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Review: 'A Chorus Line' at Forestburgh Playhouse

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The cast of "A Chorus Line."

Forestburgh Playhouse

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By Marcus Kalipolites

For the Times-Herald Record

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FORESTBURGH — With style and sophistication in its choreography as well as drama in its plot, is it any wonder that "A Chorus Line" enjoyed more than 6,000 performances on Broadway?

At the Forestburgh Playhouse, the extravaganza continues with a high-octane production where dance-as-catalyst finds some 20 players auditioning for a new Broadway show. So to find out how talented his aspirants are, Zach puts them through a number of lock-step movements with the brusqueness of a drill sergeant.

It's during this long opening number that players alternate dance maneuvers with vocal expressions of "I Hope I Get It." But for more than technique, stage director Zach (Kevin Confoy) wants to know about family, experience and age as hopefuls reveal what prompted them to become dancers.

The resumes begin with Mike. Taking over from a sister who quit dancing, Nick Mason's character couples high-stepping movements with an explanatory "I Can Do That."

While the splendid performance of "At the Ballet" provides Sheila, Bebe and Maggie (Maria Francesconi, Alyssa Wall and Khristy Chamberlain) with a venue for describing the beauty of dance, anything but pleasant are the croaking sounds of Madison Turner, whose tone-deaf character of Kristine in "Sing" has to be tuned in by hubby Al (Marrick Smith).

It's in "Montage Part 1: Hello Twelve" that Mark (Jake Weinstein) ruefully tells of his first wet dream as others take turns describing their own passage through puberty. In "Nothing," the poignant voice of Georgia Tapp taps into the emptiness of Diana unable to express feelings as part of a high school drama class.

In "Montage Part 4," the big ensemble number at the close of Act 1, Kristopher Ward explains how his character of Ritchie had forsaken teaching for a career in dancing.

The second half opens with the fluid movements and expressive voice of Zoe Kassay in her sexy and suggestive role of Val in "Dance: Ten; Looks: Three." In contrast to Val's raunchy display, Cassie (Danielle Kelsey) follows with a lengthy and artistic display of refined ballet in "The Music and the Mirror."

IF YOU GO ...

What: "A Chorus Line"

Where: Forestburgh Playhouse, 39 Forestburgh Road, Forestburgh

When: 8 p.m. Tues.-Sat., 2 p.m. Wed., 3 p.m. Sun. through July 18

Tickets: \$33-\$40

Call: 794-1194

On the Web: www.fbplayhouse.com

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Drama in the story finds Zach dealing with a frustrated Cassie (former and unemployed solo dancer) needing to find work and a forlorn Paul (Antonio Jimenez) coming to terms with his homosexuality.

And as a resolution to the uncertainty shared by hopefuls in the opening number of "I Hope I Get It," closure in the show finds warm-voiced Tapp and friends justifying their obsession and commitment to dance in "What I Did for Love."

With all the high marks of a Broadway revival, this polished production directed and choreographed by Stacy Alley warrants a visit.



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