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### ***Shout!* A Light-Hearted Evening of Entertainment**

Five retro-fitted vintage-coiffed young women take the stage in *Shout! The Mod Musical* at Drury Lane Watertower Place for what is best described as a musical review of some of the songs that defined the 60s and early 70s. Many of the musical numbers are now classic songs that defined the times, reflected the attitudes of a society that was breaking down stereotypical gender roles, and helped advance the empowerment of women during the sexual revolution as it was occurring in England as well as in the U.S.

*Shout!* is without a doubt a celebration of the music and an homage to the women who made it great. The five women cast members, who are only known to us by the color of their costumes (Blue, Red, Green, Yellow and Orange Girl) are akin to the Fanta™ girls if not the original inspiration for the vinyl clad flavor mavens. Singing the songs that made it up the chart in the UK are Lauren Fijol (Blue), Megan Long (Red), Danielle Plisz (Green), Maggie Portman (Yellow) and Amy Steele (Orange).



Pictured L-R Amy Steele, Megan Long, Danielle Plisz, Lauren Fijol and Maggie Portman

Each colorful expression of womanhood has her solo moments to take the audience back in time and into her life's individual soundtrack that defined who she was becoming. At times, however, it seems that the development of character gets somewhat obscured by the authors' attempt to create more of a variety show containing moments of inter-spliced 'Laugh-in' comedic moments and sketch comedy—the latter which does succeed in giving us more insight into each woman and helps the show connect with the audience. It is in these moments that the colors become characters instead of caricatures, and by the end of the evening we do learn where each woman has finally settled in her life.

Great costumes, hairstyles, and set design bring *Shout!* the textures of the era to the stage. The three-person band which becomes part of the set is comprised of [Bradley Vieth](#), Margaret James and Rich Trelease, and creates a composite soundscape that at times is a bit too volume hot and modern to be as authentic as the clothing to the production, and the tempos understandably are a bit sped up to allow the performance of the 29 hit songs in the allotted 90 minutes. Microphone levels for a few of the numbers were also a bit hot which detracted from the soulfulness that defined the music of the era.

The women were most impressive and the show is most successful when they are inhabiting their characters both in action and vocal performance. At times accents seemed to drift and were a bit ambiguous jumping between British, Cockney, and a Scottish burr. Another slight discrepancy occurred when Dusty Springfield's version of "Son of a Preacher Man" contained [Aretha Franklin's](#) "sock-it-to-me" background vocal addition. Small details perhaps, but when enough care is taken to remake the look and feel of an era, the same care should be taken throughout all aspects of the production.

The choreography is another area of production where the audience can instantly identify the style with the 60s but it lands more bland than rich because it doesn't take us out of what has been parodied before. At shows end, I was thinking more pom-pom squad than 60s inspired dance revival.

All that being said, the audience is still treated to an entertaining night of music and antics that reattaches us to a bit of the fabric from which we've been spun. When the women engage the audience in their journey, the show is most successful and the laughs and hand-clapping follow in turn.

For a night of light-hearted entertainment, *Shout! The Mod Musical* will play at the Drury Lane Theatre Watertower at 175 E. Chestnut Street in Chicago until June 22nd.