



New York Times, 6/27/48

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The Grandest Loss Story

Ever Told!!

PETER LAWFORD · ANN MILLER

Screen Play by Sidney Sheldon, Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett Original Story by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett

Directed by CHARLES WALTERS . Produced by ARTHUR FREED

A METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER PICTURE



New York Times, 6/30/48



New York Times, 7/1/48

'Easter Parade,' With Berlin's Hit Tanes, Astaire's Nimble Feet, at Loew's State

EASTER PARADE, screen play by Sidney Sheldon, Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, based on a story by Miss Goodrich and Mr. Hackett; music and lyrics by Irving Berlin; dances staged and directed by Robert Alton; directed by Charles Walters; produced by Arthur Freed for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Hannah Brown. Judy Garland Don Hewes. Fred Astaire Jonathan Harrow 3d. Peter Lawford Nadine Hale. Ann Miller Francois Jules Munshin Mike, the Bartender. Clinton Sundberg

With seventeen Irving Berlin songs to record and with Fred Astaire, Judy Garland and Ann Miller itching to exercise their accomplished legs and adequate vocal chords, it's no wonder that the slim story line on which "Easter Parade" is spun is almost completely lost in the shuffle. But don't give that loss a second thought for the new Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer musical, which opened yesterday at Loew's State, is at its best when the boy and girls are on their toes. And since the song and dance routines are plentiful and varied in tempo and design the picture runs its close to two-hour course with only an occasional slip from high to low gear.



Fred Astaire in "Easter Parade"

Fred Astaire, who has no peer, is dancing at the top of his form and let's hope that he'll never again talk about retiring as he did after "Blue Skies," which came out in 1946 and co-featured a singer named Crosby. Maybe Mr. Astaire has turned his feet to more intricate steps in previous pictures, but for sheer simplicity and poetry of motion his dancing in "Easter Parade" would be difficult to equal, much less better. In solo and in tandem with either Miss Garland or Miss Miller the incomparable Astaire glides effortlessly through numerous routines. His opening number, 'dancing out an Easter shopping mission for his sweetheart, is gay and debonair and involves an intriguing contest with a small boy in a toy shop over the possession of the last remaining stuffed bunny.

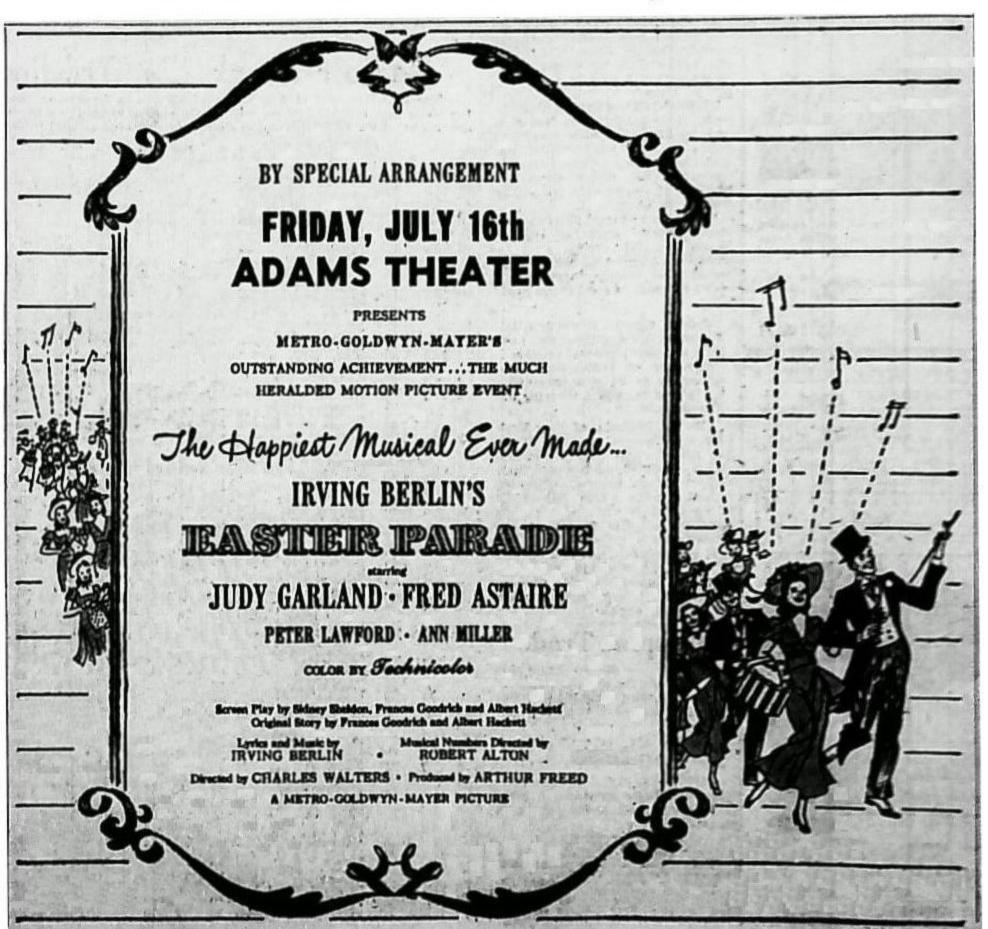
If the screen play were something more original than a conventional backstage romance, "Easter Parade" easily could have been a great musical instead of just a good one. For Mr. Astaire also is acting with consummate naturalness and the warmth of his personality more than compensates for some of the dog-eared things the script has him do. Although Judy Garland gets the top billing, she also gets stiff competition from the long-legged Ann Miller, who does an especially graceful ballroom dance with the master. Miss Garland is a competent trouper, nimble on her feet and professionally sound vocally, but somehow we feel that Miss Miller pairs better with Astaire.

Technicolor and Irving Berlin's score, including seven new songs, serve as sturdy props. The camera colors are particularly soothing and the music is always pleasant, though it might be mentioned that the new numbers are not each as fetching as "A Couple of Swells." The last is one of the best numbers in the show, with Astaire and Miss Garland decked out in rag-tag splendor. It provides a sprightly and engaging prelude to the finale, which finds Miss Garland an object of attention in the "Easter Parade" just as Astaire promised her she would be when he took her out of a cabaret chorus the year before after his partner deserted him for a Ziegfeld show.

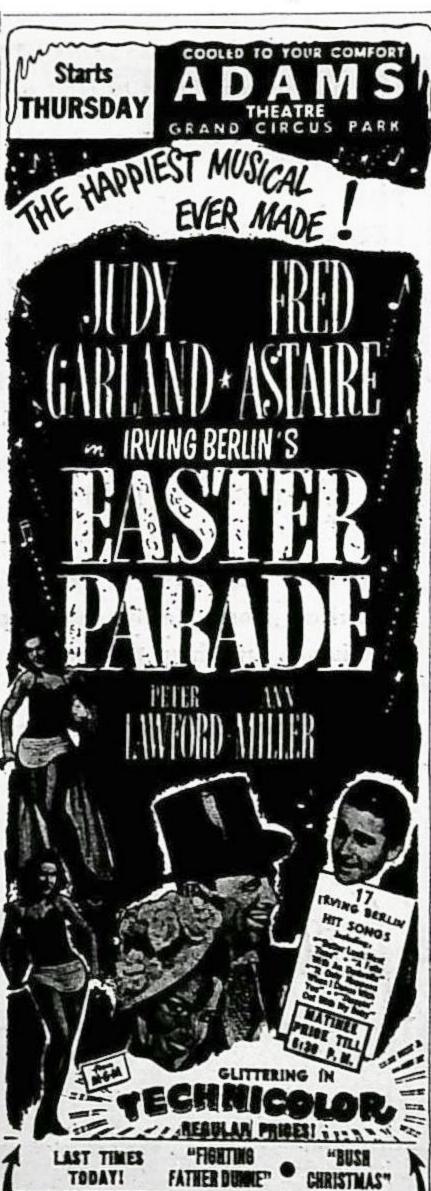
The straight performers in "Easter Parade" are few, but Peter Lawford is pleasant as the fellow who is around when the principals chose to misunderstand each others romantic intentions, and Jules Munshin has a very funny routine as a dining-room captain with a secret salad formula. "Easter Parade" may not strike the perfect balance between song-dance interludes and story, but it's an appealing show just the same.

T. M. P.

Detroit Free Press, 7/11/48



Detroit Free Press, 7/15/48



Detroit Free Press, 7/16/48



Easter Parade' Steps High, Wide, Handsome

BY HELEN BOWER

AMERICANS are fond of exclaiming that "There ought to be a law."

There OUGHT to be a law against so much as another whisper of retirement by Fred Astaire.

Two years ago he decided to retire from stage and screen. If he'd stuck to that awful decision we wouldn't have "Easter Parade" in Technicolor at the Adams Theater, with Judy Garland co-starred as his dancing partner.

"Easter Parade," ladies and gentlemen, is a dancing musical with Irving Berlin songs that makes a droop out of the best of its predecessors.

For the first time since Adele Astaire became Lady Cavendish and went to live in England in the late '20s Brother Fred has in Miss Garland a comparably perfect dancing partner.

The way he dances with Judy Fred must know this, too. It's the way he and Adele danced to the George Gershwin music of "Lady, Be Good!" on the New Detroit Theater stage in 1925.

PETITE AND brunet like Adele, Judy also has the same instinct for bright comedy.

In fact, I must keep on saying that when the song and dance days have run their course for her I want to see Judy in some straight roles.

She's the only actress I can think of on stage or screen who has the understanding of subtle comedy which so deliciously distinguished the late Minnie Maddern Fiske and still sparkles in Jane Cowl, whom Judy resembles more than a little.

Smooth Story, Too

TO GET back to "Easter Parade," Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett have written a story with enough Pygmalion-Galatea-Cinderella touches to be agreeably familiar.

As Nadine Hale, Ann Miller walks out on Don Hewes (Astaire) to star in a stage musical. Despondently drinking in a little cafe, Don boasts that he can pick out any girl and make her as good a dancer as Nadine.

Hannah Brown (Miss Garland) is the girl. The "Easter Parade" angle works into the story without requiring Berlin's title tune for more than a little background.

SEVENTEEN BERLIN songs keep Astaire and Miss Garland dancing almost all the time, which is wonderful.

Miss Miller is no terpsichorean slouch, either. Her style, as confined to this film, is ballroom Her big solo number is "Shakin' The Blues Away," with "Magazine Cover" her starring production number.

Of the new Berlin numbers, "It Only Happens When I Dance With You" gets dancing reprises. "Better Luck Next Time" is Judy's torch tune. "Drum Crazy" gives Astaire his trickiest routines, though he is terrific in "Steppin' Out With My Baby."

IN HOBO costumes and make-up Fred and Judy clown "A Couple of Swells."

With Peter Lawford, as Jonathan, playboy friend of all concerned, Judy sings "A Felia With An Umbrella." This and "Better Luck Next Time" should be most likely to stay in the public ear.

Forgotten melodies good to hear again are "Michigan," "Everybody's Doing It," "Snooky Ookums" and "Alabama Choo Choo."

From beginning to end "Easter Parade" paces light along. It's especially joyous whenever Astaire is in view, which luckily is most of the time. It would give a lift to a 10-ton truck.

Detroit Free Press 7/16/48

Detroit Free Press, 7/16/48



Detroit News, 7/16/48

Fred Astaire Returns in Fine Form

At the Adams Theater. Hannah Brown Judy Garland Don Hewes Fred Astaire Jonathan Harrow 3d Peter Lawford EssieJeni LeGon

By JOHN FINLAYSON

tappers comes back with a one could fill her slippers. bounce and, one is tempted to: say, as agile and versatile as ever. his 50's.

and in Technicolor and with a ing of Miss Miller. profusion of Irving Berlin tunes,

Astaire, whose dancing feet give with a trouper's sureness in all the illusion of youth to a some departments and is a delight to what aging male of balding pate. watch.

THE STORY tells of the badly smitten member of a dance team who loses his heart and TN 1946 FRED ASTAIRE an head when his sleek partner, I nounced that he would do his played by Ann Miller, walks out last movie dancing chore in on him and upward to musical "Blue Skies," and his screen re-comedy success on Broadway. tirment became an accepted fact. He hires a gawky, inexperienced But here in "Easter Parade," a chorine, played by Miss Garland, sprightly, well dressed, fast-mov- out of a night club line, just to ing musical, the top man of the show the haughty lady that any-

THIS CIRCUMSTANCE, of But one cautiously recognizes course, telegraphs the nature of that Fred is on the threshold of a climax which brings to an end Freddie's meaningless mooning and sends a handsome stagedoor "EASTER PARADE" some Johnny, enacted by Peter Lawwhat out of season so far as title ford, who is in love with Miss is concerned, is nevertheless an Garland, back to Miss Miller. entrancing musical which again She has been carrying the torch makes clear as crystal the natu- for him. The story isn't exactly ral affinity the motion picture a hum-dinger, but is doesn't do medium has for this type of en- any real damage to the Astairetertainment. Beautifully mounted Garland specialties or the danc-

> the title number, a perennial favorite; "It Only Happens When Raft. Joan Bennett, "SHE COULDN'T TAKE IT" I Dance With You," "Drum ACE Harper at Frontenac-WA 1-0347 ACC Crazy," which is a neat early reel Abbott & Costello, "THE NOOSE HANGS HIGH" specialty for the dance man; "A Jack Carson, Ann Sothern in "APRIL SHOWERS" Couple of Swells," a swell hobo dance novelty number done by ADAMS Grand Circus Park - CA 8522 the pair; "Magazine Cover," a centerpiece for the Ann Miller talents; "I Love a Piano," Rag-time Violin," "Snooky Ookums," "Happy Easter," which has a catchy lilt even with Astaire doing the vocals, and "Alabama Choo Choo."

> ONE NOTES that while the DOUGH," Penny Singleton-KIDDIE MAT. SAT. years seem to have lifted the spectacular out of the Astaire

by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett; music and lyrics by Irving Berlin, with maintains a sprightly pace. Its personality ameliorates his short dances staged and directed by Robert make-believe story is charmingly comings as an actor. Miss Gardlon. Directed by Charles Walters and released through Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, enacted by Judy Garland and land, on the other hand, performs

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Ann Arbor News 8/17/48



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