Sunday, 17 April 2016

Gas and Bag

How does someone who wowed them on the stage in the Bathtub Gin era do the same thing 45 years later with a generation demonstrating in the streets against war and suspicious of anyone over 30?

That's a question Jack Benny had to answer, along with a myriad of other performers who had been big names with the parents of TV viewing young adults.

In a lot of cases, they pulled a variation of an old vaudeville staple. They went on stage in a ridiculous outfit. Except in this case, ridiculous meant someone in his 50s, 60s (or older) dressing the way someone in their late teens or early 20s was. It was good for a cheap laugh in vaudeville and it was good for a cheap laugh on TV. The trouble was—how do you fill the next 25 minutes?

In Jack Benny's case, he did what he did through his radio career, mainly in the '30s—he put on a parody of a popular film. So it was in 1968, Jack Benny burlesqued "The Graduate." To further show how up-to-date he was, he tossed in "The Odd Couple" for good measure. And he borrowed a song title from 1967.

Here's Jack on the promotional circuit in an Associated Press story published on November 13, 1968.

Benny Says His Bag Good By BOB THOMAS

HOLLYWOOD (AP)—Mr. Benny was indisposed. Old blue-eyes had picked up the grippe during an engagement in Las Vegas and sounded more like Rochester than Jack Benny. Still, he was able to receive a visitor at his penthouse apartment and talk about his favorite subject, show business. The particular piece of show business that concerned him at the moment was his first television special of the season, "Jack Benny's Bag," which appears on NBC next Saturday night.

"You'll like it; it's great," he said with customary confidence. "It may be the best special I ever did −I would at least put it in the same class with the show I did with the chimps.

"I'll show you how up-to-date the show is—I'm doing a takeoff of 'The Graduate.' The other shows steered clear of it because they were scared of the censors. But I've got Phyllis Diller playing the Anne Bancroft role. When I make love to her, I defy anyone to consider it sexy. "I've got Lou Rawls and Eddie Fisher singing the Simon and Garfunkel song, 'Mrs. Robinson.' I never thought that Simon and Garfunkel would give me permission, but I asked them and they said I could use the song for nothing. Imagine—for nothing!

"Rochester is back, and I open the show with him. I shouldn't tip this off, but it's so great. After he talks to me on the telephone, he turns back to his poker game. And there's Walter Matthau dealing the cards, and Jack Lemmon fussing around the apartment!"

The special is sponsored by Texaco, for which Benny has appeared in spot commercials. He had some words to say about them:

"Some of my friends in the business say to me, 'Jack, why do you do commercials? It isn't like you.' My answer to them is, 'Frank Sinatra, who is the king of our business right now, in terms of what he can earn—Frank Sinatra goes on TV and sells beer. I mean, he makes the pitch himself. Well, if Frank Sinatra can do that, I can do some spots to sell gas.'

"But I wouldn't do it if only the commercials were involved. The thing is, Texaco also pays me a lot of money for my television specials. It's all tied in together, and it makes a lot of sense." Benny has another special to do this season and may sign for more next year. If so, he plans to eliminate other engagements. At 74, he continues to make a wide variety of appearances—night clubs, concert dates, etc.

"If I get the specials, I'll cut down, especially in Las Vegas," he said. "That's how I got this cold,

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with the Guzzler's Gin routine (from Zieg... 6 hours ago

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20 hours ago

News From ME

Sorry... - As far as I know, I do not have any diseases. I just have too much to deal with right now so I won't be blogging much if at all. I'm postponing all the web... 1 day ago

🖺 Cartoon Research In His Own Words: H.T.

Kalmus on Disney in Technicolor - Suspended Tralfaz: Gas and Bag

working two shows a night. If they'll let me do one, then I'll go back. But it just gets to be boring, the two shows every night. "But of course I'd never quit. What would I do? What would I have to talk about?"

It would appear the Groovy Generation liked the show. The special took a National Nielsen rating of 25.2 and a share of 48% of the audience. NBC-TV selected it as an entry in the Montreux Film Festival. The old vaudevillian was number one again.

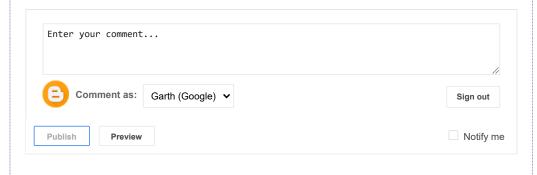


Posted by Yowp at 07:13

Labels: Bob Thomas, Jack Benny

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Animation #276 Many references may be found regarding two-strip Technicolor. I have been guilty of discussing Walter Lantz's King of Jazz (1930)...

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Mary
Turner
1985 - Mary
Turner
today Mary
Turner
really

rocked the house. Normally when any of the jocks got a reaction, it'd be split. The ones that were really liked wou...

3 days ago

The World of Knight



TONIGHT, 11:54 PM. -COPYRIGH T 2020 BY MILTON KNIGHT

3 days ago

Yowp



Hanna-Barbera Birthday Did-You-Knows - 63 years ago today, some

forms were signed by George Sidney, Bill Hanna and Joe Barbera creating what eventually became the biggest TV cartoon operation i...

1 week ago

Supervised By Fred Avery: Tex Avery's Warner Brothers Cartoons



Wabbit Twouble: A Small Addendum to An Outstanding Podcast -

Original animation drawing from Wabbit Twouble with color notations for the ink and paint department. Release date: 12/20/41 Availability: Looney Tunes Gol...

3 weeks ago

Mark Kausler's CatBlog

The Lady and the Tiger -From the Cathy Hill Archive of Unpublished Comics comes "The Lady and the Tiger". This story was drawn before Cathy started the "Mad Raccoons" series. U...

4 weeks ago

Termite Terrace headlines Porky's Hot Dog Intake -

Western Publishing definitely isn't free of

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cannibalism when it comes to comics featuring Porky Pig. These are

just some of the covers in which Porky is ei... 4 weeks ago

Peter Gray's Comics and



An early Tom Thug page for sale and other comic art by Lew Stringer go

to link and ebay.. -

http://lewstringercomics.blo gspot.com/2020/02/originalart-for-sale.html https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/ graphite47/m.html? _nkw=&_armrs=1&_ipg=&_f rom=

5 months ago

What About Thad? Cartoon Logic Podcast -

And yet another distraction from this brick and mortar blog... I've entered the world of podcasting with renowned animation director and historian Bob Jaques...

10 months ago

Likely Looney, Mostly Merrie

That's all, folks! - My posts have gotten thinner over the years. I'm aware of that. I've been hopeful for a long time, that I can remain active with blogging and sharing furth...

1 year ago

Dr. Grob's Animation Review

The Flying Man - 'The Flying Man' is a very short absurdist film in which a man drops his coat to take a swim in mid air. Another man with a dog drops by, tries the same th...

1 day ago

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