



Adelaide Theatre Guide

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Supporting live theatre in South Australia

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FLARES

Blackwood Players

Blackwood 21

Until 17 May 2014

Review by Luke Wagner

The 70s will forever be remembered as a decade that gave the world many things, but one of thing springs to mind that stands out above anything else: the music.

Sue Oldknow's "Flares" is a celebration of some of the classic 70s hits tying together the tale of the Cash family. Mumma Cash is ready to retire and is unsure which of her squabbling children to leave her precious nightclub to. Her hippie daughter wants to turn the place into a free love party, whilst her two-timing son wants to make it a rock and roll club.

Once the audience made it through the unnecessarily lengthy process of getting their tickets, they were presented with a show that was not ready for performance. For a show that relied heavily on its musical numbers, not enough attention was given to them. The choreography, whilst effective, didn't shine as it lacked sharpness and uniformity amongst the large cast. Likewise, the vocals suffered due to poor technical settings. Lead singers' microphones were too quiet, with the supporting singers sometimes drowning them out. Several of the songs dragged on and could have benefited from a shortened track.

The storyline itself fared a little better. Some good individual characterization was present, but wasn't strong enough overall. Mitchell Lowe and Tessa McCormack as brother and sister Matt and Marie did well and provided some entertaining moments. Unfortunately, others simply looked bored to be there. It is important to commit to a role, even if you mess up. The audience can tell if you are beating yourself up over a missed musical entry, but if you stick with it, they will never know.

Tiffany Barbary was a shining light in this show. Her acting was excellent and her singing was the best of the night. Despite her microphone failing, her rendition of "I Will Survive" was the highlight of this performance.

Attention to detail is the key to producing a quality show. Near enough is not necessarily good enough. A musical should be filled with energy, finely tuned songs and a punchy story. Blackwood has a bit of work to do to ensure it hits the mark with this show.