

Mac-Haydn Theatre, Chatham, NY

Forever Plaid, Written and originally directed and choreographed by Stuart Ross.
Musical continuity and arrangements by James Raitt. Choreography by Ashley DeLane Burger.
Directed by James Barry. Reviewed by J. Peter Bergman.

“You don't thrill me when you hold me, no not much”



Eric Shorey (piano), Kylan Ross (Jinx), Miles Yokom (Sparky),
John Hannigan (Smudge), Cody Edwards (Frankie); Photo: Ann Kielbasa

Forever Plaid is perhaps the most enjoyable JukeBox musical ever created. It deals with a fictional group of close harmony vocalists rather than a singing star from the past. It welcomes you into their story the way a fairy tale entraps a toddler. It gives you private moments that never existed between these four boys and Perry Como and it ultimately gives you an entire Sunday night Ed Sullivan Show in just under four minutes including commercials. The Plaids become inseparable from your heart and their music is pure pleasure from “*Sixteen Tons*” through “*No Not Much*” all the way to “*Love is a Many Splendored Thing*.” Along the way there is pathos, humor, tenderness and passion. It is a journey you can take this month, guided by four very talented and attractive young men, at the Mac-Haydn Theatre in Chatham, New York where the show is playing in repertory with “**Xanadu**”, “**Show Stoppers**” and solo concert shows, the company’s Summer in September series. If you’ve never seen this show before it is one not to miss, and if you’re a fan of the piece, James Barry has directed a smash hit version of it for the Mac.

Kylan Ross, by stepping back from lead roles into this ensemble work, has solidified his place as an emerging star of the company. He is wonderful as one half of the half-brother team of Jinx and Sparky. It is their close harmonic tones that spark the other two men into making the Andrews Sisters seem to be pikers in a musical sense. Newcomer Miles Yokom plays his sibling whose minor health issues are both funny and endearing and give the character's musicality very special meaning.



Kylan Ross, Cody Edwards,
John Hannigan, Miles Yokom;
Photo: Ann Kielbasa

John Hannigan makes his debut with the company as Smudge, the leader of this pack, and Cody Edwards plays his cohort, Frankie. Again, Barry's staging of the play gives all four men that special something that defines musical groups as special people who understand cooperation in the notes, and the choreography by Ashley DeLane Burger of their lives together is as special as their story. One thing you should know about this is that the four men are dead, killed by a bus full of Catholic school girls on a New Jersey highway. That is not a place any good musicians would like to be, but this one last chance opportunity to perform give the boys a new lease on life and costumes.

In fact, costumes, designed by Claire Mezzetta, are delightful and a grand piano centered set design by Kevin Gleason is practically perfect in every way. Andrew Gmoser's fun lighting gives the quartet everything they need and also provides subtle showcasing of music director Eric Shorey as needed. This light comedy is both entertaining and thought-provoking and ultimately most satisfying. It's a sweet and sentimental combination of a show and well worth devoting some time to as the summer season wanes and warps into Autumn.

+ 09/11/2022 +

Forever Plaid plays at the Mac-Haydn Theatre, 1925 NY Rte. 203, Chatham, NY through October 2. For information and tickets call 518-392-9292 or go to www.machaydntheatre.org