Houdini's Full Evening Show

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Contemporary Composition 4

December 18, 1979
he himself without drama or dancers
magician, tried to impress an audience. 

vaudeville stage, if done correctly, could
attract an audience. 

on their way out, however, a full evening
vaudeville was filling its life

in the 1920's and the vaudeville acts were

music, escape, and revolting of

Introdutive Paragraph

The vaudeville show included:

December 13, 1979

The Fiction Emporium 9
singers, and comics. He gave such a
show twice and it failed. Despite this
setback, Houdini was determined to
either give a full evening show that was
successful, or to break every bone in his
own body in the effort. In the fall of
1925, the dream came true when Houdini
put his full evening show on the road. The
highly successful show played two hours and
a half with Houdini on stage every
minute. His formula for success was
of
presenting the show in three parts:

magic, escapes, and revelations of
spirit trickery. I
Thesis: Houdini’s show included magic, escapes, and revelations of spirit trickery.

Body Paragraph 1
In the first act of his show, he did magic tricks. He opened with his version of Harry Kellar’s famous “Yogi’s Lamp,” in which a lamp is wrapped in a towel and is seen glowing through the cloth until the pronunciation of the magic words, when the silk is whisked away and the lamp is gone. This is followed with a bright medley of silk effects and the production of a live rabbit. Also, a radio playing
loudly, was covered with a silk foulard and vanished, with the music stopping in the instant the radio cabinet dematerialized. He produced glass fish bowls, complete with live goldfish, from silk foulards; half a dozen alarm clocks vanished and made their reappearance, all ringing lustily.

He ended the first act with his famous needle trick; he swallowed three yards of thread and then a hundred needles; an instant later the needles were removed from his mouth and seen dangling.
The second part of the show consisted of Houdini's escape tricks. He opened with the straight jacket. Two policemen secured him in a straight jacket, and after a struggle extending over a quarter of an hour, he was free. This was followed with a couple of fast releases from pillories, coffins, and trunks. Next was the handcuff challenge, in which he would ask anyone in the audience with a pair of cuffs that would restrain him to bring them on stage. He would then proceed to escape from
Their, manacles. He then closed the
second act with his famous Water
Torture Cell. He would be lowered
head first, with his feet manacled, 
into a mahogany and glass cabinet
filled with water from which he would
not make his escape.

Body #3 After an intermission, during
which he dried off, he returned with
the final part of the show, where he
performed revelations of spirit trickery
and exposed fraudulent mediums. A
committee from the audience were
invited to the stage and blindfolded
to simulate the darkness of the spirit mediums' séance room. Then, Houdini
performed a séance in full light
using all the fraudulent medium's
standard tricks: moving bells,
floating tables and spirit trumpets,
productions of writing in stems, and the
materialization of ectoplasmic forms. The
blindfolded committee, of course, was
completely baffled while the audience
saw how everything was done and how
easily "participants" could be hood-
minded.
Conclusion Paragraph

This show launched many more shows around the United States. The lines at the box offices for these shows would extend from the lobby out into the street and a half block away. The show played a single week in most cities, but the run extended to three in Philadelphia, four in New York and eight in Chicago. When the show closed closed for the summer, Houdini had summed up the season shortly: "Thirty-six weeks, and all O.K."

During these weeks, newspaper after
newspaper glowingly reported that
Houdini's full evening show was the
biggest, best and most successful of
all shows. Houdini had finally
accomplished his goal; he made the
full-evening show a success.

Excellent. Very interesting.