

Shout! is a new joyous musical tribute

SHOUT! At The Julia Miles Theater Oscar E Moore From The Rear Mezzanine

Shout Hallelujah! Everyone knows The Fab Four from Liverpool. Well, make way for the first ever - Female Fab Five. Shout! gives us five of the most deliciously talented young women in a brand new joyous musical tribute to the songs and dances (the monkey, the frug, the swim and the twist) of the swinging sixties. The musical gives us a fresh insight as to what the women of that era were going through when the world as they had known it was changing radically and quickly. So go! And pardon the pun but you'll have a frugin' good time.

It's a mod mod mod mod world on stage. From the raspberry hued shag carpet covering the multi leveled stage to the gargantuan vinyl flowers and beaded curtain by talented set designer David Gallo to the wonderfully tacky costumes, reminding us all of how women were clothed way back then, by Philip Heckman. The three piece ensemble of men, in equally garish garb, creates wonderfully fresh and exciting arrangements (by Bradley Vieth) for the songs that we all remember – if you are of a certain age. And if you are not, welcome to songs that actually have words that you can understand and music that is melodic, infectious and a pleasure to hear.

The songs are sung by these versatile five who sometimes, unexpectedly, accompany the ensemble with triangles, wood blocks, tambourines and finger cymbals to great comic effect. Each of these talented actors is identified by a color representing their personality which makes it fun and easy to chart their progress through the years as they react to changes in love, marriage, drugs, sexual mores, housework, pedicures and children. The show is cleverly framed by a series of voiced letters to an advice columnist, (Carole Shelley), whose voice over answers are not unlike those that Dame Edna would give. Advice that should quickly be ignored. The one-liners, in a style employed by the show The Laugh In, are sometimes a hit and sometimes a miss. The direction by Phillip George is chock full of tiny funny touches. Decidedly tongue in cheek and right on target. We even get a Jewish wedding! David Lowenstein, co-creator with Mr. George, has kept the choreography in period without being tiresome. It is imaginatively staged and performed with great energy and spunk. Peter Charles Morris supplies the often amusing gab that helps hold the evening together.

The songs, most of which were huge hits, are given a new dramatic context for these five women which gives them surprisingly new meanings. So much so that we care for these

girls who are going through some pretty challenging changes and we grow to admire them and love them because they are all so humanly wonderful: Marie-France Arcilla (Blue Girl- think Shirley Bassey), Erin Crosby (Yellow Girl- think JoAnne Worley), Julie Dingman Evans (Orange Girl – My Favorite Fab – think Sandra Dee/Doris Day with an edge), Erica Schroeder (Green Girl – think the most lovable slut you’ve ever met) and Casey Clark (Red Girl – think a young, gifted Carol Burnett as a terrific understudy going on for Denise Summerford who was indisposed). I’ve always hoped to see an understudy go on and shine like a star. Casey Clark did just that.

The hit parade of songs, include Wishin’ and Hopin’, To Sir With Love, You Don’t Have To Say You Love Me, Signs of The Times, Goldfinger, Downtown, Those Were The Days, and the title song Shout! Which gives the audience a chance to sing along with the fabulous five females and shout back their approval for an entertaining and altogether fun evening. Groooooooooovy!

Oscar E Moore for [talkentertainment.com](http://talkentertainment.com).