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audience reviews

Andrew Lipppa's Wild Party, Runaway Stage Productions (Broadway Stage)

Review: Dark. Dangerously delicious. The often glamorized spirit of the time was captured, but revealed through a more realistic thirst and desperation. It's rare that a musical can be so rooted in reality. The passion, the need for expression, the social liberation of both women, and homosexuals, sexual experimentation and fulfillment, the importance of security, and love, all shaken well in a martini glass and served hot over a brass section that could shake you into the Charleston, and seduce you into bed. Well...well...well done Pit! You fully supported the voices that several times made me say, "mm," with major satisfaction. Well done voices! Also a special well...well done to the brave and daring folks who so shamelessly teased and pleased on stage. Bravo dancing! There were tech probs, but nothing that distracted from this very good show. Sexy! Rock and Shock!

Review: Not a bad production! Runaway Stage always seems to try their hardest and this is no exception. Loved the choreography by Darryl Strohl! It was jazzy, sexy and even dirty at times, which fit the mood of the show! The costumes by Lillian Baxter were the epitome of the roaring 20's! My only piece of criticism? I found that some of the acting/ characterizations fell flat and some bordered on caricatures. I was just looking for a little more honesty out of the lead characters. I felt as if Queenie, Kate and Mr. Black were barely scratching the surface of their characters; I wanted to see more truthfulness than just sex appeal. But, then again, this is community theater. I shouldn't be so hard on a valiant effort! Great job cast and crew! I will recommend this to my friends and family.

Review: Amazing high-energy dancing and singing performances with all the bells-and-whistles! I saw opening night's show and was simply blown away by the level of professionalism in nearly every aspect. A fun, sexy, jazzed-up and verging on over-the-top delicious production with a LIVE orchestra rockin' the wonderful score of a recent Broadway

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hit musical well worth your time!. I dare you to leave the Sierra2 Runaway Stage theater NOT humming a tune. Get tickets now...

Review: WOW! so i saw this show on opening night, and boy what an opening. this show really was a fantastic roller coaster of all things vice. Heavy emotion, from laughing to crying, hysterics and hurt, I was simply, and completely moved by this show. Highlights of the Show: Scott Woodard (Mr. Black) pouring out his soul for "Poor child" only to be further intensified by the rest of the leads for a rousing ending of the number that caused goosebumps, Andee Thorpe (Kate) Wailing during Juggernaut, Robin Hushbeck (Madelaine True) Bring the house down with her showstopping "Old Fashion Love Story", Amber Jean Moore (Queenie) soulfully expliaing "Maybe I Like It This Way", The whole ensemble seamlessly dancing their hearts out in "Juggernaut", "What a Party", and "Wild, Wild Party." The choreography is in itself worth the price of admission. Truly capturing the essence of the Roaring twenties, my heart raced anytime I would see the entire cast spinning, and dancing. absolutely amazing! Kudos to Daryl Strohl. The vocals of the show came through almost effortlessly, while 5 and 6 part harmonies, and random musical outbursts seemed so well done, only a few small snags here and there were noticed, Deann Golz really had her work cut out for her, I'm sure, and she did a wonderful job. The Direction and staging of the show by Bob Baxter per usual for Runaway, was flawless. Not one body in an awkward or unusual spot, lead way for a very easy transformation for the audience to be a "fly on the wall" in Queenie and Burrs Apartment. Small things that left more to be desired: Andee Thorpe felt somewhat awkward during parts of the show, Scott Woodard and Amber Jean Moore's acting feel flat at times (yet not very noticeable anytime they opened their mouths to sing), Dan Mason's voice sounding somewhat thin at times but his character was so strong and real that this detail was easily forgiven, Joshua James dance solo seemed a tad hokey and a bit under rehearsed, and the fight scene between the boxer and Burrs lacked energy. Also I haven't seen a show with show at RSP with mind-blowing lighting in a very very long time, until now. Bret Bachmann's design really lent itself to the show, and for a scene like in "Come with Me" came off extremely sensual, and not at all raunchy. This show really takes the cake and overshadows a lot of RSP's recent "sexy" shows. breaking boundaries and pushing the envelope, oh so gently. SEE THIS SHOW! it is very very worth it.

Review: I came to this show friday night and was blown away. The level of talent on that stage is wonderful. Direction was fantastic. I never felt like the cast didnt know what they were doing. The 4 leads were fantastic. Vocals were amazing. Coreography was by far the best

work ive ever seen on that stage. As for the story, its dark and everything ive been waiting for. Kudos to runaway for such a wonderful production. I must say though, This show would not be what it is without the woman playing queenie. Amber Jean Moore steals the show. She had me in tears 3 times. Her closing number gave me shivers. It was both beautiful and haunting at the same time. Keep up the good work RSP!

Review: I knew I would be seeing something edgy, sexual, and daring at Runaway Stage Production's "The Wild Party", but it was different than one would expect. First, the choreography was amazing. Daryl Strohl did a wonderful, jazzy, and energetic job for the show. A few of the cast members had great voices and some nice acting, such as Kate, Black, and the woman who played Madelaine True (wonderful voice and acting) whom were great to listen to in the show, but that's where the highlights stop. Most of the main characters lacked stage presence and any chemistry of any type, especially the two main leads. Queenie was very wooden and was appeared disconnected with her character. A disappointing acting performance for such a critical character. She had a nice voice, but that was the only interesting facet she had going for the story's lead character. There was no chemistry between Queenie and her counterpart Burrs. Burrs did not have the voice for the show, nor did he seem to be the right type for the role. His dancing was not up to par and his acting seemed very forced and haphazard. The show is extremely sexually graphic -- to the point where it seemed like it went beyond edgy art and was making up for its deficiencies in its other departments with overly graphic sexual portrayals and scenes on stage. I'm not against these types of shows and genres, but this was over-the-top and forced down your throats. Overall, if you want to see some great dancing, choreography, good ensemble work with a few nice voices, and extreme sexual content. Then this is a show for you. If you yearn for more qualities, then I would not recommend this performance of "The Wild Party".

Review: Saw it on Opening Night, Excellent Singing, good choreograpy, fair characterization. Costumes sensational, lighting a little lacking, very dark on stage, maybe done to cover "things". Leads were good to amazing. Supporting roles very strong. Not for family, virtuous, and please do not let children in. This is Showtime soft porn. Would have preferred the director offered some sensual or sexual suggestion instead of literally shoving it in your face. Many inappropriate over the top unneeded sexual shock moments. Over heard several comments during intermission debating whether or not to stay or go; small percentage left. High Risk, not sure about the reward, RSP box office

and season ticket holders will eventually decide. I think in long run seen as a regrettable choice. Story really lacked umph!

Review: The production was okay. Not the best I've seen. Queenie and Burrs were totally wrong for each other. The actors did not seem to work well together nor perform very well on stage. I have seen much better. Everyone else was acceptable or even great elsewhere and the choreography was amazing.

Review: An excellent production! Most if the elements you look for have come together to produce a quality theatre experience. Especially notable are the music, dance, lighting, and costumes. Unfortunately the set and sound design do not measure up. The sound is rife w/feedback and missed cues. The set is clunky, unfinished?, and too big for the ratio of cast size:stage space. Fortunately, the things that work far outshine those that don't...Sultry Amber Moore sounds better than ever in this role. Dan Mason is equally strong vocally and an excellent actor, eagerly bringing us along on Burrs' trip to insanity. The ensemble was also strong: harmonies are always tight and the lyrics came across well (when the mics were on). But the musical stand-outs are handsome Scott Woodward, brassy Andrea Thorpe, and the jazz band. SO STRONG! Chris Cook is to be commended for rocking 24th St and successfully leading such a complex score, keeping vocal and instrumental musicians together and in top form. Most of the cast members are accomplished dancers (even singers Moore and Woodward) and the choreographer expertly features those who deserve to be, while giving the lesser dancers plenty of 'movement', complimenting the dances. The goddess in black (Hungarian in 'Chicago') and the sexy ballroom dancer in red particularly stood out and all the men were uniformly excellent (especially as Queenie's back-ups in the Opening). The choreography usually supports or furthers the story, often titillates (uber sexual), and hearkens back to what made the 20s ROAR. If one were to critique the choreography, some of it is a little derivative (ok, so's the score). Also, there are occasionally too many dancers for the small space; Strohl should have thinned out some of the numbers to give everyone more room (or maybe he & Baxter wanted to give a feeling of a large party in a small apt; didnt work for me). And Jackie - tho charismatic and handsome - is technically not the best dancer on the stage. While Josh James lacks turn-out, balance, experience, and enough space to dance in, he works overtime ACTING thru his dance solo to make it work. But this is not Broadway and \$20 does not buy perfection. Still, Strohl's creativity and his cast's energy and talent make this the best choreo you're gonna get in Sac - professional or community. With limited resources, Brett Bachman

nearly elevates this community theatre piece to rock concert status in the big dance numbers, while creating creepy shadows necessary for the noir quality of the show. Lillian Baxter's costumes fit the actors, characters, and the show brilliantly. The 2 leading ladies are RADIANT in sequin dress which are not as cliché as you'd expect from ... sequin dresses. VERY SEXY use of dress slits and garter belts. Not sure if the use of color between lights & costumes was planned or a happy coincidence, but it's lush. Some of the staging is awkward (moving furniture back & forth for dances) due to the clunky set; some of the playing spaces are not fully utilized; some of the actors need work on their comic timing (the Lesbian & the Gay Brothers in tuxes). However, Director Bob Baxter expertly builds tension between the main characters toward the tragic, inevitable end. The struggle for the gun, the reaction to the death, and Queenie's assessment are riveting. GO SEE this excellent production.

Review: I went to this show Saturday night with my friend not knowing what to expect. Little did I know what a treat I would be in for. This is a very dark show and I was very thankful to the box office for warning us. I think letting everyone know it's not recommended for more mature audiences was a fair warning and if you're not sure then don't go. This show is a very complicated production to pull off and the characters are so hard to play. Kudos to Masden, Woodard, Thorpe and most of all, Moore. I have seen a lot of theatre in my life and I don't know any other four actors that could have pulled this off. The highlight of the show, every single time Moore opens her mouth! WOW! Not only does she act the part well, she dances it fantastic. And, can you say sexy? I was ready to jump on the stage during 'come with me' But above the acting, dancing and sex appeal she truly is a fantastic singer who does not belong in the Sacramento area. 'maybe I like it this way' and 'how did we come to this' had me in tears. Not many performers can move me in that way. It is worth the twenty dollars alone just to look and listen to Amber Jean Moore. Bravo to Bob Baxter and the cast of The Wild Party.

Review: WOW, what a night of theatre !! Of course this show is for an adult audience, but it is a fascinating look at the progressive 1920's. Queenie and Burris are excellent in the lead roles, and the big cast delivers as well. Great musical numbers, with fantastic dancing ! For only \$20.

Review: I am not a prude but this show made me uncomfortable, probably because of the utter lack of chemistry between the lead characters. If I believed, it would have been easier to swallow. Risky, but lacking reward.

Review: I didn't mind this show. I thought Queenie and Burrs had a frightening chemistry. I'm a season subscriber, and quite frankly, I'm getting bored with seeing Amber Jean Moore on stage in almost every show. I wish they would add a bit more variety! It almost seems like every "sultry" or "sexy" part they need, they just fall back on her. Spice it up, RSP! Add more variety!!! Though, I do I have to say - keep Darryl Stroh! I loved his choreography for Chicago and he does NOT disappoint in this show!!! AMAZING!

Review: I saw "The Wild Party" this weekend, and although it was a fabulous performance, I'm not quite seeing what others saw in either Amber Jean Moore (Queenie) or Scott Woodard (Black.) Now, Woodard was EXCEPTIONAL in other shows I've seen at Runaway Stage. However, I was disappointed. This part showed his weaknesses as an actor (vocally, he's outstanding. bar none.) While, Amber Jean Moore has always proven to be a "look at me" actress (onstage) I've never been "wow'd" by her. Now, that's just me. My husband and I never understood the appeal. Oh well. Besides that, Lillian Baxter outdid herself this time with the costumes were exceptional! Darryl Stroll had choreography that was amazing and Christopher Cooke led that fabulous orchestra (they are always such a delight! Love that bass!) So faults and all, it's still a joy. I commend these young folk for a fun evening nonetheless.

Review: I came to the show on sunday of opening weekend and there were glitches, I felt this show was fantastic. I go see many shows at RSP and this one just raised the bar for all other local companies. I had never seen the man playing burrs before (Masden) and I was very impressed. I felt his acting was fantastic but his voice is a little weak for the role. Black is fantastic all around (woodard). He makes you feel so much for him and what a beautiful voice. Kate played by (thorpp) was fun but almost shouting at times. and queenie played by (moore) was FANTASTIC. Now I go to RSP a lot like i said earlier and I dont feel Moore has been used to much. She has not been on stage in a long time and I was starting to miss her voice. To be quite honest I thought she should have been millie. Not many people around are true triple threats. Keep up the good work all around. Fantastic show!

Review: The show was decent but not outstanding. The sexual content seemed to be forced in your face and not natural. Like they were trying to do it over the top. Which would have been fine if done right, but it was not. The four leads were ok, not good not bad, just there. The ensemble however was amazing. Overall it just seemed like nobody in

the cast had there heart in the show, and they were just doing the movements.

Review: Bob Baxter has done it once again. We just returned from another of his marvelous shows--and what a wild party it was. Have been following Scott Woodard and he did a excellent job of both dancing and singing. He surprised us with yet another showing of his talents. Can't say too much about the wonderfully talented Queenie. Only objection was that the mics were tuned too loud. During some of the six part harmonys the words were not understood. All actors brought across a very believable performance and their joys and sorrows could be felt. Look forward almost immediatly for the next Baxter production.

Review: Very well done, and fun! Very risque (sp?) and erotic. Not for everyone, if you have strong views against gay/lesbian situations and simulated sexual acts. Talent was great!!

Review: The show was ok. Nothing to write home about. Seriously.

Review: I would like to say job well done for this amazing cast. These people took time out of their busy lives to put on an amazing sexy show for Sacramento. Kudos to you actors!!! Your brilliant. Your sexy. Your talented. Bob, you cast the right people for this show. Every character had chemistry with each other. RSP, you have some elly's coming your way for this show. And Mr. Darryl Strohl, Fosse must have been your father because the dances were SPLENDID!!! I cant wait to see more from RSP in the future. You deserved your reviews in the Bee and SN&R.

Review: It's always interesting when a production receives numerous comments. It is great when theatre stirs thought and perspective. And that is certainly what Wild Party does. It is entirely different than anything I have ever seen before, either locally or on Broadway. And I found this cast to be not only incredibly talented, triple threat performers, but fearless in conveying the dark side of the roaring twenties, and certainly the author's intent. The 4 leads sing their hearts out throughout this production, their energy and emotion never failing. Production values are terrific, costumes, lighting, set, and last but certainly not least, the fabulous Orchestra. What a treat! BRAVO to all involved!

Review: Good show, but not my cup of tea. Too much everything and nothing really new. Just sexed up same old, same old. Looking forward to the next RSP offering.

Review: I saw this show and was blown away. How much more professional can you get? Burrs was one of the best characters ive seen on Runaways stage in a long long time. Hold onto him! Kate did the rold proud. Black was just beautiful in poor child. gave me chills. And queenie, not one negative thing I could say. She is fantastic! What she is still doing in Sacramento is beyond me but im happy to be able to watch her talent. WOW!!! Ensemble you were so much more than an ensemble. You kept the show going. CONGRATS!

Review: What a wild party it was! The talent assembled for this production was over the top. A very difficult show to stage...having all those people on stage once the party begins is a challenge for any director, but Bob Baxter pulled it all together nicely. The choreography seemed to fit the skill levels of the dancers. The vocals were outstanding...the principles were fantastic. I was troubled by some of the technical aspects. Ensemble vocals got muddy at times, and the lighting was dark and unpredictable, with lights missing their actors, and actors missing light to be seen. This is s must see show...thanks Runaway for staging this neglected work.

Review: Simply great! I've seen it twice - so hurry in since this is the last weekend. All the elements come together bringing fun, laughter, despair and drama.

Review: After hearing varied opinions from people whose theatre opinions I respect, I had no idea what to expect. Last night's talent blew me away. I would describe it as a masterful way to handle what others could have easily turned into exhibitionism meant to shock. Instead I witnessed a living piece of beautiful art—honest and thought-provoking—in every aspect. As much as I love the warm fuzzies from our familiar shows, it was exciting to see something new and innovative. I hope Bob Baxter gives us more of this in the future. I would encourage anyone who has not seen this show to do so immediately—run, don't walk. There are only two performances left.

Review: Wow! Truly an outstanding show. Edgy, dark, sensual and extremely thought provoking. This was my first show at RSP but it definitely won't be my last.

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