# Dance and the Hollywood Musical

Transcription of podcast 3

**Non-choreography and non-rehearsals**

The second way in which the Hollywood musical creates an illusion of folk art is through what Feuer describes as ‘non-choreography’ and ‘non-rehearsals’. She suggests that the dominant dance styles in the 1930s musicals were tap and ballroom and these derived from European social dance styles rather than 'folk' as such.

As part of her argument, Feuer characterises the dance of the musicals as 'non-choreography' and 'non-rehearsals'. So what does she mean by those terms?

‘Non-choreography' is the idea that the choreography is cancelled out because the dances give an impression of such spontaneity - through underplaying the choreography, it’s implied that dancing is natural and easy. In some instances, the dances are closer to pedestrian activity and the dance sequences develop out of ordinary movement rather than steps. In other cases, the dance sequence is presented in the context of a rehearsal so that the audience sees a polished performance presented with the casual quality of a rehearsal. The impression is therefore one of ease and spontaneity rather than labour and planning.

Once again, it’s time to take a break to watch this clip from *It’s Always Fairweather.*

As you are watching, try to think about how this might illustrate her ideas about ‘non-choreography’.

How convinced are you that this sequence underplays the choreography at work?