

Rand, Sally (1904-1979) Encyclopedia Article

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Best known for her sexually provocative dance, using ostrich feather fans, that she introduced at the 1933 Chicago World's Fair (supplemented in 1934 by a bubble dance), Sally Rand eventually made her form of erotic movement more acceptable to mainstream audiences than strip-tease had been. Rand, who came to her calling after stints as a chorine, vaudeville performer, circus acrobat, and Hollywood film star, thought of herself as a "terpsichorean artiste" rather than a stripper or exotic dancer. While controversial enough during the 1930s through the mid-1960s to earn arrest for indecency, there was considerable debate about whether she actually wore a body stocking or was naked underneath her feathers. Ultimately, Rand was good at creating the illusion of nudity while she cavorted tastefully under blue or pink lights to the music of Chopin and Debussy, and that was what mattered. She became an American institution, performing into her seventies.

Further Reading:

Carskadon, T.R. "Sally Rand Dances to the Rescue." *American Mercury*. Vol. 35, July 1935, 355-358.

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Rand, Sally. "Bubbles Become Big Business." *Review of Reviews*. Vol. 91, April 1935, 40-41.