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Cakewalking the Color Line: George Luks, Racial Doublings, and Performance at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Meaghan M. Walsh

The following essay contains language and images that readers may find disturbing or otherwise challenging to encounter.

> We start out some time in November with our new act especially written for the occasion by Will and it is one of his best efforts—in fact it is a side splitter. . . . Our stage names are—Mine: George Buzzy. Will's: William Anstock.
>
> —George Luks to Everett Shinn, c. 1900

In a three-page illustrated letter from September 28, around 1900, George Luks (1867–1933) wrote to his friend and Ashcan colleague Everett Shinn (1876–1953). In the correspondence, Luks updates Shinn on his recent meetings, works he sold since they last spoke, and upcoming tours with wealthy patrons. Framing this discussion, Luks informs Shinn that he and his brother Will just returned from a "trip to the mountains" and, as noted in the epigraph, were about to set off again in November with a "new act." Luks describes this "act" both verbally and visually in the letter—a vaudeville routine, performed by the comic duo Buzzy and Anstock. On the first page of the letter, a three-figure illustration takes up the majority of the top third of the sheet, with Luks's swooping cursive interspersed throughout the ink-and-watercolor drawing (fig. 1). At the left of the composition, a rotund figure leans recumbent against the wooden door behind him with his left hand raised as if to stop the wolf on the right from advancing. The blue-gray wolf with a gaping maw fixes his amber eyes on the cowering figure, as does the standing male figure, who peers around the corner at his fallen comrade, eyes and mouth agape in horror. Both human figures are highly caricatured, in the mode of blackface performance, with cork-darkened faces and hands, exaggerated pink lips, and white eyes.

As is suggested in Luks's message, these caricatured representations are of him and Will. This identification becomes even more apparent when comparing the illustration with a contemporary photo of the two brothers in costume.[1] In the photograph, Will stands on the left, open-mouthed and dumbfounded. He wears a bald cap with patches of dark hair sticking out in all directions, the burnt cork on his face offset by the light-colored coat and

shirt he wears. The costuming and hair resemble the figure peering in from around the corner in the illustration, suggesting this figure is meant to be read as "Anstock" and the fallen figure as "Buzzy." Like his illustrated character, Luks's performed caricature consists of striped pants, a rotund belly (clearly stuffed with a pillow), and a hat, which has fallen off his head in the drawing. The scene that the duo "perform" in the illustration is from Will's new act "Keeping the Wolf from the Door"—the title serving as both a description of the action in the sketch and a cheeky joke about making enough money to survive on by going on tour. This cleverly titled act suggests that up until the early 1900s, vaudeville remained a consistent and needed source of income for Luks.

Fig. 1. George Benjamin Luks, sketch in letter to Everett Shinn, c. 1900. Letter, Everett Shinn collection, 1877–1958. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

I open this essay with this letter and illustration for two reasons: first, it refutes previous assumptions that Luks was no longer performing in vaudeville shows when he met and started working with his Ashcan colleagues in the 1890s; second, and more important, it offers critical insight into Luks's conceptualization of race and performance at the turn of the twentieth century. In most texts on the Ashcan School, scholars discuss Luks's artistic career as a straightforward trajectory—beginning with his performances on the vaudeville stage with his brother Will in the 1880s, moving to his time as a cartoonist and illustrator-reporter for the Philadelphia (and, later, New York) press in the 1890s, and ending with his transition to painting full time in the early 1900s.[2] However, as this letter suggests, Luks continued touring with his brother well into the new century. While the Smithsonian Archives of American Art tentatively dates the letter to 1900, I suspect that it was probably written in 1903 or 1904.[3] This dating is important, as it reveals that Luks was simultaneously performing onstage, contributing caricatures to newspapers and humor magazines, and painting professionally, thereby showing that Luks was concurrently engaged in the performance and specification of race in all three media.

Even though he was living and working among Black residents in New York, Luks rarely depicted Black subjects outside of the popular press. The few exceptions include a handful of personal drawings and prints, painted sketches from his time as a war correspondent in Cuba in 1895–96, and two known boxing paintings reminiscent of his colleague George Bellows's (1882–1925) work.[4] Despite being hailed for his "realist" representations, these artworks, along with many of his representations of new migrants to the city, betray Luks's allegiance to using caricature and stereotype to represent people of color and signal his own beliefs about race and identity at the turn of the twentieth century. As such, many of these paintings and drawings remain hidden in archives today and are rarely exhibited or discussed due to their highly problematic and charged content. In this essay, I bring these works to light in order to show how Luks's depictions of Blackness speak to a modernist self-fashioning through Black performance. Moreover, I demonstrate how Luks was engaged in the practice of vaudeville, cartooning, and painting simultaneously and consider how his overlapping experience in all three media shaped his understanding of Blackness, performance, and modernism.

I focus on three key images: Luks's illustrated letter to Everett Shinn (c. 1900; see fig. 1), a graphite-and-watercolor *Self-Portrait* (c. 1893; see fig. 3), and a monotype titled *Cake Walk* (1907; see fig. 4). I situate these works in the context of masquerade—a vaudevillian technique that capitalizes on the doubling of meaning—to analyze the doublings at play in these depicted performances. I begin with a discussion of Luks's training as an illustrator and vaudevillian by examining his caricatures for the popular presses and his minstrel performance as Buzzy—which, I argue, he gestures to in his 1893 self-portrait. I examine these graphic representations in light of his commitment to parody and show how the racist caricatures deployed in these illustrations signal to contemporary conversations about Black residents in New York. Second, I read Luks's monotype *Cake Walk* as part of his self-fashioning as a modernist artist. *Cake Walk* was one of three monotypes Luks's produced in John Sloan's (1871–1951) studio during an evening planning meeting to discuss an exhibition of The Eight, the landmark show that launched their careers as modern artists. That Luks represents a cakewalk scene—a dance performance that became an integral part of African American vaudeville routines—is notable, as it connects Blackness to modernism and, in turn, frames Luks's performance career as "modern." I demonstrate how Luks's self-fashioning as a modern painter is rooted in and performed through racist caricature.

I want to be clear at the outset of this essay that Luks's engagement with caricature and parody onstage, in print, and in painting across his career is overtly racist, regardless of how he uses these comic devices to self-fashion as modern or represent contemporary ideas of race. I examine his problematic representations of Black figures not to recoup him (or his Ashcan colleagues) as a "man of his time" but to affirm the interconnectedness of vaudeville, blackface performance, and American modernism at this moment.

Vaudeville and Cartooning at the Turn of the Century

Luks's path to becoming an Ashcan painter was unconventional to say the least. He began his illustration career while serving as a grocery store delivery boy, sketching images of customers on wrapping paper for the shop owner to record who visited the store while she was gone.[5] This ability to quickly characterize the people he encountered in his daily

life was a gestural practice that he would continue throughout his career in both the popular press and his painting practice. After finishing his schooling, Luks took to the vaudeville stage with Will as the comedic duo Buzzy and Anstock. The pair toured the northeastern United States intermittently from the 1880s to the early 1900s as blackface minstrels. In the 1890s, he settled in Philadelphia to work as an illustrator-reporter while also freelancing for popular New York humor magazines, like *Truth* and *Verdict*. After his abrupt dismissal from the *Philadelphia Bulletin* in 1896 for drunkenness and missing deadlines, Luks moved to New York, where he took over the popular "Yellow Kid" comic strip from Richard F. Outcault. In addition to *Hogan's Alley*, Luks contributed to other well-known cartoons, like *Mose's Incubator* and *The Little Nippers*. By 1900, however, Luks had moved away from his illustrative practice in favor of painting, which served as his primary medium until his death in 1933.

Fig. 2. George Luks, "Hogan's Alley: The Open-Air School in Hogan's Alley," *The Sunday World*, October 18, 1896, San Francisco Academy of Comic Art Collection, Billy Ireland Cartoon Library and Museum

While Luks is perhaps best known today for his paintings of immigrant neighborhoods in the Lower East Side, his depiction of raced bodies in these works were informed by his time onstage and in the pressroom. In the early twentieth century, vaudeville and print media were two of the main vehicles propelling the duplication and circulation of ethnic and racial stereotypes.[6] As illustrators in a country founded on the principle of white supremacy, caricaturists had long established traditions of using stereotypes to distinguish Black figures from white figures in visual culture—from physical features like prominent brows, full lips, and widened eyes to the depicted actions that suggest predatory, childlike, and/or buffoonish behavior.[7] These stereotypes were replicated and reenforced on the minstrel stage, which emerged in popularity alongside US cartooning in the years leading up to the Civil War.[8] In both cartoons and vaudeville, racist caricature was used as a way for white hegemonic culture to exert social control in a rapidly diversifying country.

Luks was well-versed in using caricature to define Blackness in his work. As seen in his cartoons for the *New York World*, such as "The Open-Air School in Hogan's Alley," from October 18, 1896 (fig. 2), and his illustrations for the humor magazine *Truth*, Luks renders Black figures with exaggerated lips, dark black skin and hands, and bug-eyed stares—much like he does in his caricature to Shinn. As comics historian Christina Meyer argues, Luks's inclusion of caricatured figures in his cartoons demonstrates both the solidification of dominant cultural codes and the popularization of stereotype in cartoons.[9] Moreover, it conveys the popular opinion that Black Americans could never achieve true social equality

because they are fundamentally different from white Americans—a notion reenforced by the gross caricaturing of Black features and actions.

Concurrent with his illustration career, Luks continued to perform as Buzzy in minstrel shows, as is suggested in a curious self-portrait from around 1893 (fig. 3). In this work, Luks depicts his likeness in three-quarter profile wearing a pale blue button-up shirt with his arms crossed over the front of his stomach. His signature thin sandy hair is a chaotic swirl of graphite and yellow watercolor atop his head, while a pipe dangles from his lips. The drawing is similar to other self-portraits and paintings made by his Ashcan colleagues over the course of his lifetime, with one notable exception—his face.[10] Across his face and neck, the heavy use of underdrawing leaves a distinctive shadowing across Luks's visage. This peculiar passage could be attributed to the artist experimenting with different shading techniques, but the stark use of graphite seems to gesture to Luks's career as a blackface performer. While this odd drawing is not a representation of Luks in blackface per se, it signals to his masquerade as Buzzy in his vaudeville career.

Fig. 3. George Benjamin Luks, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1893. Graphite and watercolor on paper, 10 1/16 x 7 11/16 in. Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, Gift of Joseph H. Hirshhorn, 1966, 66.3152. Photo: Cathy Carver, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden

As scholar of African American studies Louis Chude-Sokei argues, "Mask, masquerade, and cultural border crossings became dominant signifiers of the modernist historical moment."[11] In other words, performance, especially masquerade, became a signal for the modern. Luks's performance as Buzzy—alluded to in his *Self-Portrait* and represented in the caricature in his illustrated letter to Shinn and onstage—recalls how the vaudevillian practice of caricaturing and parodying Black culture became associated with the modern in the opening decades of the twentieth century. As Richard Pells and others observe: "[The modernists' intent] was to use the techniques and contents of popular culture to reinvigorate novels, paintings, and music . . . [by] blend[ing] the serious and the irreverent, the complex and the playful."[12] It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that artists turned to the popular art forms that blended the "complex and playful," such as vaudeville and jazz, to create a uniquely American modern art. As an artist trained in vaudeville and mass media, Luks already had this visual language in his repertoire, and he explored it with his colleagues in Robert Henri's (1865–1929) and John Sloan's studios.

Monotypes and Minstrelsy: Black Performance and Modernism at the Turn of the Century

In 1894 Luks moved to Philadelphia, where he met artists who would later form the Ashcan school and The Eight in Philadelphia. He and Shinn worked for the *Philadelphia Press*, William Glackens (1870–1938) was drawing for the *Philadelphia Ledger*, and Sloan was at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.[13] Through Sloan, Shinn and Luks met Henri, who hosted a

group of like-minded artists and intellectuals in his studio at 806 Walnut Street.[14] On Tuesday evenings in the 1890s, the men would discuss current trends in art, experiment with different techniques and styles, and host parties. Additionally, these young artists would stage performances (blackface performances among them) for which they designed the costumes and sets and wrote the dialogue.[15] Nearly a decade later, when all of the Ashcan artists had moved to New York, Sloan's Chelsea studio served as the new meeting spot for these artists to try out various printing techniques and plan exhibitions.

In spring 1907 Luks participated in one of these dinner parties with Sloan and Henri, where they discussed plans for their upcoming exhibition of The Eight—the exhibition that would grant the titular group national acclaim—and played around with monotype printing techniques. Luks produced three monotypes in Sloan's studio, including *Cake Walk* (1907; fig. 4), *After Dinner* (1907), and *A Friend* (1907), all now at the Delaware Art Museum.[16] His selection of subjects is notable, as the prints speak to conversations around modernist painting at this moment.

Fig. 4. George Luks, *Cake Walk*, 1907. Monotype, 8 3/8 x 10 15/16 in. Delaware Art Museum, Gift of Helen Farr Sloan, 1978, 1975-45

In *After Dinner* and *A Friend*, Luks seems to have been inspired by his current setting and company, rendering quick sketches of the evening activities. In *After Dinner*, two figures sit in a darkened room on either side of a large table. Both figures appear hunched over the tabletop, perhaps working on monotypes of their own. Curator Heather Campbell Coyle posits that the central figure, whose features the viewer can see more clearly, resembles Henri—reinforcing the idea that this print is a representation of the three men experimenting with the monotype process after dinner. In the second work, Luks renders a three-quarter profile portrait of an unidentified acquaintance.[17] The portrait shares a similar dark background to *After Dinner*, with a white male figure in suit jacket and tie. While this figure has yet to be identified, he is perhaps another Eight colleague who joined the trio at dinner or at another one of the planning meetings.[18]

These two prints seem to be done on the spot, as if Luks quickly sketched his observations of the evening's activities on the surface of the matrix (the monotype plate). *Cake Walk* is unique in the trio of monotypes, with a different subject matter and representation of the scene. In the print, Luks portrays an animated scene of two seemingly Black figures in an elaborate performance. The couple appear mid-dance, leaning back with their arms outstretched and legs raised in an extravagant prance. On the left, the female figure wears a feathered hat that swoops forward over her brow in an exaggerated bend that mirrors the curve of her lifted knee. On the right, her companion, clad in a black tuxedo and top hat, dramatically tilts backward, his gaze on his dance partner. Through expressive passages of black ink and excised white lines, Luks captures the rhythmic quality and energetic routine of the performers.

Despite its small scale and pared down imagery, this monotype shows a complex performance that speaks to conceptions of Blackness in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The cakewalk began as a performance in which enslaved African Americans would parody their white slaveholders' customs through an exaggerated dance.[19] It was later adopted by white minstrels—seemingly unaware of the original parody—to mock Black traditions onstage. By the time Luks portrayed his interpretation of the dance as a monotype, the cakewalk was an established fixture in vaudeville entertainment.[20] As a vaudevillian himself, Luks would have had firsthand knowledge of the dance and perhaps witnessed it performed while on tour.[21]

When Luks rendered *Cake Walk*, vaudeville was at the center of debates surrounding both realism and modernism. By 1905, it was the most popular form of entertainment in the United States, due, in part, to the wide variety of sketches offered in a single showing, as well as the cross-cultural exchanges the performances enabled.[22] Created and staged largely by working-class individuals, vaudeville served as a suitable site for the production and performance of identity.[23] Embedded within these expectations was a desire for authenticity and to see the "real" performed onstage.[24] The cakewalk dance increased in popularity alongside this burgeoning interest in realism, and as such, the dance became a staple performance in African American theater, often occurring at the end of a show.[25] As Daphne Brooks argues, the cakewalk is "not merely and expressive act, but one which is, in part, *constitutive* of African American identity in the early twentieth century."[26] African American performers Burt Williams and George Walker recognized this connection between the cakewalk and the real, provocatively calling themselves "The Two Real Coons" and ending their vaudeville acts with a cakewalk.

Concurrent with this interest in realism onstage was the emergence of modernism in Europe and the United States. For American artists who were interested in distinguishing themselves from European modernism, local popular culture and traditions served as obvious sources of inspiration. As Richard Powell and others argue, Black performance and music play a crucial role in transforming American art from mere imitation of European styles to a modernist art form.[27] Moreover, as these art forms became popular abroad, Black performance and music shifted from being a marker of African American modernism to being one of American modernism more broadly.[28] In the syncopated rhythms of ragtime and lively movements of African American dance, such as cakewalks, artists found an art that encapsulated the pulse of modern life in the United States.[29]

With this in mind, let us return to Luks's animated depiction of Black performances in *Cake Walk*. That Luks chose to represent a blackface performance in a monotype print is notable, as the medium allowed him to render the dynamic dance in a way that painting could not. By erasing the swaths of black pigment around the figures with a rag or his hand (as can be seen in the smudge of the artist's fingerprints at the top of the image), he could emphasize the movements of the figures through added brushstrokes and incised lines. The gestural nature of the monotype's creation is underscored by the extreme gestures of the depicted dancers. The result is a painterly—or, to borrow Riva Castleman's term, "printerly"—image that combines the ephemerality of the original drawing and the expressiveness of painting.[30]

In using the monotype medium, Luks not only evocatively captures the rhythmic nature of the dance but also unwittingly replicates the process of blackface in creating the image. In Luks's blackening of the surface in this monotype, he simulates the process of "corking up"— painting one's face with burnt cork or shoe polish—that minstrel performers would undertake before their vaudeville routines, as he and his brother did before their routine. By "blacking up" the monotype surface with the ink and removing passages of the darkened medium to reveal, upon printing, the cream-colored paper underneath, Luks's printerly gesture echoes the painterly one he performed on his own face backstage.

While this print recalls Luks's earlier performance as Buzzy, it importantly signals the ways in which Blackness and modernism were associated at the turn of the twentieth century. As Campbell argues, this monotype, along with *After Dinner* and *A Friend*, were made in Sloan's studio while he, Luks, and Henri discussed their upcoming exhibition of The Eight. As such, this trio of monotypes can retroactively be read as Luks's enacting his identity as a modernist painter. In *After Dinner*, Luks renders modernist painters crafting their new modern personae through their forthcoming show and their experimentation with diverse media. By representing a vaudeville scene—specifically, the iconic cakewalk dance—Luks links his earliest minstrel act onstage with his current fashioning as a modernist painter and shows how his career as a performer can be considered modern.

It is ironic, to say the least, that the word "cakewalk" has come to define something that is notably easy, when the history of the term—and Luks's depiction of the routine—demonstrate that a cakewalk is anything but simple. As caricatured performance that began as an act of resistance and transformed into a marker of both Black identity and modernism, the cakewalk elicits complex questions about the relationship between Blackness, performance, and modernism. Luks's monotype of the performance as well as his blackface caricatures demonstrate how he (and the Ashcan artists more broadly) explored these intersections in his art and show how racial identities were both specified and performed through racist stereotypes. Moreover, his works signal how Black performance became associated with and constitutive of American modernism. As such, artworks like *Cake Walk* broaden our understanding of Luks's performance career as modern but also reveal that the discussion of Blackness and modernism at this moment is anything but black and white.

Meaghan M. Walsh is the Louise C. Herreshoff Curatorial Fellow of American Art at Washington and Lee University's Art Museums and Galleries.

Notes

This essay stems from the first chapter of my dissertation, "Staging Blackness, Performing Modernity," which examines the performances of Blackness in the early twentieth century in further detail. See Meaghan M. Walsh, "Modern Masquerades: Humor, Realism, and Identity in the Works of George Luks," (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 2024), 25–53.

[1] A reproduction of this image can be found in Jean Lee Cole, *How the Other Half Laughs: The Comic Sensibility in American Culture, 1895–1920* (University Press of Mississippi, 2020), 45.

[2] Robert L. Gambone is the only scholar I have come across who extends Luks's vaudeville career into the 1890s; in *Life on the Press: The Popular Art and Illustrations of George Benjamin Luks* (University of Mississippi, 2009), 7.

[3] There are two reasons for my dating. First, Luks notes on the first and second page of the letter that he found a potential buyer for one of his "pictures," indicating that at this point in time he had taken up painting as his primary occupation, which he did not do until around 1900. As the letter indicates, his minstrel act with Will was still an important source of income for Luks—suggesting that he was not making enough income from his paintings to live off yet. Second, on the third page of the letter, Luks references "Em"—presumably his second wife, Emma Noble. The mention of Emma is notable, since up until 1902, Luks was still married to his first wife, Lois, and did not marry Emma until 1904, suggesting this letter was written sometime between his divorce and second marriage.

[4] To date, I have found two boxing paintings featuring Black figures by Luks or attributed to him: *Boxing Match* (1910; Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens) and *Madison Square Fights* (n.d.; Private collection). Both portray a boxing match between a Black and white opponent, which is reminiscent of Bellows's famous boxing scene, *Both Members of This Club* (1909; National Gallery of Art).

[5] Philip Cumyn, "A Luks Reminiscence," *New York Times*, November 12, 1933.

[6] Cole, *How the Other Half Laughs*, 3–28; Ian Gordon, *Comic Strips and Consumer Culture, 1890–1945* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998), 59–79; David Monod, *Vaudeville and the Making of Modern Entertainment, 1890–1925* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020); Rebecca Wanzo, *The Content of Our Caricature: African American Comic Art and Political Belonging* (New York University Press, 2020), 36–71.

[7] Wanzo argues that racist caricature is central to the emergence of cartooning in the United States; in *Content of Our Caricature*, 7.

[8] Wanzo, *Content of Our Caricature*, 6–7.

[9] Christina Meyer, "George Benjamin Luks and the Comic Weeklies of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 3, no.1 (2012): 78.

[10] The work resembles a 1907 painted self-portrait in which Luks grins out at the viewer with his pipe clenched between his lips, wearing a smock (Texas A&M University Art Galleries). Robert Henri's and William Glackens's painted portraits of Luks in 1904 and 1899, respectively, similarly portray Luks in an artist's coat with a curled forelock.

[11] Louis Chude-Sokei, *The Last "Darky": Burt Williams, Black-on-Black Minstrelsy, and the African Diaspora* (Duke University Press, 2006), 4.

[12] Richard Pells, *Modernist America: Art, Music, Movies, and the Globalization of American Culture* (Yale University Press, 2011), 27.

[13] Bennard Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight* (Dover, 1988), 54–55. The four men would hop from paper to paper but never ended up at the same periodical at the same time (58–59).

[14] Henri shared the Walnut Street studio at times with John Sloan and fellow newspaper artist Joe E. Laub. See Heather Campbell Coyle, "Laughing Matters: Art Caricature in America, 1878–1918" (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2011), 221n62.

[15] Coyle, "Laughing Matters," 185–92.

[16] Coyle suspects that *Cake Walk* was among the monotypes made in Sloan's studio in 1907, as the work came into Delaware Art Museum's collection with other similarly sized monotypes by Robert Henri and Mary Perkins produced in Sloan's studio in 1907. Moreover, in his diary entries from March 18 and April 7, 1907, respectively, Sloan mentions Luks attending a dinner at the Sloan residence with Henri and later notes that he and Henri had some "monotype fun." See John Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes, and Correspondence*, ed. Bruce St. John (Harper and Row, 1965), 113, 120.

[17] Heather Campbell Coyle, "After Dinner," *Delaware Art Museum Online Catalogue*, accessed May 4, 2023, https://emuseum.delart.org/objects/5586/after-dinner.

[18] I suspect that this could be a member of The Eight, as the bouffant hair resembles his depiction of a member of the group in a caricature of the same year (see George Luks, *Henri and His 8*, 1907).

[19] Daphne A. Brooks, *Bodies in Dissent: Spectacular Performances of Race and Freedom, 1850–1910* (Duke University Press, 2006), 270.

[20] Sylvia Yount, "Everett Shinn and the Intimate Spectacle of Vaudeville," in *On the Edge of Your Seat: Popular Theater and Film in Early Twentieth-Century American Art*, ed. Patricia McDonnell (Yale University Press, 2002), 187.

[21] It is interesting that in the photograph of Luks as Buzzy, his leg is lifted and bent in a manner that mirrors the prancing pose of the two dancers. While I do not mean to suggest that Luks performed the cakewalk routine in his act, as there is no evidence of this, I find it a noteworthy comparison that shows that this gesture had become associated with performing Blackness onstage.

[22] Vaudeville shows were made up of a series of variety sketches rather than a single performance. The sketches ranged in terms of tone and length, from dramatic acts and burlesque comedy to song and dance numbers. For more, see Robert W. Snyder, *The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York* (Oxford University Press,1989); Ester Romeyn, *Street Scenes: Staging the Self in Immigrant New York, 1880–1924* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 125–58; and Yount, "Everett Shinn and the Intimate Spectacle of Vaudeville," 157–73.

[23] Romeyn, *Street Scenes*, 87.

[24] David Krasner, *Resistance, Parody, and Double Consciousness in African American Theatre, 1895–1910* (St. Martin's Press, 1997), 17.

[25] The cakewalk dance rose in prominence in the postbellum era onstage, but by the 1900s, it was a permanent fixture in African American theater. See Brooks, *Bodies in Dissent*, 270; and Marian Hannah Winter, "Juba and American Minstrelsy," in *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth-Century Blackface Minstrelsy*, ed. Annemarie Bean et al. (Wesleyan University Press, 1996), 223–41.

[26] Brooks, *Bodies in Dissent*, 272.

[27] Richard Powell, *Black Art: A Cultural History* (Thames and Hudson, 2002), 30–32; Sieglinde Lemke, *Primitive Modernism: Black Culture and the Origins of Transatlantic Modernism* (Oxford University Press, 1998); and Charles Riley II, *How the Jazz Age Reinvented Modernism* (ForeEdge, 2017).

[28] Lemke, *Primitive Modernism*; Richard Powell and David A. Bailey, *Rhapsodies in Black: Art of the Harlem Renaissance* (University of California Press, 1997); and James Smethurst, *The African American Roots of Modernism: From Reconstruction to the Harlem Renaissance* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[29] Richard J. Powell, *The Blues Aesthetic*: *Black Culture and Modernism* (Washington Project for the Arts, 1989).

[30] Riva Castleman, *Jasper Johns: A Print Retrospective* (Museum of Modern Art, 1986), 14.