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Guys and Dolls has something for everyone

## **Standing ovation for Scarborough Music Theatre's last show of season**

Scarborough Music Theatre received a well-deserved standing ovation for their end of season production of the classic musical, Guys and Dolls.

From the impressive New York City set, to the authentic 1940s costumes and fantastic ensemble performance, no detail is spared for a show that is thoroughly entertaining, funny and fun to watch.

Based on two short stories by Damon Runyon, with music and lyrics by Frank Loesser and book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows, Guys and Dolls is about love, gambling and the importance of taking a risk.

This story follows a group of crap shooters, led by Nathan Detroit (Mike Ranieri), who spends his time arranging illegal crap games around New York City. It also showcases the plight of the women who love these gamblers but can't get them to settle down.

Hot Box nightclub dancer, Adelaide (Jill MacMillan) and Sister Sarah Brown (Mary Bowden) from the Salvation Army, come from two different worlds but have the same problem: they've both fallen in love with gamblers; Adelaide with Nathan and Sarah with renowned gambler, Sky Masterson (Rich Burdett).

Adelaide has been waiting for 14 years for Nathan to marry her, while Sarah meets Sky because of a bet that said Nathan couldn't get the holy Sarah to accompany him for an evening in Havana, Cuba.

Through these characters, the audience is taken from Broadway to Havana, the sewer to the Sally Ann Mission, as they take us on a journey of running away from the law, the Lord and love, in pursuit of their next big win.

There are songs that many will know including 'Luck Be a Lady Tonight,' and 'Bushel and a Peck.' Stand out numbers include Adelaide and Sarah's duet 'Marry the Man Today,' where the two plot to finally bag their men, and Sarah's Bacardi-induced 'If I Were a Bell.'

The characters in this show are almost caricatures of themselves, but each is so individually likeable. Like fellow gamblers Big Jule (Dan Bart), Harry the Horse (Ben Trister), Benny Southstreet (Luke Slade) and Nicely Nicely Johnson (Mark Tingle), who stole the scene more than once with their antics and funny one-liners.

The six Hot Box girls are Marilyn Monroe-esque and did not fail to entertain. They also had some great one-liners along with amazing vocal and dance abilities as shown in their fantastic number, 'Take Back Your Mink.'

There are so many great performers in this show. Ranieri did not disappoint as the suave and charming Nathan, and Burdett is compelling and convincing as the gambler with the conflicted heart.

MacMillan has had several supporting roles in musicals in the past and finally, this one was her chance to shine in a lead role that is perfectly suited for her. She is phenomenal as the always a fiancée, never a bride Adelaide, and her ease on stage makes her a delight to watch.

Bowden has a beautiful voice and she plays Sarah with a great combination of vulnerability and conviction. She and Burdett also have great onstage chemistry which makes their unlikely pairing romantic and believable.

Director Jacqueline Burke got the casting right for this show. The characters are animated yet believable and the show moved at a pace that there is never a dull moment.

In any staging of Guys and Dolls there are expectations for both those who've seen and love this musical, and for those who are experiencing it for the first time. Scarborough Music Theatre does not disappoint with this production, and it's a great finale to their season.

Guys and Dolls runs until May 14, 8 p.m., with 2 p.m. matinees on May 8 and 14, at the Scarborough Village Theatre, 3600 Kingston Rd. Tickets are \$25 and \$21 for students and seniors on Thursdays and matinees only. For tickets call 416-267-9292.