

NEWS Article February 19, 2004

Fingers and Toes dances along but has size trouble  
HARRY CURRIE, Record Staff

Fingers and Toes, which played Centre in the Square on Tuesday, is a cute, saucy three-handed musical that pays homage to the golden age of stage and film musicals of the 1930s and 1940s.

The plot has a simple premise: how a pianist and a tap dancer created a musical called Fingers and Toes in two weeks. The old cliché of art mirroring life is very accurate here, for that's pretty much how the real Fingers and Toes was created by pianist Logan Medland and choreographer Randy Ganne.

While Medland decided to appear in the musical as his fictional alter-ego Tristan (Fingers) MacLean, Ganne handed his own fictional persona to Timothy Gledhill, who plays Adrian (Toes) McGrath. Since the play revolves around the standard Hollywood musical concept of love, a third character, Molly, played by Allison Plamondon, arrives to bemuse and confuse both Fingers and Toes.

When the action begins, Fingers is sitting in a studio trying to write a symphony, which isn't going too well. His dancing friend Toes arrives to tell him about producer Dearth Graballski, who is looking for a new musical.

Toes cons Fingers into a coin toss to decide whether to try to write something for Graballski -- he wins the toss -- and Toes comments "How hard can it be?"

Well, pretty hard, they quickly discover, as they struggle with a song that has 'la-la-la' as most of the lyrics.

Enter Molly -- that's both a good thing and a bad thing for their creative urges -- and the three struggle toward finishing the project, personal feelings and involvements both enhancing and inhibiting their progress.

There are a lot of good things about this musical. The dialogue -- crisp, snappy and funny -- carries a lot of great one-liners, and moves the pace along briskly. The music, a blend of great standards and some fine originals by Medland, creates a familiarity that allows Fingers and Toes to feel like a comfortable pair of shoes rediscovered.

Nothing wrong with the performances of the three principals, either -- Medland a consummate pianist in every style imaginable who possesses a natural flare for acting, Gledhill an amazing tap dancer who both acts and sings extremely well, and Plamondon who is able to work as singer/dancer/actor with both skill and fine natural ease.

The difference in height between Plamondon, who is very short, and Gledhill, who is very tall, made some of the dancing seem awkward. Not that they didn't handle the intricate steps -- they were both exceptional tappers -- but it had a Mutt and Jeff look about it that jarred.

In this form, Fingers and Toes is an intimate musical, and should be performed in smaller, intimate halls. The Centre in the Square is too big a venue for this show as it stands.

But I couldn't help but think it could be expanded into a much bigger version with a larger cast, super production numbers and a variety of sets, and do very well.

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