

Irvin C. Miller, With His Brown Skin Models Proves Hit Of Season In Chicago

CHICAGO, Ill., Jan. 7.—Not because their color's shady but because their limbs are shapely, their faces natural in beauty and their wardrobes classy in modish quality rather than fastidious, is one reason why Irvin C. Miller's Brown Skin Models drew a large audience

in spite of very cold weather and on the verge of New Years to detract from attendance at the Grand week of Dec. 28th, when something entirely new in ideas was presented and a good hearty laugh was enjoyed. The entire show, written staged and produced by Mr. Miller presents something new in ideas and humor, and because it does, people are offered a refreshing degree of unexpected fun which they get. The production as presented is a musical travesty review and art show in posing figures, attitudes and dancing and to those who understand the classification of shows can readily see that it is one of the largest and best of its kind.

At this stage in Irvin C. Miller's career it can be easily observed that with his educational qualities and original mind that he can be rated as foremost among producers who have come up in the young and more progressive school since the days of Cole, Shipp and Rogers. As an actor or comedian Mr. Miller has been rated as his best as the overgrown, crazy headed, ignorant boy and the more he sticks to that creation in black face in the future, the greater and funnier he will be. While his travesty on inside dope would be best in straight work in-

stead of comedy in such scenes his art of delivery elicited enough amusement to set the house in order for the comedy love scene in which George Crawford participated with Mr. Miller and Miss Billee Young. This led to the "Black Hope" comedy scene with George Crawford and Blanche Thompson, not the former singer by that name but the pretty movie star who has been seen in Micheaux productions. Then there came a dance by Lavenia Mack, a very fine buck and wing dancer who made a hit. The travesty "Big Ape" proved to be the hit of the show and made people long for more on the finish. The bedroom scandal by telephone was an illusion for laughter which barely escaped its over-limit. The Relief Bureau was another piece of farcical oddity which created joy. It was a bureau for killing off husbands with Miller at his desk as the manager and George Crawford as the stenographer and Crawford as a comedian is a unique caricature of explosives who makes people roar and he has a specialty of a limber limbed dromanic which introduces him as a contortionist in exultating folly which mesmerizes the audience. Two other strong specialties are George Williams, a new black

face comedian who did not attract on his entrance but worked up in the levee and everglade element to such an extent, especially in his dancing that he had the audience in an uproar on his finish and Lilly Yuen, a very talented dancer who proved to be an expert in the new Charleston, won heavy applause with encores. Hayes Pryce, formerly of the Lafayette Players, as the playwright, gave a medley of scenes in dramatic art in description which proved his already known ability as an actor. The musical score was all composed by Donald Heywood, except a Yodle song which introduced Edna Barr in that particular line. Miss Billee Young who appeared first as a maid was a warm member in the cast and one good comedy scene was where she applied at the relief office only to be discovered to be a thief, causing Irvin Miller at the desk to remove his things from the table, was well acted by both. Miss Young also led a Harem dance that was characteristic.

Of the vocal numbers Cecil Rivers, a genuine tenor with a voice of infinite sweetness, sang the primitive introductory, "Painting a Picture for You," but the secret of his art is not in the quick songs but found in the ballad and semi-classic music especially in two duets, "Fine Feathers Make Beautiful Girls," and "Some Day," in which his high register was light but sweet and cultured. He was assisted by Flo Brown, a very fine alto singer who blended well with Rivers and the two were encored. The Harem scene was immense. Flo Brown and Girls in Radio Eyes was among the good numbers and the specialty in dancing by Irving C. Miller and Blanche Thompson. The models were of the finest types of beauty and the chorus was good both as singers and dancers and in the concluding ensemble, a model appears on a horse. The scenery and drops were gorgeous in glow and setting. Among other active members in the cast were, Carrie Huff, Ruth Johnson, Miss Bee Freeman, Nettie Worthy, Yvette Dotson, St. Clair Dotson a very excellent male dancer who was encored. Cornell Richardson Vigal, Margaret Bolden, Sadie Tappin, Alberta Upshaw, Ruby Meyers, Hilda Bendershaw and Theo Raines.

On New Year's Eve, Irvin C. Miller struck a new vein as a high comedy comedian in two scenes: that of the Harem which showed him to be the greatest comedian yet seen in a branch termed buffoonery which belongs to the legitimate class in comic opera. Mr. Miller is a close student to these separate educational branches of art as also seen in his straight comedy work.