.

Bohemia (Prague, Sept. 6, 1907)

THE AMERICAN SALOME IN THE "VARIETE"

Par. 1:

Miss Allan, who appeared today for the first time in the "Variete" Theatre and yesterday gave a private performance to an invited audience of press representatives, is a latter-day adherent of Miss Duncan's barefoot persuasion. This latest innovative trend is part of modern awareness. Ever since that first Berlin performance of Duncan's, which reconquered the culture of the line, which mastered the expression of the animated work of art for the gestures of dance, a half-dozen priestesses have been called to the service of the new Terpsichore in Anglo-Greek costuming. In a certain sense this manner of dance seems to be almost *passee* in an age when--hypnotically or not--German, Italian, and Indian ladies (wearing no socks) "embody" not only Chopin and Schumann, but even recitations of poems from Liliencron or Goethe. If Miss Allan were nevertheless content to be no more than a dancer with grace and intellect, who can feel in a musically-alive manner and interpret the line-language of the great masterpieces effortlessly in her dance-pantomimes, but the same token, from our perspective, we would be enabled to allow the performance to work on us in its pure form, free from a hunger for sensation, perhaps more than in that time of our first surprise (at the new art form).

Par. 2: The light dress with the short skirt that recalls vividly the swaying Bacchanalians (female) on the murals of Pompeii, the bare feet, which silently glide over the carpet and spring upward, the grave tones of the accompanying piano--we are used to all this. As a result, our attention is now free to focus on the dance. This dance, now, is something new, completely different from what we have seen until now. The slender hands with fingers like priceless flowers on supple stems sway in soft undulations; fingers mobile as fluttering ribbons sigh or frolic. The light strength of the inspired Maenad is in the leap of the austere limbs as rejoicingly, seemingly weightless, they leave the ground. Nothing seems contrived or calculated; everything is the result of the moment, a reflex of the melody. A not always likeable but expressive face

Bohemia, par. 2, continued

echoes (reinforces) the language of the limbs. Nevertheless, what we see is not a pantomime; rather, it is a dance, verses (poetry) in gestures, so to speak, and not a performance of them. These certainly overpower the spectator (one). Bright, child-like joy and painful sorrow, ~~XMX~~ flushed sensual desire and the shock of the soul faced with the secret of death--all this, this somewhat too slender and not overly enticing body knows how to represent suggestively.

Par. 3:

In all its might, however, (this capacity) emerges in the fantastically brilliant Salome scene. It is as if a wildly jerking sensuality were driven into the slender body, as if it began to blossom and to swell forth and glow through her skin. In the shimmering armour of lust with glittering gems and pearls, in which Moreau clad his most renowned portrait of the king's daughter from Judea, we see the dancer. In naked sensuality, her body beseeching (calculating) she meets the eyes of Herod; the rhythm of her motion accelerates; she knows what she wants, and suddenly in its grisly horror the head of the prophet is handed to her from the cistern. With the natural motions of the wild ash she dances Salome, the demivierge of the perverse instincts, gaze now focused on the pale head in heated ecstasy. Wildly she revolves her head in jerking madness; her eyes and fingers groping in the cramps of love, they fantasize about unheard-of desires; shame seems to have vanished from her perspiring body; one draws back from the flame of this passion... Finally abrupt shock overcomes her, freezes her motion, forces her to lay aside the dead head and to be paralyzed in the numb pose of nameless self-disgust. . . Only curtainfall releases the spell of this unique vision.

All of Prague will, no doubt, be talking about Miss Allan over the next two weeks.

Nudity

Author: Miss Maud Gwendolen Allan

To the pure, all is pure; to the pervert, all is perverted. I wish to use this proverb to clarify the so-called nudity in my dancing. Some witty Budapest newspapers have seized upon my costume as a joke (prank), making incorrect remarks (allegations) that I perform but partly-clothed. How can there be any other purpose that I leave single (separate) parts and surfaces (of my body) uncovered than that of raised artistic effect? Even for purposes of a joke, I cannot imagine such. Such joking in my opinion is not right.

This is how it is. The dancer's body is her instrument, the raw material, just as is the violin to the violinist and clay to the sculptor. Is it really possible to cover up this raw material when it is precisely this that brings about (causes) the desired (called forth) artistic effect? No, this would be truly foolish. The same kind of foolishness as closing up a grand piano or to push over a statue after unveiling.

Besides, I am not even going to explain this in detail. The Budapestians anyway understood and were truly sympathetic and appreciative. I only wrote these few words about this so-called nudity since the kind editor invited me to do so. Behold, it is here thus.

I salute the editor (e.g. yours truly)

(Budapest)

January 17, 1907

Maud Gwendolen Allan

in "A H E T"

1907

Strauss mit der «Salome» auf Tournee. Zeitgenössische Karikatur

Max Allen - Salome



Salome auf Reisen.



Arzt von Ernst
in der Schlacht von...



Frang von Stud
Endie zur Salome

Frang von Stud - Endie zur Salome 1892

Neues Programm
 M. Bräuninger: Die 2 Händel'schen Opern
 B. H. H. Gruppe: Gemaltischer Act
 Theresia u. Martin: K. Hypnotischer Act
 De. H. H. Gruppe: Zauberkünste
 R. H. H. Gruppe: Ballet
 König: Ballet v. John Tyler, London
 Anna: Ballet v. W. H. H. Gruppe
 W. H. H. Gruppe: Ballet
 Dr. H. H. Gruppe: Ballet
 Dr. H. H. Gruppe: Ballet

Apollo-Theater.
 8 Uhr: Die neuen erstklassigen Spezialitäten.
 9 Uhr: Das bunte Berlin
 10 Uhr: Die neue erste Genfation!
 11 Uhr: Die neue erste Genfation!
 12 Uhr: Die neue erste Genfation!

Passage-Theater.
 Anfang 8 Uhr.
 Das originale Musik-Programm:
 • Lucie Senig
 • Vortrag: Soubrette.
 Ferner 14 neue Spezialitäten.

Theatersaal der Kgl. Hochschule für Musik, Fasanenstr. 1.
 Mittwoch, 4. April, abends 8 Uhr:
Musikalisch-plastische Stimmungsbilder
 (Werke von Bach, Gluck, Mendelssohn, Chopin u. s. w.)
 von
Maud Gwendolen Allan.
 Karten 6, 4, 3 Mk. bei Wertheim, Leipziger Str., Kastellan der Hochschule u. Abendkasse.

Saal Bechstein: Heute, Mittwoch, 4. April, abends 8 Uhr:
 II. Liederabend
Jane Arger^{aus Paris}
 unter Mitwirkung von Herrn Hermann Lafont (Klavier).
 Karten Mk. 4, 3, 2, 1 b. Bote u. Bock, Wertheim, Leipziger Str., u. Abendkasse.

Beethoven-Saal: Heute, Mittwoch, 4. April, abds. 8 Uhr:
 Vokal-Quartett-Abend
 der Damen **Grumbacher-de Jong, Schnabel-Behr,**
 der Herren **Paul Reimers, Arthur van Eweyk.**
 Mitwirkung: **Artur Schnabel.**
 Brahms-Abend.
 Karten Mk. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 b. Bote u. Bock, Wertheim, Leipziger Str., u. Abendkasse.

Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtnis-Kirche.
 Freitag, den 6. April, abends 7 Uhr:
Generalprobe
 zur
Matthäus-Passion,
 ca. 300 Mitwirkende.
 Karten 2 Mark bei Bote u. Bock, Bernh. Siegel, Teufelsdr. 2, Ardenbachstr. 18/19, und an der Abendkasse.

Richard Wagner-Gesellschaft.
 Sonntag, den 8. April 1893, 7½ Uhr abends,
 in der Aula des Johanneums des Gymnasiums,
 Kaiserstr. 1.
Enoch-Arden
 von
 Tennyson-Stras.
 Regie: George Armes, Groß-Lichterfelde.
 Begleitung: Louis Hügel, Berlin.
 Karten 2, 1, 1/2 Mk. bei Wertheim, Bote u. Bock, Leipziger Str., u. an der Abendkasse.

Indien.
 Original-Pantomime des Circus Busch.
 Besonders hervorzuheben: Tigerjagd, Elefanten- und Bärenkampf!

Circus Albert Schumann.
 Heute, Mittwoch, den 4. April, abends 7½ Uhr:
 Grande Soirée equestre.
 Glanz-Programm, u. a.:
 Berlin's neueste Genfation!
15 Japanische Gaukler,
 vollständig, neue hier noch nie gesehene Truppe
 Neu! **Jokoda-Truppe.** Neu! **Menj. Grand.**
 Neu! **Mik. Sello.** Neu! **Mlle. Rosa.**
 Neu! **Ar. u. u. Viktor.** Neu! **Hesterfamilie**
 Ferner: **Cardinale.**
 Chinesische Krieger
 mit ihren fischfangenden **Cormorants.**
 Tauberrögel
 Zum Die dieß. Pracht-Ausstattungsphantomie.
 Schluß: **Femina,** Das neue Frauenreich.

Hôtel „Der Reichshof“
 Wilhelmstraße 70a.
 Alleabendlich von 7 Uhr ab
 während der Diner- u. Souperzeit:
 Orchester
Brachfeld-Pariaghy.

Verkaufe bewegl. Sachen.

Marienbader
 Rudolfquelle.
 Stärkstes natürliches Gichtwasser
 gegen
 Gicht, harterde Nephrose, Eisenschwäche etc.
 Beste Hilfe bei veralteten Leiden
 Marienbader Rudolfquelle-Verband

INTRODUCTION

"I think you'll like 'Maudie; she's fanciful and frivolous. I should hardly call her 'fast', though she does do the most dreadful things, but she does them so very nicely that probably the most strait-laced of people will have to forgive her, when they read her in the privacy of their own or other people's bedrooms - not only forgive, but love her and her bad ways and her worse friends...."

"To the Reader" from the anonymous author of Maudie, published c. 1910 reprinted in 1985 as "a notorious erotic frolic of the Edwardian era."

During the first week of March 1908, a publicity circular promoting the forthcoming debut of Alfred Butt's latest discovery hit the streets of London. Alfred Butt was the leading theatre agent of the day and manager of the Palace Vaudeville Theatre; the 'discovery' was a Canadian born 'classic' dancer, Maud Allan.

Although unknown in London, over the last two years or so Maud Allan had become well known on the Continent, both as an artist and as a sensation. The sensation lay in her reputation as the "Salome dancer" in "The Vision of Salome". This dance interpretation (by no means the first) of the Biblical story had created controversy and notoriety ever since Maud had first performed it in December 1906 in Vienna. The controversy raged over the daring treatment of the tale itself, the scantiness of the Salome costume and the decency of the climactic moment when an ecstatic Salome picked up and kissed the Baptist's decapitated head.

The notoriety sprang from the power of Maud Allan's 20 minute solo performance to the accompanment of fabricated Hebrew melodies entwined with Eastern harmonies. With bewitching artistry Maud made real to her audiences all the passion, sensuality and eroticism of a young Salome at last face to face with the object of her hitherto repressed desires. It was the sensational aspect of Maud's dancing that the publicity circular focused upon, as is evident in the following excerpt:

Her skin is satin smooth crossed only by the pale tracery of delicate veins that lack the ivory of her round bosom and slowly waving arms...Her lovely face has the small pointed nose with sensitive nostrils, while her mouth is full lipped and ripe as a pomengranate fruit, and as passionate in its ardent curves as that of Venus itself. Her velvety eyes are set in clear opalescent blue whites. They are eyes as frank as a child's. They are eyes that caress with love, flash with hate.

In describing Maud's performance in "The Vision of Salome", the pamphlet became openly erotic:

Her naked feet, slender and arched, beat a sensual measure. The pink pearls slip amorously about the throat and bosom as she moves, while the long strands of jewels that float from the belt about her waist float langorously apart from her smooth hips. The desire that flames from her eyes and burst in hot flames from her scarlet mouth infect the very air with the madness of passion. Swaying like a white witch with yearning arms and hands that plead, Miss Allan is such a delicious embodiment of lust that she might win forgiveness with the sins of such wonderful flesh. With her hot mouth parched for kisses that the impeccable saint refuses to give her, she lures an invisible Herod to grant her fiendish prayer. In the very height of her furious exhaltation at winning her request, the change comes. Before her rises the head she has danced for and the lips that would not touch her in life she kisses again and again.

For all its extravagance, this view of Maud Allan has a certain elemental truth. With her magical grace of movement, her wonderfully expressive face and her imaginative visualization of music, Maud Allan somehow projected a mystifying mixture of the erotic and the exotic - artfully shrouded in a veil of discretion and good taste.

One contributing reason no doubt for the circular's extravagant language was Alfred Butt's determination to excite public interest and thereby vindicate his decision to engage this unknown dancer for a two week stint at his Palace Theatre. He had engaged Maud, according to subsequent rumor, over the protests of the Palace's Board of Directors. Presumably the Board protested the wisdom of presenting an item that so deliberately exploited a Biblical character - ever since Oliver Cromwell's time and, indeed, until 1964, portrayal of Biblical characters on the British stage had been forbidden. Quite probably, too, the Board objected to Alfred Butt's proposed promotion of Maud, as inappropriate to the good name of the Palace Theatre, reputedly the centre of artistic or at least respectable entertainers. No doubt objections ceased when Alfred Butt pointed out that he had engaged Maud Allan on the recommendation of King Edward VII before whom Maud had given an after dinner performance while he was on holiday in Germany, some six months earlier. Greatly impressed by Maud's performance, the King had told her he would commend her act to his friend Alfred Butt. Who was to go against the King's wishes? Who would care to question the King's judgement?

As it turned out, while there was no reason to question the King's judgement, there was cause to doubt Alfred Butt's for having promoted Maud Allan the sensational Salome dancer over Maud Allan the artist. Maud's London debut on March 8 was indeed sensational - but not in precisely the way Alfred Butt had schemed. Overnight, she was hailed as an artist, personifying purity and grace, those two social ideals of the Edwardian era. Even the melodramatic excesses of "The Vision of Salome" were excused, on the grounds that Maud's art made them decent, acceptable, and unforgettable. The publicity circular was withdrawn overnight as inappropriate to the nature of Maud's success. For some months, while she was lionised by the highest Society, she held the cultural community - and the press of London - enchanted, her public from all walks of life mesmerized. She became the friend of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith and his unconventional wife Margot, the mistress (one of many) of the second Duke of Westminster, one of the wealthiest men in England. She also became the tenant of West Wing, an austerely grand component of Holford House, a sprawling mansion in London's Regents Park, for which, according to Maud, Margot Asquith (an independently wealthy woman) paid the rent for over 20 years.

During these months of intoxicating triumph Maud was seen as personifying the Edwardian ideals of grace and charm, taste and style, femininity and art. Of her personal affairs nothing was known - or at least publicised.

While this silence added to the aura of mystery that enveloped her, it did not deter publication of Maudie, a pornographic novel that, without question, was inspired by knowledge of Maud Allan's private life.

The relevance of this "notorious erotic frolic of the Edwardian Era" (for so it was described when republished in 1985) lies in the portrayal of Maudie. As the mistress of a grand estate - and of four admirers who gravitate there for a week-end, Maudie's main concern is to satisfy their - and her - sexual appetites. This she does with great panache and amidst great luxury ("the house was not much like a tart's but rather like that of a great lady of fashion") - paid for by fat millionaire lover. As one able to offer a wide range of entertainment, day and night, Maudie is the perfect hostess. On one occasion, for example she performs "The Dance Of Emancipation" (an oblique reference to "The Vision of Salome") while on another she invites her house guests to join her in a session of photographing nude models. (Maud had become an enthusiastic photographer during her student days in Germany).

No matter how she may have reacted to this publication, as an intrusion upon her cherished privacy, it must have caused immeasurable concern. While she certainly had her liaisons during this period, and may well have been the head of a coterie of sexual adventurers, she always insisted upon the privacy of her personal life about which, unlike her famous contemporary Isadora Duncan, she was obsessively tight lipped.

She could not know of course that nearly a decade later the mere existence of Maudie may well have encouraged publication of recklessly cruel statements about her private life - statements that inevitably (if foolishly) led her to sue for libel - and to become the victim of the infamous "Black Book" trial of April 1918.

While there are innumerable accounts of Maud's mesmerizing effects upon her audiences and several published records of her charisma off stage, there is only one attempt to describe in any detail her physical appearance. That attempt was made by Maud Allan herself. It appears in the opening paragraphs of "A Rainbow Out of India", a clumsily fictionalised autobiography of some 60 typed pages that she composed in the late 1930's. The story opens with the sudden appearance of a woman patient at the San Francisco office of a Dr. Herold. Gradually Dr. Herold recognises this unexpected visitor as Octavia Lockburn, a celebrated dancer whom as a young man he had fruitlessly pursued around the world. The following paragraphs describe Dr. Herold's appraisal of his unexpected visitor, before he recognises her as his former enchantress:

He saw that she was regal in stature, over 5'6" he guessed, and that her carriage was queenly. Her age baffled him, shrewd as he was, but it was the graceful flash of her glance which told him that here was a person beyond the categories of most womankind.

Her brows were level and far apart, her eyes incredibly wide spaced, under a broad forehead over the corners of which her red - gold hair was arranged in becoming valences. Her nose was long, large, chiselled with macrometer fineness; full spread at the nostrils, a monument of a nose. She had high cheek bones, hollow cheeks, eyes deeply recessed, and a firm, flawless mouth, that was of elemental compassion. He studied her generous, intensely mobile features which could light up all over in an instant without disturbing the flow of her words. Her enunciation had a continental precision. Her language was smooth, cultivated, coherent. Her voice was lovely, vibrant, musical. Her head was large and beautifully shaped.

Her smile was irresistably winsome, gentle and sweet. Her whole comport stamped her as the flower of a long line of gentle birth. Yet she had tremendous force within her, strength, resolution, judgement and the gift of laughter.

Who, then was this woman, who described herself in such glowing terms?