

Famous Actress Weeps At Seeing Statue Of Liberty: PRAISES THE WAY ...

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PRAISES THE WAY EUROPE TREATS BLACK ARTISTS

Alberta Hunter Plans To Return At First Chance

NEW YORK, N. Y.—(By G. S. Schuyler for ANP) Reclining gracefully in a colorful dressing gown on an oriental divan in her cozy apartment in the exclusive Park-Lincoln on Edgecombe Avenue, Alberta Hunter, handsome and talented singer and hostess, just back from many triumphs abroad, grew bitter as she contrasted her reception in Europe with that in the United States.

"Of course, I prefer Europe," she declared emphatically. "What Negro with sense doesn't? There I was received with kindness, consideration, and appreciation; here I have met with little except unkindness and lack of appreciation. The only time I knew I was colored in Europe was when I came in contact with certain types of white Americans. The United States Consul in Paris absolutely refused to render me any assistance when a thief broke into my room in my hotel and stole some valuable clothing. American Negrophobes are solely responsible for any unpleasantness Negroes encountered in Paris.

"While the average Negro in Paris is well-mannered, it is true that many of them have abused their privileges, so that some public places, largely frequented by white Americans have grown bold enough on occasion to say frankly that their patronage was not wanted. It is true that some of our boys have drunk like pigs, run wild, and whipped French women, but as I said, such are in the minority."

The telephone rang. It was Adelaide Hall calling. There was a friendly, spirited conversation. Then the house telephone rang and the doorman announced a friend. Again the telephone rang. This time it was a stage-door Johnny from Chicago. Such interludes give an interviewer a better picture of a person's character, often, than an hour's conversation. And this interviewer immediately voted Miss Hunter a most gracious and cultured lady, a young woman of refinement thoroughly in control of herself at all times.

America's Reception
"Here in America," Miss Hunter continued, "my reception has been so different. The theatrical agents are very unkind and brusque, regardless of one's record. They do not want refinement and finesse in a Negro performer; all they want is 'managerism,' a whole lot of foot-stomping and shouting. In Europe it is just the opposite—they don't try to put the Negro in a certain groove and keep him there. The white agents here will give the most mediocre white actors consideration before they will a Negro with the finest European reputation. They tell Negroes that a European reputation amounts to nothing but they will pay a white performer twice the salary he formerly received after he comes back from abroad. Many of these white performers I have myself seen hissed off the stage in Paris and London.

"So far as I am concerned," she added, "I would be willing to stay in Europe always. I was treated kindly everywhere, and my work was heartily appreciated. I got a great reception. I met such men socially as Somerset Maugham, the playwright, and Serge Voronoff, the noted scientist. For one and a half years I was with Paul Robeson in "Show Boat" in London, and later I was well received as a headliner at the Chez Florence in Paris, the Knickerbocker in Monte Carlo, and other places at Nice and Cannes.

Do Well In Europe
"Good Negro performers can do well in Europe despite the fact that times are tight. Many are doing so. Outstanding among them is Noble Sissle, who with his fine orchestra at Les Ambassadeurs in Paris, is making musical history. His music is subdued, his manner refined and aristocratic, his personality pleasing. His fine deportment and sunny character have gone much to offset the bad impression left by some of the rowdies. He is coming over here to start an American tour on Christmas Eve, but I understand that he will return in the Spring to Paris or Nice. Others can do as well and many are. At the first opportunity I'm going back. Why, when I was steaming up the harbor here, I actually cried when I saw the Statue of Liberty again."

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