

PAUL FEIGAY & OLIVER SMITH

present

BILLION DOLLAR BABY

A Musical Play of the Terrific Twenties

with

**MITZI
GREEN**

**JOAN
McCRACKEN**

**WILLIAM
TABBERT**

**DAVID
BURNS**

**ROBERT
CHISHOLM**

**DANNY
DANIELS**

**SHIRLEY
VAN**

**DON
DE LEO**

**EMILY
ROSS**

**JAMES
MITCHELL**

Book and Lyrics by Betty Comden & Adolph Green

Music by Morton Gould

Choreography and Musical Numbers Staged by Jerome Robbins

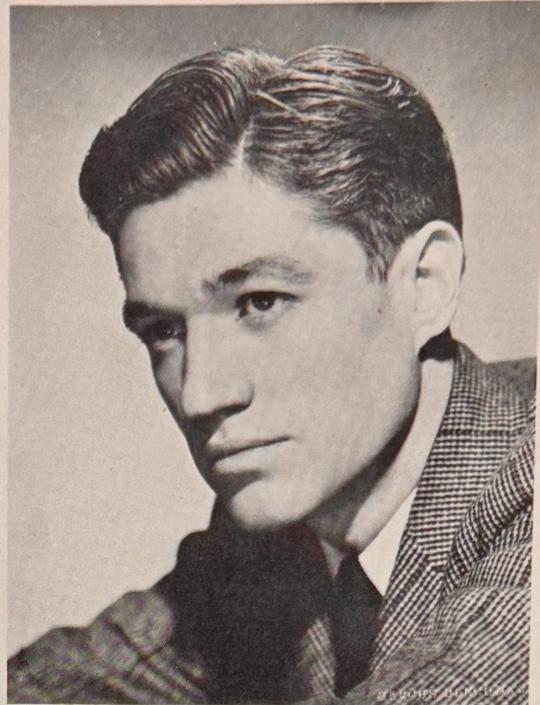
Settings Designed by Oliver Smith

Costumes Designed by Irene Sharaff

Musical Director: Max Goberman

Production Directed by GEORGE ABBOTT





PAUL FEIGAY AND OLIVER SMITH

With their second important musical comedy launched within the space of a single year, the producing team of PAUL FEIGAY AND OLIVER SMITH is regarded as a major one in the lists of Broadway entrepreneurs. Their first was "On The Town," which opened during Christmas week, 1944. It was hailed as a hit both financially and artistically, and recently won the Newspaper Guild Page One Award as "the most original musical comedy of the year." Moreover, it was on the boards before either of these partners had attained their twenty-seventh birthdays, which makes their achievements the more extraordinary.

Mr. Feigay, while a student at Yale, made up his mind that he wanted to produce shows, and good ones. Upon leaving college, he tested his wings by staging one of the most successful productions at the World's Fair, in the Hall of Medicine. Then, instead of haunting the offices along Broadway, he once more tried a new field and, with Norman Bel Geddes and Miles White, helped streamline the Ringling Brothers Circus. Mrs. Lytle Hull, well-known patroness of the arts, enlisted his services for the Dlyborne Opera series and then engaged him for an executive post with the New Opera Company.

Oliver Smith, a native of Waupun, Wis., studied in the School of Fine Arts at the University of Pennsylvania; had a number of exhibitions and began to make some designs for stage backgrounds. He walked into the New Opera Company's offices one fine day with a portfolio of sketches under his arm, and had the good luck to get by the office boy and meet Feigay. The latter had admired Smith's paintings, and, on examining the sketches, unhesitatingly recommended him for "Rosalinda," which was then in production. Smith was given the assignment, and his settings, highly praised, revealed his fine talent as a designer. The two young men developed a firm friendship and found they had kindred convictions about good theatre.

The result was a decision to join forces as producers. So persuasive were they and their ideas that they enlisted more money than they could use for backing their first venture; obtained the services of George Abbott as director, and astonished the Broadway oracles with their expertness in the intricate business of getting a large-scale musical on the boards.

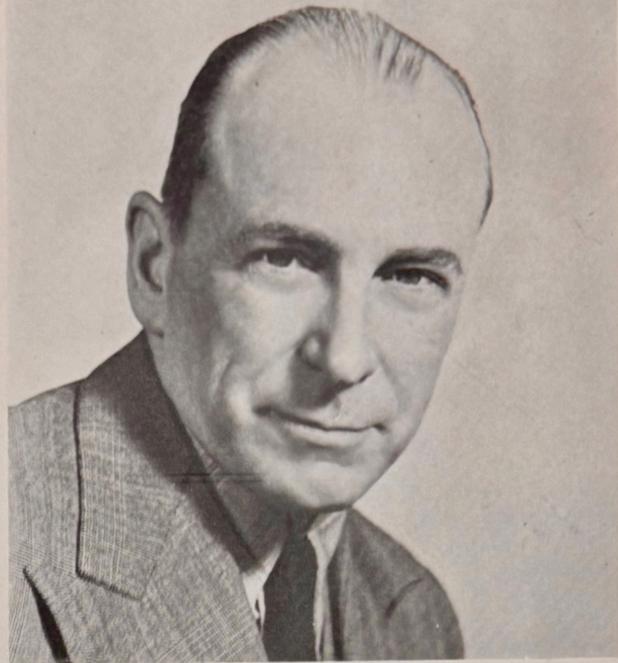
Smith, of course, designed the settings, and also has continued to create the backgrounds for a number of productions of the Ballet Theatre, of which he is now co-director.

GEORGE ABBOTT

Last season, GEORGE ABBOTT stepped slightly "out of character" when, for the first time in the decade during which he has been one of Broadway's foremost and canniest producers, he directed a show for another firm. It was "On The Town," and he took a chance with it, for it was a first try at musical comedy for many of the people involved. The famous Abbott judgment in picking winners was upheld, however. It is one of the biggest musical hits of recent years.

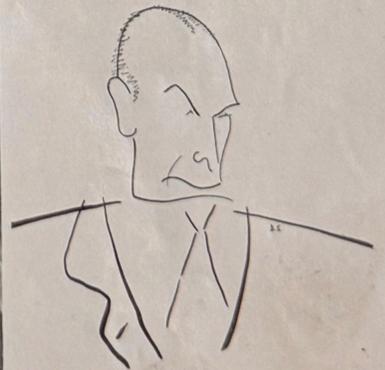
Once it was safely on the boards, Mr. Abbott turned his attention to his own affairs. But this fall, he again was approached by Messrs. Feigay and Smith and the writing team of Comden and Green, this time to stage "Billion Dollar Baby." And again, after a perusal of the script, he took a vacation from his own office to become their director.

After a brief period of apprenticeship as an actor, Mr. Abbott gained his first fame for the cleverness and pace with which he directed such offerings as "Broadway," "Coquette" and "Three Men On A Horse." He won enough pelf and prestige to hang out his own shingle as a producer, continuing, however, to act as director of his own shows, as well as general executive, trouble-shooter and discoverer of fine young talent. Gene Kelly, Ezra Stone, Nancy Walker, Gene Tierney, Maureen Cannon, June Allyson, Van Johnson and others have him to thank for their first break in the theatre. To his credit as a regisseur are such hits as "Boy Meets Girl,"



"Room Service," "Brother Rat," "Kiss and Tell," "Snafu" and the musicals, "The Boys From Syracuse," "Too Many Girls," "Pal Joey" and "Best Foot Forward." He has also spent some lucrative months as a producer-director in Hollywood.

Despite his many years in the theatre, his unquenchable enthusiasm for young talent remains ever fresh. Bill Tabbert, David Burns and Danny Daniels, of the "Billion Dollar Baby" cast, are alumni of previous Abbott productions. He invariably tries to keep those who have made good for him steadily at work somewhere; and one result is that a company under his guidance is sure to possess that cordial teamwork without which no major production can succeed.





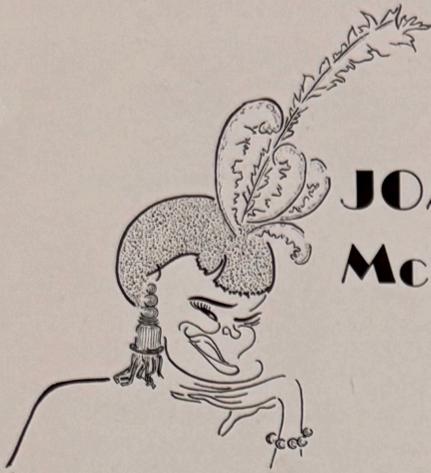
MITZI GREEN



MITZI GREEN is one of the rare child prodigies of the screen who has succeeded in escaping from the fatal "old age" that usually overtakes such youngsters—partly because of the wise guidance of her parents and largely because she deftly molded her personality and talents as the years went on. Daughter of the famous vaudevillians, Joe Keno and Rosie Green, she made her debut at the "mature" age of three. She was travelling with her father and mother at the time, and when they appeared on the same bill with Gus Edwards, he offered Mitzi two cents a week to "dress his act" by sitting on a background fence. By the time she was four, she had, on her own initiative, worked up such a lively imitation of the team of Moran and Mack that her parents

wrote her into their own act. She enlarged her repertoire of imitations, and was soon billed as Little Mitzi the Mimic. Her reputation grew and, at the age of nine, she was signed for the motion picture, "Honey," in which she appeared with Wesley Ruggles. Her catch line in that film, "I know a secret", was avidly snatched up by practically every child in the country and became a household phrase that was the bane of all parents, but brought her national fame. During the next three years, she acted in fourteen pictures, and with continuous success. At this point, her parents decided to retire her from the screen. With more wisdom than most young people possess, she decided she still had something to learn about acting, despite her fame, and enrolled in Walter Hartwig's summer stock company in Maine. Mr. Hartwig gave her some fine pointers that helped her "grow up" in the theatre. Next came engagements at such swank night-spots as the Versailles, where she sang popular numbers and did some of her clever impersonations. She was seen there by Rodgers and Hart, and as a result, won the leading role in their musical comedy, "Babes In Arms." Most recently, she has been a guest star on the radio programs of Jack Benny, Fred Allen and others, and starred in night club revues.



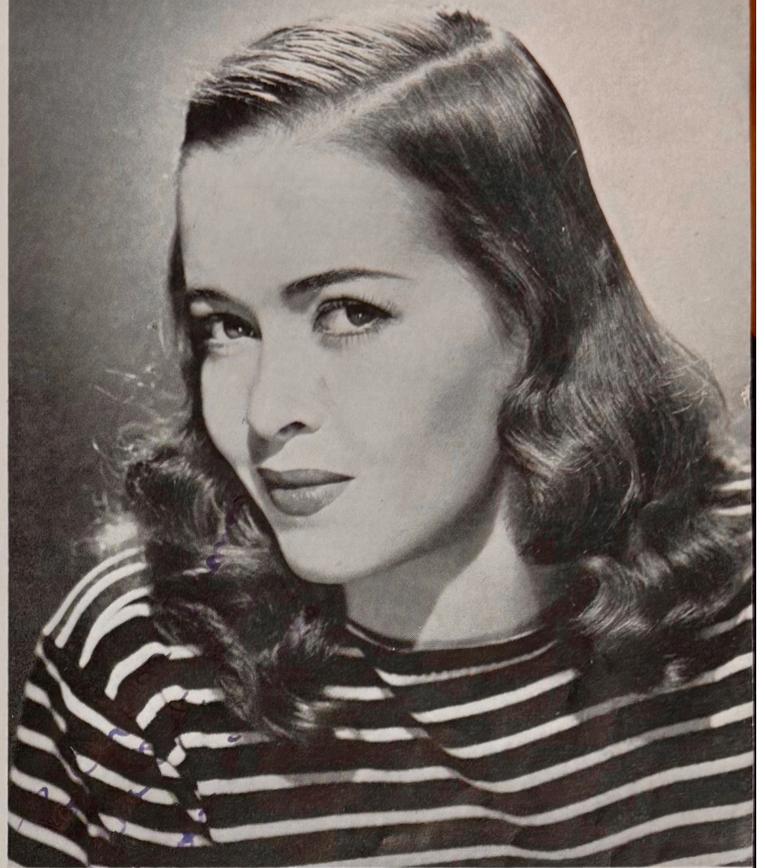


JOAN McCRACKEN

The story of JOAN McCRACKEN is one of those tales of overnight success in the theatre that has a firm basis in fact. Within the short space of two seasons, this young lady zoomed from the chorus to fame and favor as one of the most sought-after leading actresses for musical comedy and the screen.

The daughter of a Philadelphia newspaper man, she studied dancing with Catherine Littlefield and soon decided to make this art her career. She got her first professional assignment in the ensemble of Eugene Loring's Dance Players, a well-thought-of group that made concert tours in the East. She appeared with the company briefly in New York. She read that the Theatre Guild was auditioning dancers for a new musical and decided to try out for it. And she was given a chance in the corps de ballet.

The musical was "Oklahoma!" One of the numbers was a Western ballet with a Can-Can sequence. Miss McCracken proved so delightful in it that Warner Brothers promptly



signed her for a seven-year term. She went to the Coast, but returned East with a temporary release from the films, when offered a leading role in "Bloomer Girl." She protested that she didn't think she could sing well enough—bumptiousness has never been a McCracken characteristic. But her rendition of "Tomorra" and other ditties, her infectious personality and skillful characterization of an "advanced" young woman of Civil War days, were greatly applauded.

She left that production when asked to take on her present role, having obtained a further release from the film studio.





BILL TABBERT



BILL TABBERT makes his fourth appearance in a Broadway musical in "Billion Dollar Baby." The first was in a leading role of "What's Up." Next came "Follow the Girls," in which he began in a minor part and, shortly after, was awarded the juvenile lead. He left that musical comedy to join "The Seven Lively Arts," as a featured player, and was especially commended for his delivery of several Cole Porter numbers. Tabbert hails from Chicago, where he became champion boy singer of all the high schools of Illinois, Ohio, Michigan and Indiana. He was selected from a group of 400 applicants by the Chicago Civic Opera Company, making his stage debut with it and singing several important roles before making his Broadway bow. He has been heard as soloist with a number of well-known orchestras, and served in the army until he was gassed during maneuvers.

DAVID BURNS



*To Mom,
Love & Kisses
Navy Burns*

DAVID BURNS has created laughter in many comedy hits, both with music and without, since he was first seen on Broadway with Gregory Ratoff in "Wonder Boy." They include "Face the Music," "The Man Who Came To Dinner," in which he created the role of Banjo and played for two years at the Music Box Theatre; "Pal Joey," the Chicago production of "Oklahoma!"; in which he was the peddler, Ali Hakim, for sixty weeks; and, in London, "Dinner At Eight," "Nymph Errant" and "Three Men On A Horse." While in England, he also was featured in the motion picture, "The Saint in London," and in several films in which he appeared with Vivian Leigh, Charles Laughton and other English stars. "Billion Dollar Baby" is his first production since his discharge from service. Oh, yes, he is a native New Yorker.



ROBERT CHISHOLM



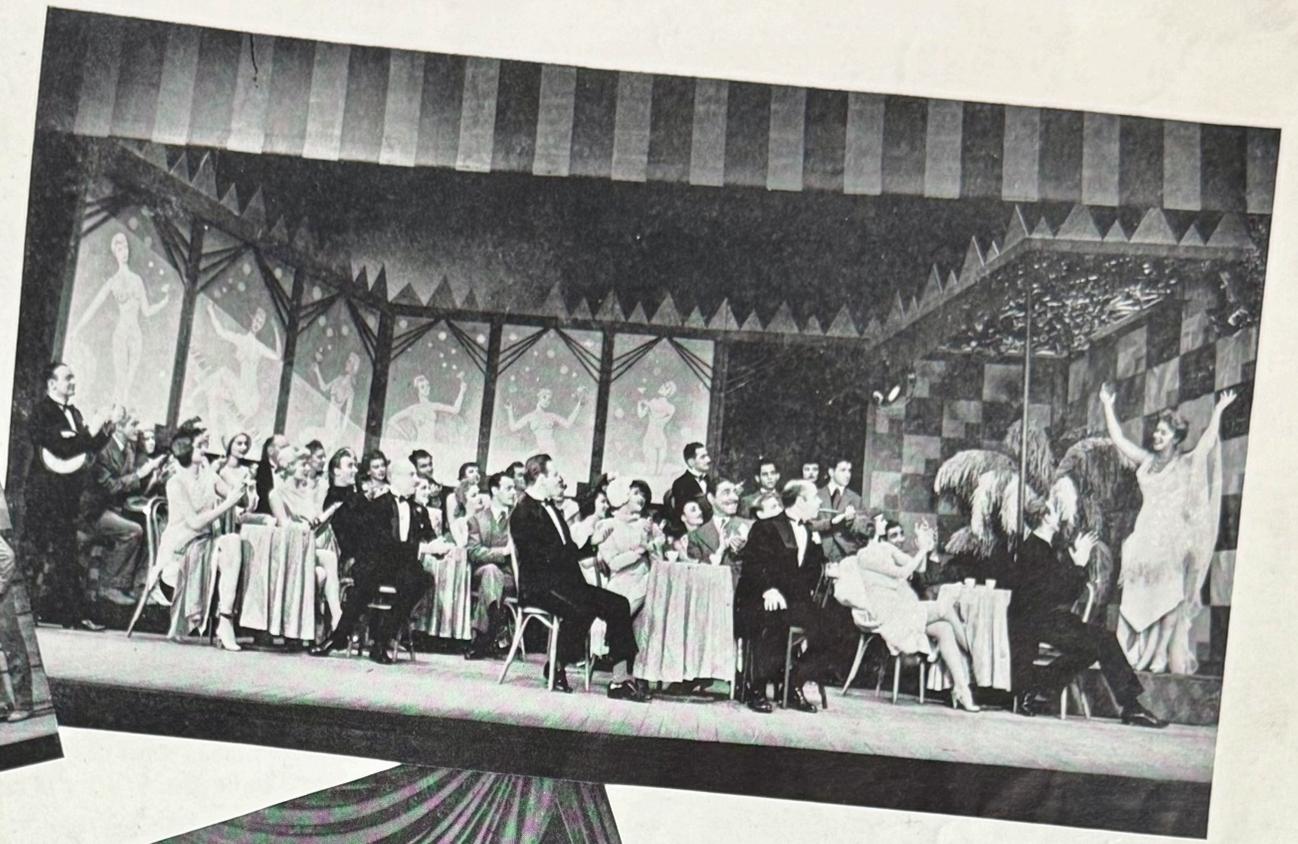
ROBERT CHISHOLM is well known to musical comedy audiences in this country, England, and in his native Australia. He was the highly amusing Senator Pitkin W. Bridge-work in "On The Town" until he took over his present assignment. Previously, he was seen on Broadway as King Arthur in the successful revival of "A Connecticut Yankee," in the leading role of "The Two Bouquets," in "Three-Penny Opera," "Higher and Higher" and in "Knights of Song," in which he played the leading role of Oscar Wilde. Chisholm first studied for the theatre in England and appeared there in an extensive repertory of musical comedies and operettas, as well as in vaudeville. He came to the United States for a vaudeville engagement at the Palace Theatre, where he was seen by Arthur Hammerstein, who signed him for his production of "The Golden Dawn." Later he played opposite Helen Morgan in "Sweet Adeline." His single venture into the field of comedies without music was "Without Love," starring Katherine Hepburn.



DON DE LEO

DON DE LEO was most recently seen on a Broadway stage in a featured role of "Common Ground," and prior to that, in "Catherine Was Great." He will be remembered also in "Hit The Deck," "Good News," "Great Day," the revival of "Burlesque" and in "Her First Murder," with Zasu Pitts. He is, besides, a well-known screen actor, has been heard on many radio programs and has been seen and heard in the supper clubs.







BETTY COMDEN AND ADOLPH GREEN



"How did you feel when you realized that you had written a smash hit in your very first musical?" BETTY COMDEN and ADOLPH GREEN were asked recently.

"We were afraid we'd never be able to do another!" they chorused. But here it is, and this young pair of writers can now rightfully preen a bit, for they turned out a second, "Billion Dollar Baby," while they were also featured players in their first, the enormously successful "On The Town." They settled down to their typewriters every night after the final curtain, and utilized their Sundays in the same profitable endeavor. It was only when "Baby" entered the rehearsal stage that they finally took a limited leave of absence from their acting chores.

From the outset of their career, which has been a joint one almost since both began seeking a place in the theatre, writing and acting have gone hand in hand—which may be one reason why they have such a keen and craftsmanlike knowledge of how to pen a scene or create a laughable character.

Both were born in New York City boroughs, Betty being a native of Brooklyn and Adolph of the Bronx. They met, while still in their 'teens, in a little theatre group to



which they had recourse after vainly trying to convince commercial entrepreneurs of their talents. Over the coffee cups, they and their fellow members discussed life and art; the upshot was the formation of a group known as The Revuers, for which this pair wrote sketches, skits and ditties that satirized about everything from movie stars to subway riders. Again came a battle period—to try to gain auditions from those who might pay for their appearances. Finally, the proprietor of the Village Vanguard, then just another red-wine-and-cellar bistro in Greenwich Village, let them go on in his floor show without paying for the privilege. It was a chance to show their wares, and they took it.

First the trade papers, and then the columnists, got the word around that here was something entirely fresh and top-notch. In a few months, they began a long series of profitable engagements at the Rainbow Room, Cafe Society, the Radio City Music Hall and like places; and then Comden and Green were commissioned to do a series of radio programs for NBC. They turned out a full half-hour show regularly for over a year, and credit this experience for some of their versatility and their knowledge of what audiences like.

The inevitable call came from Hollywood. As often happens, they were signed to appear in one picture, actually appeared in quite another, and never saw themselves on the screen at all. Their sequence was left on the cutting-room floor. Returning to New York, they had begun night club appearances anew, when Paul Feigay and Oliver Smith, whom they met through composer Leonard Bernstein, assigned to them the task of writing the book and lyrics for "On The Town." They finished the job in ten weeks and, still hearkening to the voice of the actor within them, fashioned the character of Clair de Lune, the anthropologist, for Betty, and Ozzie, the sailor who gets carried away, for Adolph. When they began "Billion Dollar Baby," they firmly decided they would be its authors and nothing else but, and resisted any temptation to "write in" roles for themselves.

MORTON GOULD



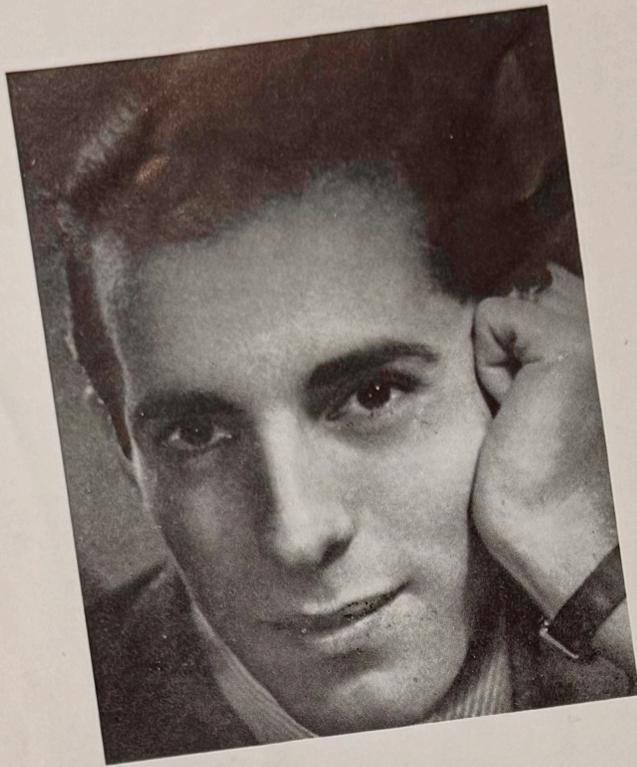
At a little over thirty, Morton Gould has had one of the fullest and most varied, as well as most successful careers of any of our younger American composers—and has managed, during the course of it, to win the plaudits of the long-hairs and bobby-soxers alike. Besides his fame as a composer, he is known as a conductor, both in the concert hall and on the airwaves, and as a splendid arranger. "Billion Dollar Baby" is his first venture into the theatre with a full-length musical, though his score for Jerome Robbins' ballet, "Interplay," was heard in Billy Rose's "Concert Varieties" and during the Ballet Theatre's recent season.

Gould was born in 1921 in Richmond Hill, Queens; and by the time he was six, the metropolitan newspapers carried reports of him as a child prodigy who was performing his own compositions. He concentrated on piano tech-



nique, as well as on composing, and early showed a great talent for improvising that helped him gain fame both in writing and playing music. By the time he was seventeen, at least a half-dozen of his works, including several orchestral pieces, had attracted critical attention. Shortly after, Leopold Stokowski brought him into the symphony orchestra radius. He began to entertain radio listeners with classical arrangements of popular tunes, or, as one writer phrased it, he "put a top hat on Tin Pan Alley," during his WOR weekly broadcast, for which he likewise was orchestra conductor.

He has continued to be active in all these fields. The long list of his compositions include two symphonies, four American Symphonettes, "A Homespun Overture," "Lincoln Legend," which had its premiere under Toscanini with the NBC Symphony Orchestra; "Cowboy Rhapsody," "Minstrel Overture," "Concertette for Viola," a Violin Suite, "Jazz Caprice," "Night Train," "A Manhattan Rhapsody," "Sonatina for Piano" and, of course, his famous "Pavanne," which is played by symphonies and dance bands alike. He hates being labelled, or labelling other folk, has never advanced any theories about jazz or modern music, and believes in the taste of the American public and the place of excellent light music in the roster of permanent greatness.



JEROME ROBBINS



JEROME ROBBINS is still another alumnus of "On The Town," of which he was choreographer. Between that production and "Billion Dollar Baby," he has appeared in Billy Rose's "Concert Varieties" and with the Ballet Theatre in "Interplay," one of the most popular and distinguished works of its season at the Metropolitan Opera House. Another number in which he was seen there was "Fancy Free," which he conceived and staged two years ago, and which first brought him fame.

Robbins was born in Weehawken, N. J., only a ferry ride from New York. By the time he was a high school senior, he was appearing in summer camp shows, and staging some of their dance numbers.

Venturing to Broadway, he was, for several seasons, in the dance ensembles of "Great Lady," "Stars in Your Eyes" and "Keep Off The Grass." During a summer spent in staging dances for the entertainment of one of the larger camp resorts, he rehearsed with a group of ambitious youngsters in "The Strawhat Revue." He had a small role in this short-lived production, but it led to an invitation to join the Ballet Theatre, at the outset of the career of that now-leading dance-organization. Its combination of classic ballet and the modern idiom stimulated him to such an extent that he became more interested in choreography than in appearing in

its productions. He tried out several of his own numbers, working steadily away, and including his observations of the American scene, from which, for the most part, he draws his inspiration.

A meeting with Leonard Bernstein, who was just achieving recognition as a leading American composer, inspired him to create the ballet, "Fancy Free," for which Bernstein wrote the score. It was the outstanding hit of that season of the ballet in Manhattan, creating a furor among the cognoscenti and achieving a popular success, as well. Robbins was deluged with offers from producers, many of whom had not even known he was in their productions when he was a humble dancer in the chorus. Feigay and Smith, however, who were among the enthusiastic admirers of "Fancy Free," came to him with the idea of doing a full-length Broadway musical in the general style of that work, and so interested him in the possibilities that he turned down contracts from established managers to take a chance with this new producing partnership. The gamble was more than justified. The musical was, of course, "On The Town," and it added to the professional stature of all concerned in the undertaking. Robbins, in fact, enjoyed working on that production so much, that, in the early months of its run, he sometimes stepped into a dancing role for a performance or two.

DANNY DANIELS



DANNY DANIELS was previously seen on Broadway in "Best Foot Forward" and "Count Me In." The hiatus of two years is explained by his pre-occupation during that time with the business of helping his Uncle Sam rid the world of political gangsters. Born in Albany, he was a child tap-dancing wonder in that city at five. For some years thereafter, billed either as "Danny Pat, Song and Dance Sensation;" or "America's Foremost Juvenile Dancer," he appeared at numerous benefits and clubs in New York City, spending his summers on the circuit of mountain hotels, that training ground for Jerome Robbins, Danny Kaye and other now successful young men. During his family's brief stay in Hollywood, he appeared in "The Star-Makers," the film starring Bing Crosby, and then, at sixteen, made his stage debut in "Best Foot Forward." He is a favorite also with frequenters of The Glass Hat, La Conga, La Martinique and other stops on the nitery route.



SHIRLEY VAN



SHIRLEY VAN, fresh from Los Angeles High School, was signed by Warner Brothers before the ink was dry on her diploma. Such a circumstance would prompt most girls of eighteen to do a little dancing in the streets. But not Miss Van, who wanted to start her acting career on Broadway. As luck would have it, George Abbott was in Hollywood at the time, directing the movie version of "Kiss and Tell."

She decided he was just the man to give her good advice about the theatre. He told her that if she would obtain a release from the film studio, she would get a role in "Billion Dollar Baby." That makes Miss Van (her complete name is Van Benthuisen) a typical example of the younger generation, which seems to believe that a direct approach is the shortest route to getting what it wants.



EMILY ROSS



Though EMILY ROSS is well known to theatregoers, this is her first appearance in a Broadway musical. The reason? She found stock and touring engagements so lucrative that she has been loath to desert those fields for this important, but far more chancy, branch of the theatre. She began her career at fifteen as a dancer, and then joined Jessie Bonstelle's company, one of the leading resident stock groups of the day. Among the successes in which she has played leading roles on the road are "Over Twenty-One," "The Naked Genius" and "The Women," which had a two-year tour here before Gilbert Miller took it to London. Miss Ross was playing in the Clare Booth satire in the English capital when war was declared, interrupting the engagement and bringing her back to these shores.



JAMES MITCHELL

JAMES MITCHELL has been a dancer since 1940, when he made his debut with Lester Horton's group in Hollywood. Previously, he had been a child vaudevillian. His first Broadway musical was "Bloomer Girl." He has also been seen at Earl Carroll's Hollywood Theatre-Restaurant, where he played a six-month engagement, and in several films.



BILL SKIPPER

BILL SKIPPER has been a featured dancer in such Broadway successes as "Higher and Higher," "Panama Hattie," "Banjo Eyes" and "Star and Garter." While in the Coast Guard, he distinguished himself in the hit show of that armed-forces contingent, "Tars and Spars." He hails from Mobile, Ala., and was first seen in New York as a member of the Ballet Theatre.



DOUGLAS DEANE

Though only twenty-four, DOUGLAS DEANE has been on the stage for more than two decades. At the age of three, he appeared in Christmas pantomimes in his native London. He spent three years in Shakespearean roles and several more in a half a dozen musicals, among them the English productions of "Take It Easy," "Going Places," "Wild Cats" and "Johnny Get Your Gun," with Gertrude Niesen. He was Jessie Matthews' dancing partner in such films as "Love Again" and "Head Over Heels." On Broadway he has been seen in "Johnny 2 x 4," "Louisiana Purchase" and "Let's Face It." He has also danced in several motion pictures with Vera Zorina and in revues at Hollywood's Coconut Grove. His sister is Muriel Angelus, the musical comedy star.



MAX GOBERMAN

MAX GOBERMAN spent last summer conducting the series of symphony concerts on the Blue Network and then, for a time, took over the musical direction of "Polonaise." He first enrolled under the banner of Feigay and Smith as conductor for "On The Town." Among his previous assignments in the theatre and in allied fields were the orchestra direction of "Helen Goes To Troy," produced by the New Opera Company; the Ballet Theatre's 1941 season and its Mexican tour. He was resident conductor for the Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra during the season of 1942-43, has made many recordings, and has directed the orchestras of and assisted in arranging the score for several films.



IRENE SHARAFF

IRENE SHARAFF is one of the best-known designers in the theatre and particularly noted for the good taste and daring inventiveness with which she has invested her costume creations. Among the productions bearing her trade mark are "By Jupiter," "Lady in the Dark," "The Boys of Syracuse," "The American Way," "On Your Toes," "I'd Rather Be Right," "Banjo Eyes," "The Land Is Bright," "Boys and Girls Together" and "Jubilee." She designed the clothes for "Meet Me In St. Louis," "The Ziegfeld Follies" and "Yolanda and the Thief," and other film productions.



"A BILLION DOLLAR HIT!"

—JESSE ZUNSER, Cue Magazine

"'Billion Dollar Baby' is a lountiful musical show. Everybody should be happy at the Alvin. The book and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green are slyly refreshing. They have succeeded in making their billion dollar baby a funny product of the flapper age. Jerome Robbins has con-tributed fascinating dance footnotes; George Abbott has staged them in just the mood of nervous excitement they demanded. There's no end to the satirical gayety. Morton Gould's score is rich and varied, sung and danced brilliantly. Mitzi Green and Joan McCracken are so good in leading roles they wind up in a photo-finish. This Paul Feigay-Oliver Smith production is a honey. It is great good fun."

—HOWARD BARNES, *Herald-Tribune*

"Oliver Smith and Paul Feigay, who produced 'On The Town,' have come up with 'Billion Dollar Baby' which is even better. An evening of song and dance which is swift and smart. It is nice to welcome a musical like 'Billion Dollar Baby.' It makes one feel as though one had done a good deed. Actually, 'Baby' did the good deed for me, and I thank it. I had a very fine time."

—JOHN CHAPMAN, *Daily News*

"'Billion Dollar Baby' has the right idea. Miss McCracken is practically a whole musical comedy in herself."

—LEWIS NICHOLS, *Times*

"The youthful producing firm of Paul Feigay and Oliver Smith brought its second successive hit to Broadway last evening. 'Billion Dollar Baby' is another way of spelling success."

—ROBERT COLEMAN, *Daily Mirror*

"Yes, sir, that's my 'Billion Dollar Baby' . . . a fine, fresh feather in the producing cap of Paul Feigay and Oliver Smith. Mitzi Green is simply grand."

—ROBERT GARLAND, *Journal-American*

"The town has another hit! 'Billion Dollar Baby' has everything to make Christmas a merry one, this Christmas and next Christmas too."

—ARTHUR POLLOCK, *Eagle*

"'Billion Dollar Baby' has pace and a lot of vitality . . . its numbers include a delightful burlesque . . . a genuinely imaginative ballet and enough all-round values to make it a go."

—WARD MOREHOUSE, *The Sun*

"A musical you are always rooting for. The people who put it together have talent. They will have no truck with the hackneyed formulas and hammy notions of run-of-the-mine Broadway musicals. 'Billion Dollar Baby' is no more commonplace than 'On The Town' was. In fact, it is far more ambitious."

—LOUIS KRONENBERGER, *PM*

"One of Broadway's bests of 1945."

—DANTON WALKER, *News*

Triple A Indorsement: "The rollicking, frolicsome, more than terrific 'Billion Dollar Baby,' as exciting a music frivolity as has reached town in seasons."

—New Yorker Magazine

—LOUIS SOBOL, *Journal-American*

