

'A Chorus Line' at The Arlington Players by Derek Mong

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Forget one singular sensation! *A Chorus Line* at The Arlington Players is a full line-up of seventeen triple-threat sensations!



The cast of 'A Chorus Line.' Photo by Peter Hill,.

With music by Marvin Hamlisch and lyrics by Edward Kleban, and book by James Kirkwood, Jr. and Nicholas Dante, *A Chorus Line* is truly an iconic, classic piece for all true musical theatre lovers as it traces the career trajectories and ambition of seventeen dancers auditioning for spots on a chorus line. Bob Bell's scenic design places a row of mirrors towards the back of the stage which allows the audience to see a reflection of themselves as if in a dance studio, and the lack of props and large set pieces mimics a Broadway theatre during a high-stakes audition. Much of the set changes are performed by raising and lowering a curtain over the mirrors and carefully adjusting pools of light to distinguish between various spaces—creating an efficient, yet extremely effective, way of navigating the stage and directing the audience's focus, provided by Chris Hardy's lighting design.

Under the direction of Susan Devine and the production team of Amanda Acker and Leah Aspell, the energy on stage was electrifying, and the chemistry and camaraderie between the entire company was apparent. From the starting number "I Hope I Get It" to the final reprise of the classic "One," the entire company is on stage for the better half of the show, which is performed without an intermission. Although, in the narrative arc of the plot, each individual character is competing against one another for a coveted spot in the chorus, there is a sense of unity in the way in which each cast member complements and is complemented by one another, which is poignantly reflected in the final number "What I Did For Love," in which the company reminisces about the sacrifices they have made to pursue their dreams.

When the cast of young performers sings "We did what we had to do/Won't forget, can't regret, what I did for love", you can't help but get a sense that the young actors are too—like their characters—chasing their limelight. Among the cast of rising stars, there were several standout performers. Kristine (Nadine Rousseau) and Al's (Mark Allen) performance of

“Sing!” was remarkable—capturing the whimsical quintessence of the song without devolving into mockery or overbearing caricature. Mark (Sean Cator) and Connie’s (Gina Santos) portrayal of pre-adolescent teens in “Hello Twelve, Hello Thirteen, Hello Love” was also well-performed, leaving the audience both laughing in recognition of the oddities of adolescent life, yet reminiscent of bygone days in the years of becoming.



The cast of ‘A Chorus Line.’ Photo by Peter Hill.

Amanda Kaplan’s (Diana) solo in “Nothing” was another stand-out performance of the afternoon; her chilling vibrato perfectly captured the essence of a star waiting to bloom. Kaplan has a powerful belt and vibrato, which she shares in her solo in the finale number “What I Did for Love.”

With choreography by Stefan Sittig, Alison Block’s performance of “The Music and the Mirror” was a lyrical interlude that showcased the power of solo dance—a refreshing break from the larger dance numbers with the full company.

Under the musical direction of Paul Nasto, the orchestra situated below the stage in the pit is not to be understated. One major commendation for the show is the great balance of the vocals of each individual singer and the band overall by Sound Designer Dave Correia, which allowed for the audience to experience the production with all of the instruments and voices coalescing to form one, singular sound.