

TELL TALES
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white ermine fur coats. They didn't look imitation, either. Then there was the scene of the Russian revolution at the Czar's Palace and it looked like thousands were running around the stage in reckless abandon. One thing you'll find in the de Paris show is amazing agility by large choruses of dancing girls. What each did en masse would be acceptable as a single spot in an act. We mustn't forget to tell you about the baby (or midget) elephant trained to spontaneous obedience of the most startling commands. The payoff is the animal unfurling a banner that read, "I Work For Peanuts."

The next stop was the Fremont Hotel to see the darling of the Tells, Neil Sedaka. What a performer that young man is. Behind a voice that launched at least 15 Rock 'N Roll sellers of more than 1,000,000 each, is an accomplished pianist. He's a Julliard graduate and has been selected to represent America in the Music Festival in Russia this summer.

Introduced by orchestra leader Nat Brandwynne, Neil comes on with all the polish and finesse of an accomplished show business veteran instead of a lad in the middle twenties. Naturally, he sings the hits that made him the idol of teenagers all over the world, like Calendar Girl, Next Door to an Angel and Happy Birthday Sweet Sixteen. The opening notes of each song brought on resounding applause reflecting fond memory of happy yester-year music.

But the highlight of Neil's appearance, which tear-dimmed the eyes of some and opened the hearts of all, was the rendition, concert style, of a classical piece by Chopin. Here in a hotbed of Rock 'N Roll, stand-up comics, Negro tap dancers and hillbilly yodelers, the Fiesta Room became Carnegie Hall. Anything less than the most exquisite rendition would have been farcial. But the lad's fingers, commanding the notes of the piano in flawless performance, flew over the keys in perfect accord to bring forth all the richness of the great compose. Rapt attention was personified.

There wasn't a tinkle of a glass nor a whisper of a voice. The audience of happy, gay drinkers seconds before, became hushed into profound respect for a master at work. It was musical pleasure at the highest level.

It is no wonder that Brandwynne, no mean pianist in his own right, who left the stage or retreated behind curtain for every other performer, stood rivited in deep reverence a few feet from Sedaka during the piano solo.

It is no wonder this is the lad, chosen above all others to bring to the United State the title: "Greatest Piano Player in the World" in competition against top pianists from every civilized country. We're proud to call him our own. We sincerely hope some sharp-eyed entertainment director of a Strip hotel will bring this lad back to be presented in a room and setting in keeping with his talents. He's got everything in the circumference of the musical sphere from Rock 'N Roll, where his recordings reached an all time high of 87,000 sales in a single day, to the longest of long hair with no peer in our shores. In between is a repertoire of Yiddish and Israeli numbers, not heard in his performance at the Fremont for obvious reasons, that would generate a stream of Landsmen's cars from L.A., the like of which inn keepers here could never conceive.

Sedaka would be a natural for Milton Prell's grand opening of his New Alladin. On this we stake our reputation as a judge of what the public seeks for entertainment.

FRANK
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sion, stage technique, tone of voice, everything, to find the answer to the question: Why Frank Sinatra?

True, he wears cuffs on his trousers, but can't be the reason. Yes, he's got the most searching, roving, piercing bluer - than - blue, blue eyes, but neither is that the answer. He's not overly handsome and his voice is not the richest, strongest around. There are easily thousands of male entertainers who dress as well, look better, and exhude more melodic sounds than Frank Sinatra. Gary Marshal, in the Dunes Lounge show, to name one, is truly a handsome, powerful voiced, personable chap, but Gary's name on the marquee wouldn't attract a handful of persons, not now in any case, and probably never as many as Sinatra does. Why?

It's only because you are straining every power of perception, groping for the slightest hint, even sacrificing your own enjoyment of the master performer in your soul searching quest for a possible answer to the phenomenon, you sense something, and slowly it begins to open up the black abyss in your mind like the first streaks of dawn breaking over a distant horizon.

You're not sure, like the initial experiment in a medical quest to cure a dreaded disease. Now you think you know what you're looking for so you watch even more closely to see if your theory holds up. It does, even more than you believed at first. You apply every test. In his voice; it's there without a doubt. The motion of his hands, unquestionably. His stance, indubitably. The words he utters in speaking portion of his progrm. This is the acid test. Not a negative note in what you seek. The man comes through with flying colors.

You're convinced beyond doubt that you have the answer to: Why Sinatra?, but how can you describe what you know to be a fact when it concerns an implication of a person's state of being?

For instance: If you laugh at a comedian, should you thereafter write that the man is funny? Others may, but this writer would prefer to state the words the comic used, possibly describe the gestures, indicate the props, and then allow the reader to determine for himself whether the performer was funny or not. A cry in a singer's voice, an acrobat's flip flops, a juggler's control of clubs, dishes, hoops, all could be transplanted into words. Not Sinatra's magic, at least not all of it. Not the part you sense from intuition.

Here's some of it. After every song Frank considerably mentions the name of the composer. Some of the names have long since been forgotten by all except a few in the profession, like Oscar Ruby. Why does Frank do this? He does not appear to be a man overly considerate of other's feelings. Then

there are the portions of his monologue that were never put together by professional writers.

"I want to apologize for all the construction going on around here. That big round thing out front, not Jack Entratter, the new building. It looks like a Jewish light-house, not the building, Jack Entratter."

Frank's capsule review of other shows on the Strip to an audience in town to catch as many as possible, is without comparison to every other entertainer, whose courtesy mentions are considered professional ethics in the business. Certainly, it's not phoney ethics Frank Sinatra has.

Well, what did we discover about Frank Sinatra?

Before we give it to you point-blankly, now don't go looking ahead to the end of this piece, we'll attempt to convey the realization we felt listening to him on the stage, without explaining what gave us that realization.

Did you ever sit in a restaurant with friends talking about everyday matters? Nothing earth - shattering, no complicated problems effecting personalities or events. Just matter-of-fact simple topics of conversation, like: "If you give up drinking, I am sorry for you because if you wake up in the morning feeling bad, you're not gonna feel any better all day."

Now a lot of performers could use a line like that from the stage. Some would get a snicker, or a laugh or even a howl. With Franks, it's different. You somehow get the feeling he's sitting at the table talking with you, It's not what he says, It's the way he talks, sings, walks, dresses, moves. There's nothing put on. It's down to earth. It's everyday communication. He talks or sings neither down nor up to you. It's straight at you. Others have this quality. But there's an aire to Sinatra's demeanor. You somehow get the feeling he's not stage acting.

We know from personal experience. This writer sat in Lindy's with Frank, and two others a few hours after he arrived from Spain some years ago. He had mixed emotions during that hour at the table. The emotions concerned personal problems which should not be related here. It was not the incidents, but his reaction to them, which left an indelible impression of the man in our mind.

With all his millions, with all his popularity, with all his power in the entertainment industry, this is one of the most honest men we've ever met. More than being straightforward to three others who couldn't mean too much in his allover scheme of life, "To Thine Own Self Be True" was personified by Sinatra.

All this came back to us as we watched the man perform on the stage of the Sands. Now we've got the answer to our question and we hope we've conveyed our sentiments to you.

* That is why knowing someone, who knows someone is not enough to get you in. You have to know the original someone yourself, and you better know him pretty good, or you don't stand a chance.

If Diogenes should wander into the room some night, he can throw away his lantern. Sinatra is the honest man in Show business.



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