

## SELECTED STAGE SECRETS PASADENA COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE

By ELLEN LEECH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALBERT HILLER



JOSEPH HAM AS PRINCE MEREN-RE, LEFT; BELLE MITCHELL, PRIESTESS OF ISIS, AND TEMPLE ATTENDANTS; CENTER, FRANK McALLISTER, AS PRINCE KETA, RIGHT, IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE BIBLICAL DRAMA, "PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER."

THE premiere production of the interesting and compelling Biblical drama, "Pharaoh's Daughter," by Dr. Allison Gaw and Ethelean Tyson Gaw, at the Community Playhouse, Pasadena, in October, established a new order of playwrights among us, and proved anew the power of blank verse.

This dramatic, historical romance, contrasting vividly the Court of the Pharaohs and the life of the Hebrew slaves, gives an unusual opportunity for reference to the Costume Department of the playhouse. The production was so brilliant, with such meticulous care shown not only in the interpretation of character but in the detail of the historic costumes, and in the provision of a background and settings to stimulate the imagination, that even the most unobserving must have realized that such results are not obtained without effort and untiring energy, pluck and perseverance on the part of someone.

Walter Cohick Plunkett, a young but well known costume designer, gave hours of time to making sketches, exact in detail, and coloring them accurately that the important item of color might be satisfactorily worked out in the perfect whole. The exquisite changing lights that we enjoy; the mazes of color that form the picture, all are the results of deep study. A group may be worked out satisfactorily, accounted for in relation to one another, but when the group breaks because the movement of the play requires a different formation, then this again must be perfect in color, although the second grouping may be across the stage from the first and with a totally different

background. Yes indeed, the costumes, the stage settings and the lighting all make a tremendous difference.

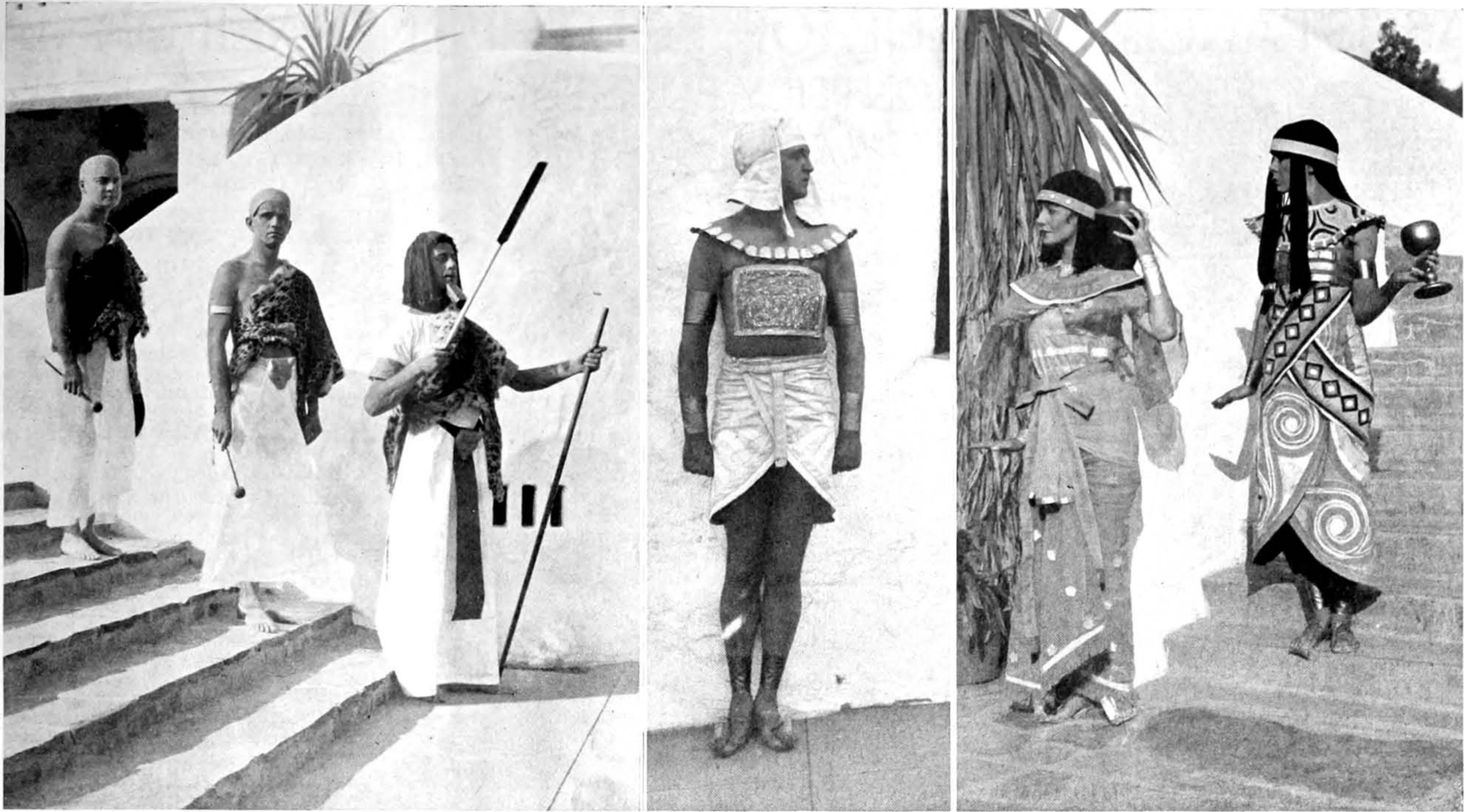
While history records the type of dress, the materials, and something of the gorgeous colors, each individual designer of modern times has a slight margin in which to vary his productions. The materials in use, however, are definitely decided, as the Egyptians used primarily a heavy handwoven linen, a fabric intermingling goats' hair, and a sheer, fibrous material, the latter used largely in the swathing processes, covered with a cloak or cape. For the heavier materials various weights of cotton cloth were substituted in the reproduction and for the gauze tarleton was used, dyed in the workrooms to the required shades, and often colored several times.

The detail work was most interesting and intricate: The severe Egyptian wigs, made of heavy black cord sewed with interminable stitches to the tightfitting base, and decorated occasionally with beads and ornaments for the feminine wear, to produce the peculiarly straight hair always associated with those fair but dusky maids of the ever-flowing Nile. The head dresses were all elaborate and all carried a meaning, the triple crown of the Queen for instance proving her a Pharaoh of Upper Egypt and the Third Pharaoh of Lower Egypt. The power of this ruling house is exemplified by the fan used in the costumes of both the Queen and Moses. The Queen's cloak proclaims her a ruler through its symbols, and the decorations of the costume of Moses with the symbols Osyces and of the Sun



NILE DANCERS, INTERPRETING THE SONG OF THE EVER-FLOWING NILE: JESSIE HERRON, LEADER; ROSA BURNEL, VIRGINIA MARSDEN, ELIZABETH FLINT, JOSEPHINE SPATES, AND ELIZABETH MARSDEN—A LOVELY BIT OF THE ROMANTIC DRAMA, "PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER."





EDWARD ATLEE, PRIEST OF KARNAK, WITH ASSISTANT PRIESTS, EVERETT McCAMMAN AND RAYMOND MARTIN, LEFT; FREDERICK WRIGHT, PRINCE ATORE, CENTER; MAYFAIR MURPHEY AND LURENE TUTTLE, NOVICES IN THE TEMPLE OF ISIS, RIGHT.

are signs of the heir apparent and of the ruling Pharaoh if a male.  
 To enumerate further details which should not be overlooked: the sandals, with their elongated toes, the toes turning almost back to the ankle, were made of heavy cloth, with inner soles, then painted and gilded and held in place by carefully sewed elastic. Those intriguing beard protectors, designed and cut from buckram, were painted and fitted by a ingenious member of the staff. History may

sive to buy outright, so another artist modeled them in plastic, gilded them, and in turn they shone like solid gold in the priestly processional.  
 Working out these artistic details, attempting and producing unusual effects with plastic, buckram, glue and gilt, carries with it the uplift of original production but after all please remember it is tiring, and not quite so interesting to sit and sew a straight seam, putting things together that must stay put through eleven performances. Think of the needle pricks encountered in sewing miles of black cord into a wig, and yards of lotus flowers onto the Queen's gown. Just think of all the colors and designs which were cut out and applied, as well as the other designs painted on each costume whether for royalty or slave, and all this a labor of friendly service.

The production committee for the performance was composed of Mr. and Mrs. Donald H. Fry, Mrs. C. B. Scoville, Jr., and Roma Penfield. Miss Genevieve Graydon was chairman of the costume committee with the following heads of departments: Dyeing, Everett McCamman; pattern-cutting, Mrs. Elizabeth Cole; painting, Frederick Wright; headdress, Richard Russell; wigs, Dorothy Ware; sandals, Raymond Martin; accessories, Donald H. Fry; sewing, Lucy Howard and Ramona Henderson.



HELEN JEROME EDDY AS QUEEN MERRHIS, PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER AND REIGNING SOVEREIGN OF EGYPT

tell why they were used but I will venture the assumption that they were primarily put in vogue by a kingly soul who saw this opportunity to hide what he didn't have by originatng a style,—a keen mind, and very feminine in its working. The cats' heads proved too expen-



ARTHUR LUBIN AS PRINCE RAMESSES-MOESIS, REPUTED SON OF PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER AND HEIR APPARENT TO THE THRONE, HEARING THE PETITION OF MYRA (MARY RADLOVA), AND HER GRAND-FATHER, BEN-ISRAEL (CHARLES HANCOCK)