



# "DESERT SONG" OPENS THEATER

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In collaboration with Oscar Hammerstein, II, and will be presented by Lillian Albertson in Los Angeles next Thursday night, opening the new Windsor Square Theater at Windsor and Lucerne boulevards.

This successful California producer chose "The Desert Song" with which to open one of Los Angeles' most beautiful new theaters because, contrary to all light opera precedent, it has a real plot and its composer knew his music. Simultaneous production in London, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles proves its popularity with the public.

The opening scene is in mountain crags. Having been born in the San Joaquin Valley and marooned in New York for many subsequent years, Lillian Albertson has her own ideas of mountains and has spared no expense in realizing them in the scenery for "The Desert Song." Also, there are to be some gorgeous sets in a commanding French sheik's palace which are said to rival the harem in "Sheherazade."

**Bright New Theater Chosen**

A beautiful theater in the heart of the discriminating Wilshire district is the new Windsor Square Playhouse in the Ebell Club Building which Lillian Albertson has chosen for the premiere on Thursday evening of "The Desert Song," Sigmund Romberg musical comedy. Above are sketches of the principals and the interior by Staff Artist A. L. Ewing

**BY ISABEL MORSE JONES**

**WE** HAVE had "White Desert," "The Revolt in the Desert," "The Garden of Allah," Arabian deserts, American deserts, Mexican deserts, painted deserts, and Gobi Deserts—and the Sahara Desert and now we are to have "The Desert Song." It is an operetta written by Romberg and Harbach

### RED CLOAK, MASK

The hero is a Riff Robin Hood in a red cloak and mask, who has some heart-melting songs to sing and is a commanding figure dominating the large company as easily as he does the diminutive star. His name is the Red Shadow, and he has one of those fascinating dual personalities. Perry Askam sings the part.

The diminutive star is called "Margot" and, of course, she is the center of all the mischief in the palace and on the desert. As played by Elvira Tanzil, Margot promises to be a riot in the audience as well as on the stage, for Elvira is just four feet of Italian musicality. She is black-eyed and pert, has a really amazing voice, and is young and talented enough to have poise and sang-froid to an irresistible degree.

Miss Tanzil has theater blood in her veins. She confessed laughingly that she has a relative in every theater in this town. She comes from an old Italian family and her unusual voice is literally a gift from her mother. It is a strange story.

### COMES TO LIFE

Elvira's mother had a voice of great promise and was studying for an opera debut. When Elvira arrived her mother lost her singing voice entirely and it has never re-

turned. As the child's voice grew more beautiful and true the mother believed that her own voice had come to life in the throat of her daughter.

The child, for she is barely 19 years of age, and has never been on a railroad train, was given her first opportunity by the Ellis Club, which invited her to be its soloist one season. One of the members told Miss Albertson about the good impression she made and after hearing her she was signed for one of the most important parts to be had in light opera.

The comedy for "The Desert Song" is supplied by a newspaper man who blunders into Riffs where the bravest have quaked, and never even trembles. Johnny Arthur does the nery Bennis Kidd.

Lionel Braham, Maria Bekefi, Russian dancer, and John Merkye and Myrtis Crinley are other principals in the cast.

### THEY CAN SING

Miss Albertson has not been content to merely choose a cast that can act, she has insisted that the members be able to sing. The male chorus actually sings in tune, a thing that no male chorus is expected to do any more. At least, there has not been a male chorus in light opera visiting here from New York in years that knew the difference between a barber-shop chord and one that was lost.

### DIGNIFIED, SPACIOUS

The new Windsor Square Theater is at once dignified, spacious and yet intimate. It is large—unusually so for a theater outside of the downtown district. The walls are paneled in satiny wood which should make it acoustically good. The decoration is very simple and rich and the seats are luxurious. The whole place has an aristocratic air that will appeal to the discriminating. As it is in the center of the Wilshire district, which, according to well-posted realtors, is a district populated by discriminators of the highest type, all should be harmonious between the new Windsor Theater and its surroundings.