Pandemonium greets Beverly Sills in overdue Met debut

pared his own synthesis of

the several versions and

then made a few changes

There were some critical

carpings about the authen-

ticity of the result, but last night was clearly a night

for singer worship, not for

out for this extraordinary

event was filled with celeb-

rities; musical and other-

wise. Danny Kaye and Kirk Douglas were present, along with Maria Jeritza,

Dorthy Kirsten, Galina

Vishnevskaya and Rise

the opera house without

being stopped three or four

times on Lincoln Center

One could not get near

The audience that turned

of his own.

musicology.

Stevens. -

By Robert Finn Staff Writer

N E ₩ YORK—Soprano Beverly Sills, who called Cleveland home for five



Beverly Sills First act bow ...

Low comedy. strip parade back at Roxy

By Robert Dolgan

Live burlesque returned to the Roxy Theater yesterday after an absence of four years. About 50 men attended the first show at 1 p.m. They had paid \$6 each for the privilege of ogling the star, who calls herself Passion Flame, and three other strippers.

The four dancers, who all appeared to be in their 20s, took all their clothes off, save for incidentals such as shoes and gloves. Roxy veterans recalled the days when some of the chorines wouldn't even remove their fish-net brassieres.

The Roxy, the oldest burlesque house in the city, has been showing sex movies exclusively of late.

"People have been asking that we bring back live said Thomas Briggs, Roxy manager. 'But we'll probably keep showing the movies in between the girls' acts.'

"We're considering putting on burlesque full said booking agent Paul Walker. seems to be a revival of burlesque around the country. People might be getting tired of porno movies."

Master of ceremonies vesterday Long. a typically low comic. One time he came onstage with his pants down around his knees. "Now you look like Ralph Perk," a man yelled from the audience

"With a face like yours you shouldn't talk," Long replied. He also took pratfalls, told corny jokes and tap-danced. He said his father had appeared on the Roxy stage 45 years earli-

After a joke drew only scattered applause, he said. "There will be no individual applause. Either you all clap together or get

the hell out of here.' The strippers, who will appear daily at 1, 4, 8 and 10:30 p.m., are Torchy Diamond, a lanky brunette; Jayde, a petite blonde who struts confidently through her number, and Gypsy Eden who came armed with a Carmen opera costume, a tambourine and a

tremendous bust The return was no treat for the nostalgia buff. On the same stage where Lou-Costello and Bud Abbott immortalized their "Who's on first" routine, there was only one comic skit, done by Long and the lanky bru-

And worse, at the intermission no candy butcher came out beside the stage and gave out with his traditional cry: " My assistants will now pass among you with boxes of candy. In each and every one is a valuable prize."

years in the late 1950s, finally made it to the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House last night after 20 years or so as a noted opera singer and almost a decade as an international

superstar. Miss Sills appeared in the first Metropolitan production of Rossini's The Siege of of Corinth" and was greeted with a series of roaring ovations that may have caused seismographs to tremble in

When she first appeared on stage and before she had sung a note—she was greeted by cheers lasting almost a full minute. At the end of her mammoth aria at the start of the second act there was pandemonium in the opera house for well over four minutes. At the final curtain there were showers of confetti and tossing of bouauets.

Her fans, who filled every one of the 3,900 seats, were clearly in a mood to celebrate the correction of one of opera's most glaring career over-

Miss Sills, who made her career next door to the Met at the New York City Opera, seemed to be enjoying the occasion. Her performance as Rossini's muchput-upon put-upon heroine Pamira was full justification for all the cheering. She tossed off the runs, trills, scales and intricate ornaments of her part with what appeared to be total effortlessness.

There may be sopranos with voices boasting more body in the middle register, but there are none

today who can operate above the staff with the agility, accuracy, assurance and tonal purity of Beverly

It was really a ladies' night at the Met, for Miss Sills was ably partnered in the trouser role of Neocle by mezzo soprano Shirley Verett.

Miss Verett's accurate runs and booming low notes won their own ovation from the audience.

Sad to say, neither of the two major male parts was adequately filled. Justino Diaz as Emperor Mametto II had little command of the florid Rossini style. As for tenor Harry Theyard, who sang the role of Miss Sills's father, it is hard to see why this harsh-sounding and tremolo-ridden tenor has been promoted into a major career in any opera house.

The minor roles in "The Seige of Corinth" do not count for much, though Richard T. Gill did make a good impression as Jero.

Thomas Schippers conducted tautly, keeping the performance moving along as briskly as the opera's basically static nature would allow.

The sets and costumes designed by Nicola Benois were colorful and appropriately exotic for this story of war between the ancient Greeks and the Turks.

He kept Miss Sills in blue all evening long against the grays and reds of almost everyone else, thus singling her out even when she was not taking a direct part in

the action.
"The Siege of Corinth" is one of Rossini's large-scale tragedies and it has had

a most confusing histo- Plaza by desperate-looking ry. It exists in three or Sills fans offering to buy any extra tickets one might four different versions, all of which have points in their favor. Foor this production, Schippers pre-

It was a genuine and well-deserved triumph for the lady Cleveland knew as

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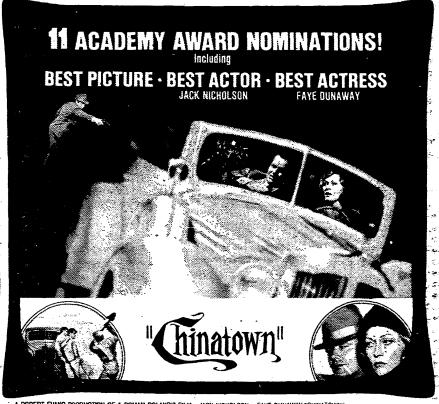
BEGINNERS

LUCK"

Mrs. Peter B. Greenough, wife of a former business editor of The Plain Dealer. Clevelanders will be able

Corinth" on the Metropolitan Opera broadcast on Saturday, April 19.





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