

Document Citation

Title	"The sun shines bright" another brilliant John Ford production
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Publisher name not available</i>
Date	
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	The sun shines bright, Ford, John, 1953

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CHARLES WINNINGER, Arleen Whelan and John Russell head the cast of John Ford's powerful new drama for Republic Studios, "The Sun Shines Bright," which bows..... at the..... Theatre. The heart-warming film is a picturization of Irvin S. Cobb's famous character "Judge Priest," portrayed by Charles Winninger.



"THE SUN SHINES BRIGHT" (2A)

"The Sun Shines Bright" Another Brilliant John Ford Production

4-Time Academy Winner Brings Warmth And Dramatic Impact To Famed "Judge Priest" Stories

(Review)

TYPICAL of John Ford's directorial genius, his latest film for Republic, "The Sun Shines Bright," which opened yesterday at the Theatre, abounds in the deep warmth, charm and dramatic impact which has become a notable trademark of Ford pictures. Charles Winninger, as the renowned Irvin S. Cobb character, Judge Priest, heads an important cast which includes Arleen Whelan, John Russell and that famed Negro comedian, Stepin Fetchit.

"The Sun Shines Bright" is a lot of pleasant and highly entertaining things lumped into one big smash production. It has heart, plenty of it. It has warm, happy chuckles and at times, stark drama and suspense. There is vibrant romance also, but through this powerful narrative of big people in a small town split asunder by bigotry and tyranny, flows a strong current of heart-warming humanity and courage.

Colorful Character

Based on Irvin S. Cobb's short stories, "The Sun Shines Bright" is essentially the story of Judge Priest, portrayed by Winninger, a compassionate old, dyed-in-the-wool Confederate soldier, who as late as 1905 still cherishes fond memories of greycoat victories and traditional esprit de corps with his Confederate cronies.

It is his compassion for his fellow humans which leads him continually into political pitfalls in connection with his coming re-election bid to the bench. This weakness, together with his fondness for an occasional nip, proves capital ammunition in the hands of his adversary, Milburn Stone, who is also campaigning for the judicial spot.

Dramatic Story

The Judge's troubles increase when he endeavors to play cupid in romantically uniting John Russell, a sort of black sheep who has just returned to town, with Arleen Whelan, the adopted daughter of the town's doctor, Russell Simpson, who has a scandal in her background involving her mother, a fallen woman, and the respected General, portrayed by James Kirkwood.

This romance leads to all sorts of tribulations including a violent buggy whip duel between Russell and Grant Withers, member of the notorious Tornado gang. As if this were not enough to divert the gang's votes, since Judge Priest intervenes and incurs the wrath of Withers, the kindly Judge also defends an innocent Negro's life at the hands of a lynching mob from the Tornado gang, placing his own life at stake.

Emotional Climax

Between the heated election, mob violence, the sudden return of Miss Whelan's mother to die under circumstances which would deny her a decent funeral, and the timely intervention of the judge and his faithful cronies, Director Ford brings the production to a tense emotional climax of thrills and heart tugs.

Charles Winninger shines in the role of Judge Priest while Stepin Fetchit, as his faithful servant, returns to the screen in a rib-tickling role comparable to his earlier hilarious successes.

Outstanding performances are delivered by the stars and they are ably supported by Simpson, Ludwig Stossel, Francis Ford, Paul Hurst, Michell Lewis, Grant Withers, Milburn Stone, Dorothy Jordan, Eve March, Jane Darwell and a cast of hundreds.

Director Ford once more has achieved a cinematic triumph. Credit also is due Producer Merian C. Cooper, Ford's partner in Argosy Productions.



"THE SUN SHINES BRIGHT" (1B)

DRAMATIC SCENE from John Ford's thrilling new production for Republic, "The Sun Shines Bright," currently at the..... Theatre, pictures Dorothy Jordan and star John Russell.