

GIRL SHOWS!

A look at the American carnival girl shows of the 20th century and a review of the book *Girl Show: Into the Canvas World of Bump and Grind* by A.W. Stencell.

Presented by Leslie Cunningham

The Harlem in Havana Project [Burlesque Education Series](https://www.harleminhavana.com) | [harleminhavana.com](https://www.harleminhavana.com)

Class Overview

- **Title:** Girl Shows!
- **Presented by:** Leslie Cunningham
- **Class Description:** A look at the American carnival girl shows of the 20th century and a review of the book *Girl Show: Into the Canvas World of Bump and Grind* by A.W. Stencell.
- **Delivery Format:** In-person and virtual presentation includes a 23min pre-recorded docu/storytelling video; 20+ minutes of discussion questions (3 total); 10+minute review/questions.
- **Audience:** Global audience interested in American entertainment history, Women's Studies, Black Life, Burlesque and Dance history.
- **Prerequisites:** None

Class Objectives:

1. Learn about the American carnival girl shows of the 20th century.
2. Review of the book *Girl Show: Into the Canvas World of Bump and Grind* by A.W. Stencell.
3. Meet some of the headliners who helped innovate Burlesque.

This presentation covers:

1. The book *Girl Show: Into the Canvas World of Bump and Grind* by A.W. Stencell
2. Girl Show History
3. Burlesque Baddies
4. Black Girl Shows

Discussion Questions: (To be discussed in a group for 5 minutes each)

1. What was happening socially in America in the early to mid-20th century that sparked the rise of the American showgirl?
2. What were some challenges showgirls may have faced traveling and performing on carnival girl shows?
3. What are some factors that played a role in the demise of the American carnival girl show?

Review Questions:

1. What did you learn?
2. What stood out for you about the presentation?
3. What did you find relevant as it relates to your current art forms?
4. Do you have any questions?

Presenter Contact Information:

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Websites:

- Leslie's website, lesliecunninghamfilms.com
- Harlem in Havana Project, harleminhavana.com
- Jig Show | Leon Claxton's Harlem in Havana- jigshow.com (documentary film)