

“Beehive : The 60’s Musical”

Alan Bresloff



Somewhat Recommended ** On the heels of the last production at the Metropolis Performing Arts Centre in Arlington Heights, I was sort of looking forward to “Beehive: The 60’s Musical”. After all, their “Avenue Q” was sterling. I even invited some friends (who also loved that show) to join us. We were disappointed, to say the least. This is truly not a musical play, but is in fact more of a tribute to the music and mostly female performers of the 1960’s Ladies like Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross, Lesley Gore, Connie Francis, The Shirelles, Tina Turner and then as we moved forward in time into the 1970’s Janis Joplin and the “peace movement” handled by Halle Bins to perfection.

The music was memorable: Over 26 songs filled the one-hour-forty-five minutes , including a 15 minute intermission, with songs such as: “Where The Boys Are”, “One Fine Day”, “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow”, “My Boyfriend’s Back”, “It’s My Party”, all done by six very young ladies. Doing songs of the 1960’s and narrating the times as if they had lived them was lost on the mostly senior Arlington Heights audience , many of whom were wearing shoes that were older than these young ladies.

This show, created by Larry Gallagher, has a weak script that tries to tell the story of the period where women first came out of their shells in order to take their stand in the “Modern World”. While the six young ladies have decent voices and range, director Dina DiConstanzo, who I have always felt was solid, could not overcome the weakness of this story. There are some cleverly done numbers, in particular one that was supposed to end the first act, “Abraham, Martin and John” an homage to those who were taken during the tragic days of the 1960’s: John Kennedy and Martin Luther King and what happened to our country because of this. A very tear invoking song that was supposed to end the act allowing the audience to use the intermission to reflect. I think, after doing

the show, it was decided that this was a pretty somber way to end a happy , tuneful show, so they went into the “British Invasion” and did two numbers from the second act- then did a few extra instrumentals to start the second act.



My personal thoughts- make this a 90 minute show, even a 100 minutes, without an intermission and keep your audience into the show. It took the pretty rude audience tonight about 10 extra minutes to get back into the show. I felt sorry for the musicians (under the leadership of Kenneth McMullen) as they did the instrumentals with the audience sipping their beverages and talking about their teen years. Those of you involved, you know you were unfair to those sitting around you.

Hats off to the young ladies: the feisty Anastasia Arnold , The preggers Christie Burgess, Caitlin Dobbins (who does a mean Tina Turner), Bre Jacobs (a powerful voice with a great range), the earlier mentioned Halle Bins and the adorable Jala Williams-Craig. Some of them are just starting their careers, so please note their names. You should hear them again, A special note should also go out for the wig designer , Dianne Sizemore, who did a major job of taking us through hair styles of the times, as did costume designer Rachel S. Parent, with clothing styles. There is a great speech about the coming of the mini-skirt and how girls who were told not to wear them, overcame their mother’s requests. The set (Katie Alvord-Wendling) was created at levels that allow every seat to see every performer. The Metropolis was also designed to allow each audience member to see the stage clearly because the seats are

alternate, just enough to give that view. Makes theater much more fun!



While this is not up to the level of the previous production, it is because of the script, yet, those who enjoy the music of that period and like the idea of watching the evolution of the women of pop-music, you will have a great evening and be entertained by the great numbers and the videos and photos that are displayed throughout the evening. These, along with the thrilling “Abraham, Martin and John” are worth the price of admission, so don’t hold back. You can only see this production of “Beehive: The 60’s Musical” thru August 25th with performances as follows:



Thursdays 7:30 p.m.

Fridays 7:30 p.m.

Saturdays 3 and 7:30 p.m.

Sundays 3 p.m.

Tickets are \$40 and as I said, there are no bad seats in this house. Tickets can be purchased at the box office, by calling 847-577-2121 or online at www.MetropolisArts.com.

The theater is located in downtown Arlington Heights at 111 West Campbell Street with loads of FREE parking (including a covered garage- but pay attention to the signs and head up to the 4th floor). There are lots of good restaurants along the street as well.



To see what others are saying, visit www.theatreinchicago.com, go to Review Round-Up and click at "Beehive: The 60's Musical".

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