



## The Star-Ledger

### Feelin' groovy

#### **The '60s swing with vintage British pop faves at 'Shout!'**

Friday, July 28, 2006

MICHAEL SOMMERS

Where: Julia Miles Theatre, 424 W. 55th St., New York  
When: 7 p.m. Tuesdays; 8 p.m. Wednesdays-Saturdays; 3 p.m. Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays  
How much: \$55.  
Call (212) 239-6200 or visit [www.shoutthemodmusical.com](http://www.shoutthemodmusical.com).

NEW YORK -- Expect to enjoy a nicely nostalgic night out with the girls in "Shout!," a new show created from British pop hits of the Swingin'60s.

Anyone of a certain age whose inner Dusty or Petula is evoked by such vintage material may well be tickled by the 90-minute revue, performed by a kicky five-woman company.

Cleverly devised by director Phillip George and choreographer David Lowenstein, "Shout!" provides an impressionistic swing through the 1960s via a fast-paced mix of music and episodic comedy bits.

There's really no plot. Rather, these characters, identified only by the consistent hue of their period fashions, evolve with the times triggered by the songs.

For instance, "Orange Girl" (Julie Dingman Evans) serially experiences love, marriage, growing disillusion, divorce and personal reinvention. In contrast, "Green Girl" (Erica Schroeder) is the lusty soul who freely experiments with plenty of men and fab fads before settling down.

Humor punctuates the song stack. Some are quick "Laugh-In"-type bits: "I love my new vinyl boots, but I hate to think how many vinyls they killed to make them." Others are brief comedy sketches, such as when the women puff marijuana for the first time or when one broadly enacts all of the many possible side effects of ingesting birth control pills.

A running gag involves various letters written to and answered by a magazine advice columnist whose clueless remarks are delivered in plummy voiceovers by Carole Shelley, no less.

The generally perky mood tends to be affectionately retro, and the emphasis always sticks to the wildly catchy music. Denise Summerford is especially amusing when her wishy-washy character is torn by a schizo arrangement of "Georgy Girl" versus "Windy," which segues into a medley with the rest of the ensemble that covers the likes of "How Can I Be Sure" and "Don't Give Up."

A piquant Erin Crosby and a cool, elegant Marie-France Arcilla complete the energetic quintet, who are all dolled up in the requisite white lipstick, tarantula eyelashes and micro-minis of the Mary Quant-Vidal Sassoon-Twiggy era.

Neatly backed by an onstage instrumental trio, these performers often grab tambourines or maracas -- even a vibra-slap that creates the rattlesnake effect for "Goldfinger" -- and frug enthusiastically through their numbers with all of the twitchy go-go dance floor moves of the decade.

Occasionally such posturings slip over into some campy doings inadvertently recalling drag shows, but usually George's frisky staging keeps matters fairly straight.

On the other hand, designer David Gallo's purple-hazed, shagadelic decor doesn't appear to have a straight line anywhere -- it's all groovy curves, beaded fringe and globby plastic daisies. Hideous it probably appears to younger eyes, but anyone who recalls those years will recognize the awful truth to such visuals.

As for the songs, well, did the mere mention of some of these old favorites provoke smiles of fond recognition? If so, then "Shout!" offers light and lively entertainment.